

(TRANSLATION)

Mr. President,

It is a great honour for me to address such a distinguished assembly in this beautiful "ville lumière" which means so much to Canada and all Canadians. But first, permit me to pay tribute to the President of the French Republic for his gracious welcome and impressive introduction, for the efficient way in which you have provided for our deliberations, and to you on your election to the position of President of the Conference.

(TEXT)

I wish to assure you of the very high priority which the Canadian government attaches to co-operation between developed and developing countries on global economic problems and to the success of the Conference. As many of you well know, my Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, has undertaken a series of foreign missions and extensive discussions with leading world statesmen to promote progress on the important issues which comprise the North-South dialogue. While he is unable to be with us today, he has asked me to convey the following special message to this assembly.

"Mr. President, on behalf of the people of Canada, I would like to convey greetings and best wishes for a successful conference.

Among all the complex problems facing today's increasingly interdependent world, none is more pressing or more fundamental than the plight of the poorest nations and peoples. The moral imperative of social justice, to assist one's neighbours, is not constrained by family, ethnic, religious or national affinities. It does not depend upon whether one exports or imports petroleum, whether one has a centrally planned or a free market economy, or whether one belongs to one political alliance or another. It is a responsibility of all of us, developed and developing countries alike, and one we must carry out together.

The fact of global interdependence was stressed once again in July at the Ottawa Summit, where the participants jointly expressed their concern about the serious economic problems in many developing countries, and the grim poverty faced by hundreds of millions of people.