

efforts of the United Nations. That has been especially true when UN efforts have focussed on practical, constructive and clearly defined activities.

Through its child survival strategy, UNICEF has reduced infant mortality worldwide. The UN commissioner for refugees has provided legal protection and material assistance to millions of people fleeing war and persecution. The United Nations Development Programme has helped nations build viable economies by supporting 8500 projects in 150 countries. Smallpox has been eliminated through the work of the World Health Organization. The UN has also provided an essential forum for debate on global development issues, most recently at the successful special session on Africa.

Those achievements were the result of careful planning, the setting of realistic goals and reliance on practical measures. The lesson for this conference is clear when we turn to disarmament, where the record of the United Nations - and of its member states - has been less impressive. Twenty years ago, the UN's performance in this field offered prospects for real progress. More recently, the focus of attention here on nuclear weapons has often been at the expense of interest in other problems of arms control - problems that might be easier to solve. Nuclear weapons issues dominate the resolutions of the First Committee, yet global levels of conventional arms are high and rising, and that is a problem which many members states could help resolve by their own action.

As a first step now, we should attach higher priority to the development of confidence-building measures, which are a prerequisite to any major arms limitation agreement. In Europe, where the confrontation between east and west is most direct, the Stockholm Conference has made a valuable contribution to increased security. In Central America, there appears to be a prospect of agreement because the countries involved have worked together in a spirit of co-operation and taken actions which contribute to mutual confidence. These examples differ in form, but demonstrate that small, steady, practical steps can create the confidence that leads to progress. We should increase our efforts to promote such cooperation at the regional level.

Canada is strongly committed to both development and disarmament as fundamental policy objectives. In allocating resources at home, the Canadian government seeks to achieve an equitable balance between a healthy economy driven by a vigorous private sector, and the