

stronger leadership role in partnership with the international financial institutions, regional banks and bilateral donors. This does not require the UN to spend money: rather, the Council should lend its authority to the critical effort to sustain and nurture stability in countries where it played a central role in bringing about peace in the first place. In other words, the Council needs to take a broader view of its responsibilities.

We are not here today to criticize the Council, but rather to formulate ideas on how it could work better. It has been moving in the right direction on several issues, notably the promotion of democracy and the protection of human rights. Its creation of the International Criminal Tribunals to judge indictees from the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda is a striking departure, and one which we cannot allow to fail.

The Council's dynamics have changed tremendously since the end of the Cold War. We used to complain that the superpower competition paralyzed the body. Then, for some years, it sometimes seemed that the Permanent 5, acting together, considered the Council their own chasse gardée. This was all the easier for them because the Non-aligned group was no longer in a position to lead on many issues and was, indeed, seriously split on many of them. The impression of a condominium of power within the Council has paradoxically been aggravated since the differences over the Former Yugoslavia between France, the Russian Federation and the UK on the one hand and the USA on the other, were papered over with the Council's endorsement of the Dayton Agreement late last year.

However, cracks are appearing in P-5 solidarity, most spectacularly last week over American actions in Iraq. The Russian Federation has also complained consistently in recent years over double standards in the Council's decisions. Even China broke ranks with its P-5 partners for some days over a recent mandate renewal for the UN force in Haiti. Thus, there is some suggestion that the Council is entering a new era, one in which non-permanent members can again make a real difference, as Canada hopes to do in the years 1999-2000, if, as we hope, we are elected to the body in 1998.

Infuriating as the United States' failure to fund the UN has been, it is clear that we must learn to work better with the Americans, and with Congress in particular, in order to overcome the growing isolationism infecting much of American life. This trend is particularly worrying with a number of the UN's traditional friends in Congress retiring this year.

For the remainder of the world, the UN, and its Security Council, remain the most promising counterweight to US unilateralism in a unipolar world. We must fight hard to defend and improve it.

I know your conference will touch on the issue of reform. A lot has already been accomplished in the Council's working methods, much of it under pressure from countries such as my own, which could no longer tolerate having significant responsibilities thrust on us by a Council