

UNGA 44: Second Committee

ITEM 82(a): INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Statement of Australia, Canada and New Zealand

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour on this occasion to speak on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, as well as Canada.

While at this stage of the debate there is not much new I can add to the comments of earlier speakers, I do wish to make a brief contribution to the Second Committee's reflection upon where we stand. I wish also to express our appreciation for the report on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and, more generally, for the energy and initiative of our Rapporteur.

Our delegations believe there are reasonable grounds for a degree of satisfaction in the progress made so far, while recognizing that the substantive elaboration of the strategy still lies ahead of us and that no specific agreements have yet been reached. We are nevertheless optimistic for several reasons. First, the tone of the debate in the Ad Hoc Committee has been positive and conciliatory. We discern flexibility and openness to new approaches on all sides. This apparent willingness of all participants to avoid rigid postures and strive for consensus, and to seek pragmatic solutions augurs well for the balance of the process.

A second positive factor has been the increasing engagement of delegations in setting out ideas on both the content and structure of the IDS, as illustrated by a veritable outpouring in September of formal and informal papers. In the various interventions, we saw increasing evidence of convergence toward the view that the IDS should seek to focus on several priority themes, notably the acceleration of growth and development, human resources development, the problem of extreme poverty and environmental concerns. A wide body of opinion also appears to support the view that the appropriate optic for the IDS is the development of the developing countries, and that the IDS could be situated under the umbrella of whatever wider framework for international cooperation emerges from the planned special session of the General Assembly.