

A 25% budget cut, as Honourable members will appreciate, is no easy task. UNESCO did this.

But this beginning can lead to revitalization and a reassertion of those core programs for which the organization was created. A now more modest UNESCO must try twice as hard to win over its sceptics over the coming two-year budget and beyond; and vigilance will still be the name of the game. All Member states, particularly major contributors, must maintain their pressure on UNESCO if the present progress is to be consolidated. It is in the interests of the long-term health of the whole UN system that the UNESCO reform experiment should continue. We must follow through on our commitment if the reforms are to work. It means a determined effort from within.

Canadians are interested in UNESCO. This measure of public opinion underscores the considerable goodwill in the general public towards organizations like UNESCO. I count on the innumerable non-governmental organizations, provincial and federal departments, which represent the many diverse constituencies for UNESCO activity in Canada, for continued support for this task. I will turn to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO especially to advise and to assist the Government in this painstaking endeavour. I will do this because there is perhaps no other country in the world which relies so heavily on its international links in all walks of life.

As I stated, Canadians feel an attachment to UNESCO. I might add that UNESCO feels an attachment to Canada, as attested to by the many compliments about Canada that I heard in Sofia.