

under guise of defence, has the right to accumulate arms that are intended to destroy its neighbours. Equally troubling, of course, are excessive expenditures on arms which sacrifice other important priorities such as health, education and agriculture.

The choice is there for all of us to make: instruments of destruction or tools for peace.

The Effectiveness of Humanitarian Relief

Assistance to victims of natural, economic and political disasters has always been a priority of the United Nations. Yet the UN response to these crises has lost its edge, dulled by quarrels among agencies and jealous hoarding of admittedly scarce resources.

In the face of human tragedy these practices are inexcusable and intolerable. It is time for the appointment of a senior official for humanitarian relief and disaster assistance who can organize international responses to disaster with dispatch and compassion.

Reinvigorating the effectiveness of the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization, and stronger links between New York and Geneva, can provide inter-agency responses that are needed, coherent and focussed. We support the establishment of a new UN fund to provide flexibility for humanitarian relief at the onset of a disaster.

Developing Countries

Despite the fiscal constraints that are affecting virtually all countries in the world, Canada believes that a strengthened, more effective United Nations must continue its focus on helping the poorest among us.

Developing countries are making major efforts to reform their political and economic systems. Unhappily, in many countries, especially those in Africa, as dramatically confirmed in the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Program of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, debt service obligations continue to far exceed the capacity to pay. That challenge has been severely compounded by drought, desertification, environmental degradation and disease, and by the migration of desperate people fleeing these perils.

What are the answers? While they may be complex, they are not new. The goal of sustainable development depends upon participatory democracy; open, market-based economic policies; sound economic management; and an orderly international trading system which we are trying to ensure in the Uruguay Round of the multilateral trade negotiations. With ideological blocs now