

a member of the Commission on Human Rights, Canada will now direct her efforts principally towards the protection of the rights defined in the Covenants and in the Declaration. One obvious means is to make effective the investigative and appeal mechanisms that are now established. These mechanisms require that states be willing to accept impartial examination of any alleged failures to abide by their commitments. A Court of Human Rights, as proposed by my German colleague, is a step we should consider. None of us have perfect records. To fall short of the aspirations inscribed in the Covenants and the Declaration on Human Rights is not a matter for partisan polemics but for sober assessment.

The obstacles ahead are formidable. Appeals against violations of human rights can be a threat to the legitimacy of some governments and an embarrassment to others. No state is immune to criticism in this regard, although some manage to deflect attention while others become the center of attraction. Canada will speak out to the best of her knowledge without regard for power or favour. We attach particular importance to the full implementation of the terms of the Declaration on Torture which the General Assembly adopted in 1975.

Peace and Security

Our experience with peacekeeping has been different from our experience with human rights. The concepts and principles of UN peacekeeping have been the subject of strong disagreement, whereas the practice has been modestly successful.

Threats to peace and security vary from year to year but we are rarely able to claim that none exist. This year we have been shocked by the continuing loss of life in the Lebanon. The United Nations has not been able to contribute to peacemaking efforts there but should remain ready to respond if the situation so requires.

A few weeks ago Southern Africa was on the verge of disaster. It may still be so. But I am sure we are all encouraged by the developments of recent days. I pay tribute to the patient diplomacy of the Secretary of State of the United States and welcome the apparent change of mind in Pretoria and Salisbury which his efforts may have achieved.