



# Statements and Speeches

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## **STRENGTHENING THE UN: THE SEARCH FOR SPECIFICS**

Address by the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Thirty-Eighth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, September 27, 1983.

...We meet at a time of heightened tension. The urgency of many world problems has intensified since last year. The need for a dynamic United Nations has never been greater.

One year ago, the Secretary-General inspired us to take a hard look at this organization. We measured expectations against realities and, to no-one's surprise, found ourselves wanting. We recognized that we were in the midst of what the Secretary-General called "a crisis in the multilateral approach in international affairs". We unanimously agreed on "the imperative need to strengthen the role and effectiveness of the United Nations". We have not yet succeeded.

It is now time to move from high-sounding generalities, on which we can all agree, to specific measures for strengthening the multilateral system.

### **Peace and Security**

The reputation of the United Nations is widely measured by its contribution to peace and security. We must turn around the current perception that the UN cannot respond forcefully to crisis and conflict. We must make more creative use of the existing provisions and mechanisms of the Charter.

The key is the Security Council and the way in which the Secretary-General works with the Council and the members work with each other. Council members have been seeking ways to make the work of the Council more effective. It will be unfortunate if political realities prevent any significant improvements. We count upon the members of the Council, particularly its permanent members, to exercise their responsibilities on behalf of all member states.

Is it naive to demand an enhanced spirit of co-operation and acceptance of responsibilities in the Council? One wonders in the light of recent events. The world will not soon forget that the Council was prevented from taking action on the destruction of a civil aircraft by the Soviet Union. We cannot write off this particular Soviet veto as a harsh fact of life. This exercise of the veto was callously irresponsible. It frustrated the Council from taking action to preserve the safety of international civil aviation.

Canadians continue to be outraged by the tragedy of September 1. On September 12, the Canadian House of Commons unanimously condemned "the unwarranted attack on and destruction of the Korean airliner on the orders of Soviet authorities". The House demanded "a full and truthful explanation of this brutal act from the Soviet government". It demanded "that the Soviet government