

Archbishop Scott,

Distinguished Guests,

The events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union mark a profound change in world history - a change made more dramatic because it is sudden, surprising, spontaneous. Those changes are far from over; indeed, the next steps - of securing lasting reform and freedom - will be even more difficult. And it is both natural and right that the world should turn its attention urgently to how we help the people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

But it is equally important that we maintain policies and priorities that are leading to evident progress in other parts of the world. The Berlin Wall is a vicious symbol, and there is joy everywhere that it is coming down. But there are other walls - walls of ignorance and poverty, that programs of Official Development Assistance are helping to bring down; walls of resolute prejudice that will be broken only by the kind of campaign that we have waged together against apartheid.

I particularly welcome the occasion you provide me today to reiterate the high priority we attach to bringing down those other walls, in Africa and elsewhere, and to offer some reflections on developments in South Africa.

The fight against apartheid is a central element of the foreign policy of this Government, both because the cause is so compelling, and because we believe this is so clearly one of those international issues where Canada can make a difference.

That is because Canada enjoys a good and strong relationship with South Africa's black neighbours. We do not carry the colonial baggage of some other Western countries. We are active members of the Commonwealth, La Francophonie and the G-7 - indeed, the only country to belong to all of these groups. That is important where co-operative action is the most effective force for change.

The Commonwealth has been in the vanguard of the fight against apartheid, as it was in setting the framework for the evolution of Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. From the Nassau Conference onward, Canada has played a leading role in that Commonwealth campaign, whether in meetings of the Heads of Government, or in the Eminent Persons Group, or in the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa.

Looking back just two years ago, to the early days of the South Africa Education Trust Fund, it is worth recalling that hope had all but disappeared for peaceful and fundamental change in South Africa. Apartheid's cruel face had not flinched in reaction to the popular uprisings of 1985 and 1986, and in February 1988, additional draconian measures were imposed.