

Mr. President,

I begin by expressing Canada's congratulations to you on your election to the presidency. As a representative of Ecuador you have played an active role in the affairs of Latin America and in many areas of world co-operation. We welcome your election and wish you well in carrying out the high duties of leadership of the 28th session.

By the admission of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Democratic German Republic, the United Nations has taken another big step towards universality. Canada applauds the breadth of mind -- the evolution from stalemate in Europe -- that has made these states welcome within our organization.

Canada also warmly welcomes the admission of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas as a full member. As a country that has long enjoyed close links with the Bahamas, we are confident that the influence of our newest member will be directed to the highest interests of the United Nations.

The United Nations is becoming universal -- is it becoming more effective as an instrument for the attainment of the hopes and aspirations of mankind?

Since last we met here one of the architects of this organization, the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, died in Canada. In those bright, hopeful days when he and others were engaged in preparing for the birth of the United Nations, Mr. Pearson expressed his fear that when the unifying pressures of world war have subsided, "nationalist pride and prejudice would become strong again -- and the narrow concept of the national interest prevail". This judgement on the future was all too quickly proven accurate. Yet as conscious of its imperfections as any man, Mr. Pearson remained convinced that the United Nations was indispensable for even the most slow and painful march away from mass violence and poverty.

It is true that in certain key areas of world security, the United Nations appears to have been by-passed. Improved relations between the great powers have been achieved essentially through bilateral efforts. Significant steps have been taken towards greater European stability with the European Security Conference and talks on Mutual Balanced Force Reductions. The agreement reached bilaterally between India and Pakistan, restoring the conditions of peace and future co-operation in the sub-continent has been warmly welcomed by the world community.

All of us are, in some degree, affected by these deliberations and decisions, and we recognize that it is the nature of our world's society that all of us do not have the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making as we would wish through this world forum. As the Secretary General has said in his excellent introduction to the annual report: "It is necessary to emphasize that there is no inevitable clash between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. They are, or should be, mutually supporting, each having particular advantages in particular situations. There is no single road to peace -- we have to try all roads."

But we should never fail to assert the interest and the primacy of this organization where it has an indispensable role to play.