

We are with you in your progress toward hope and fulfilment for your people, and we thank you for your inspiring words today.

[*Translation*]

On behalf of the Senate, I wish to thank you for your visit.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker Fraser: Mr. Mandela, Madam, members of the House of Commons and the Senate—

[*Translation*]

—very distinguished guests.

Mr. Mandela, on behalf of my colleagues in the House of Commons and other honoured guests presents, I wish to thank you for your speech and to extend warmest greetings to you and your compatriots.

It is indeed a great honour for us to have in our midst a man whose courage and dedication has won the admiration and respect of people young and old throughout the world.

[*English*]

Canadian parliamentarians and the people we represent have for many years demonstrated their strong opposition to the system of apartheid in South Africa and the enormous suffering that it has caused.

Canadians and others urged your release from prison. We rejoice at the fact that you are here with us today. Your presence here is tangible evidence that there have been positive developments in South Africa and that there is now more than ever real hope for a peaceful transformation of South African society which will guarantee racial equality and justice for all South Africans. This is, to many of us, crucial because, unless there is justice for all, there is little chance of justice for anyone.

At a time when the human race is more and more aware of the fragile nature of our planet's environment and of the necessity of working together to ensure our survival, the need to resolve our differences without bloodshed and to guarantee the respect of the basic

human rights of all individuals should be clear to all men and women of intelligence and good will.

We have seen the democratic ideal become stronger than ever, even in regions where until recently there appeared to be little chance that it would flourish in our lifetime. Thus, we are approaching the end of the 20th century with some quiet optimism which not so long ago might have seemed out of place.

However, this by no means implies that every problem will now be resolved with little difficulty and we listened carefully, sir, to your remarks in this regard. We are not ingenuous here. We have watched your struggle for many years and we know how much of a struggle lies ahead.

Much more will need to be done before apartheid is finally abolished, and much more will need to be done before equality is established for all people in your country.

These negotiations toward the creation of a non-racial democracy will be complex and arduous, but we are encouraged by the progress made in talks between the government and the African National Congress toward the removal of obstacles to formal negotiations.

[*Translation*]

We are certain that your contribution to these negotiations will be central in keeping with the significant role you have already played in South Africa's march towards a non-racial, free and democratic society.

Rest assured that we will follow the course of the negotiations with great interest and that our wish is for successful negotiations which will transform South African society and do away with the evils of apartheid.

[*English*]

As you enter the most important phase of your illustrious life, sir, we convey to you our best wishes for success in your mission and confirm our admiration for your courage and dedication.

We ask you, sir and madam, to return and take our prayers with you. God bless you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!