

For Canada, the need for more open, transparent and collegial decision making is crucial. There must be closer consultation with countries contributing personnel and equipment to help implement Council decisions. Here, real progress has been achieved of late, which Canada warmly welcomes. This progress needs to be institutionalized.

The credibility and effectiveness of the Council in promoting international peace and security is also key. Although we do not regard expansion of its membership as a panacea, it is clear that composition plays a role in fostering credibility and effectiveness: the Council is no longer as representative as it once was. Its legitimacy, and perhaps also the quality of its decisions, would be greatly enhanced by more representation from those countries that contribute the most to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the broad purposes of the Organization — the key criterion for non-permanent membership enshrined in Article 23 of the Charter.

Perhaps it is time to reflect together on those purposes to which Article 23 refers. They would surely include participation in UN peace operations; commitment to arms control and disarmament; and support for good neighbourly relations, humanitarian assistance, human rights, development co-operation and the promotion of civil society. An understanding among Member States along these lines would help in the selection of non-permanent Council members, whether on the existing or on a modified basis.

Mr. President, a recurring theme throughout my remarks has been the need for the UN to marshal its scarce resources more effectively. There is simply no other option if we are to restore confidence in this Organization, and in the specialized agencies. As the Secretary General has stressed, the Organization's financial crisis is crippling its effectiveness and its credibility. We cannot allow this to happen.

The answer lies in addressing both expenditures and revenues. Many governments, including Canada's, are facing difficult budgetary decisions. We have had to learn to live with expenditure reductions in real terms while maintaining priority programs. International organizations must respect the same pressures as domestic governments. The UN and its agencies must focus on key objectives and reduce overhead spending in order to protect priority programs. In fact, there are many steps that chief executive officers can take themselves to increase efficiency and to reduce costs without impairing programs, and we should all insist that they do so. Similarly, many agency budgets should be held at present levels wherever possible, if not reduced. Member States must work collectively to this end.

Canada strongly supports the proposal, put forward by the Secretary General, for an Efficiency Task-Force to address these