

The Security Council is currently faced with enormous responsibilities. Its decisions are binding on all member states and have a determining impact on millions of people.

It is essential that the Council reflect as accurately as possible the wishes of the entire international community. Accordingly, it is imperative that we review the makeup of the Council. By making the Council more representative of the world as it is today, we can enhance the legitimacy of its actions and facilitate their implementation. Canada will continue to play an active role in the negotiations launched during the last General Assembly with a view to concluding an agreement as soon as possible.

However, an expanded Council must not be seen as a panacea. As we have said on a number of occasions, the Council must make its work methods more transparent and become more receptive to the viewpoints and special concerns of non-member states. More specifically, Canada has called for a closer dialogue between the Council and troop-contributing countries. The informal practices that have been developed in recent years are a good start, but we must look for practical ways to institutionalize them. We ask the members of the Council to keep an open mind in this regard.

Fifthly, we must put the UN on a sound financial footing.

It goes without saying that the UN can fulfil the mandates we have given it only insofar as its member states fulfil their financial obligations and contribute generously to its voluntary funds.

The amounts in question are no doubt modest when compared with monies invested elsewhere, but nevertheless represent a significant burden that is growing larger at a time when many of our countries, Canada most definitely included, are undergoing a difficult period of budgetary adjustment.

Our taxpayers do not question the need to contribute to the UN, but quite rightly expect that their contributions will be spent judiciously.

That is why the need for sound management of the system's resources takes on such importance in our eyes. The recent creation of the position of inspector general should help tighten controls and improve administrative practices. There is also a need to review budgetary procedures in order to make them more transparent and to simplify those dealing with peacekeeping operations.

Reviewing the scale of assessments is always a perilous undertaking, but the need to do so has become urgent. The current system has serious distortions and no longer adequately