

TEXT

As far as Canada is concerned, our commitment to development assistance is now well entrenched. Let me simply reiterate the government's policy to allocate to official development assistance 0.5 per cent of our GNP by 1985 and to do our utmost to achieve the international target of 0.7 per cent by 1990.

As some members well know, I take particular interest in promoting consultations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), church leaders and business representatives, and I have been impressed by their strong moral and intellectual commitment to the over-all Canadian effort in favour of Third World development. I would like to pay tribute to the impressive work that is carried out by NGOs and the church groups in Latin America, and I would like to repeat the strong commitment of this government to continue supporting financially the initiatives taken by private citizens in this country.

I want just to mention a serious issue with a human face which is having an adverse impact on the economic and social development prospects of many developing countries. I refer to the international refugee situation, the dimensions of which are expanding at an alarming rate.

There are now some 10 million refugees in different parts of the world and many more millions of internally displaced persons. The situation in Africa, which has witnessed a quintupling of its refugee population in the past few years, is of particular concern and led to the convening of the conference in Geneva in April, in which I participated, on the subject of international assistance to refugees in Africa. At that conference, Canada pledged, in this year alone, a \$22 million contribution towards the longer term requirements of \$1 billion to assist in humanitarian relief, and local reinstallation and possibly eventual repatriation of the five million refugees in question.

There are also major unresolved refugee situations in Central Asia, in Southeast Asia and in Latin America. These situations, apart from the grave humanitarian problems for the refugees involved, impose economic, social and political burdens on the countries providing asylum which tend to undermine the stability of the countries and regions affected. It is for this reason that Canada, while contributing in a major way to the humanitarian relief effort, has led the international efforts at the United Nations' General Assembly, the U.N. High