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AID POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

The following is a recent address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, to the Ministerial Meeting of the Development Assistance Committee in Washington, D.C.:

First, Mr. Chairman, I should like to congratulate you on your report, which once again provides us with objective comments on the merits and shortcomings of our collective aid effort. You have also given us guide-lines that will be useful in pursuing the fundamental aid objectives that are the subject of today's discussion.

We meet in new surroundings, having accepted the invitation of the Government of the U.S.A. to conduct this year's deliberations in Washington, D.C. We welcomed this invitation as providing an opportunity to pay tribute to the generosity and leadership of the Government and people of the U.S.A. in the collective effort to promote economic development and ameliorate the lot of the developing countries. Our presence here also suggests the extent to which we necessarily look to the U.S.A. in the future expansion of this effort and in evolving new and imaginative measures for dealing with problems of development, old and new.

I take great pleasure in welcoming to this Ministerial meeting a fellow Commonwealth member, Australia, a country which was seated with us at the founding conference of the Colombo Plan. It is encouraging to see the growth of this circle of nations committed to increase and improve their aid through the process of consultation and co-ordination.

The performance — both individually and collectively — of our group has, over the past five years or so, provided overwhelming evidence of our determination to play our full role in bridging the gap between rich and poor countries. As the Minister responsible

in my own country for the conduct of both foreign and aid policies, I am reminded every day that aid not, repeat not, only plays a crucial role in the complex process of economic development but is also a major factor in relations between nations. For this reason I am today profoundly disturbed by apparent stagnation in our collective efforts to mobilize greater aid resources and put them to effective use. Without a renewal of upward trend in this effort there is little chance that we shall succeed in establishing a foundation of lasting peace and stability in the world. This is the opportunity and challenge of today's meeting.

During our deliberations we have an opportunity to make an objective and, I would hope, a critical review of our aid policies and programmes. I have come to this meeting with the conviction that such an appraisal should not, repeat not, be conducted against a narrow background of progress achieved over the past year or so in specific sectors. Rather, it is essential, in my view, that we measure the adequacy of our effort against general background of long-term position and requirements of developing regions of the world and of our common ability and determination to meet those requirements over a period of time.

SITUATION REVIEW

If we look at the situation now facing us, we cannot, repeat not, but be struck by certain disquieting facts. In spite of 5 percent growth target of the UN development decade, it has not, repeat not, been achieved to date and average growth rates are in fact lower than in the 1950s. In spite of international concern about the growing debt burden, debt-servicing liabilities are now as high as \$35 billion and con-