

And in the background of this debate looms the question of the veto. Some argue that new permanent members should have the same privileges and responsibilities as the existing permanent members. Others oppose the granting of the veto to new permanent members. Still others accept the granting of new vetoes, but only if the general exercise of the veto is curtailed in some fashion.

These are major differences. With regard to the veto, for example, we have certainly been pleased to note that (for the most part) recently it has not been used. That is a positive development and we hope it continues. But is it realistic to think that existing permanent members are going to formally give up their veto soon?

In short, Security Council reform is a daunting task but a necessary one. We cannot give up even if it takes time to effect solid and helpful change. After all, through the Security Council the world needs to find a way to make better use of those countries that over the years have provided leadership, ideas and resources towards the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of the organizers of this conference and all its participants. Your work and your attendance in such large numbers demonstrate once again, as if any further proof were needed, that there is a great reserve of goodwill, energy and interest in Canada and in other countries for the United Nations. As we prepare to celebrate the UN's 50th anniversary next year, we must call on this reserve to successfully implement the reforms that must be made.

More than ever, the international community needs a strong, credible international institution that is adequately equipped to meet the challenges that face humanity as we approach the 21st century.

I encourage you to continue your reflection. Rest assured that the Government of Canada, the Prime Minister and I firmly intend to forge ahead. Since its creation, the United Nations has been the cornerstone of our foreign policy. The reform of this institution will remain one of the key objectives of our activities.

Thank you for your invitation and your attention.