

Mr. President, since we are still at the initial stage of this Third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, I would like first of all to congratulate you on your election as President of the Conference. I am happy to have this opportunity to present in my name, and in that of my delegation, our thanks to the Government and to the people of Chile for the arrangements which have made this Conference possible and for the warm welcome which they have extended to us through your good offices.

I am particularly impressed by the Centre where this Conference is taking place. I note that in this Centre architectural beauty and practicality have been united. These buildings have been planned and constructed in a period of only a few months. They have, moreover, been embellished by living examples of Chilean art. They will remain as a symbol of Chile's contribution to international cooperation in the realm of development, and the agreeable atmosphere that they create should greatly contribute to advance the work of this Conference.

This present Conference is the first of its kind to be held in Latin America. We are therefore conscious of the extent to which the efforts of two eminent personalities of this very continent - and I have in mind Dr. Raoul Prebisch, the first Secretary General, and his successor Dr. Perez Guerrero - have given form and meaning to this organization. They have both contributed to make it one of the major international organizations of our time. It is evident that the progress already realized by this organization has been made possible by the efforts of numerous personalities from other parts of the world, but to a great extent it is the direction that these two men gave to it which has assured its success.

Mr. President, success in international conferences and international organizations is difficult to measure. There is a natural tendency to concentrate on the precise and immediate outcome in terms of resolutions or conclusions, and to ignore what may be much more significant in the long run - the impact on attitudes, the changes in men's thinking and understanding, the influence exerted on other bodies, and not least the degree to which general objectives are met over time.

I want for a moment to offer my personal assessment of UNCTAD in these broad terms, having had the honour to be Canada's Ministerial representative at the First United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. I suggest that what UNCTAD has done - in less than a decade - is this. It has established its commitment to the trade and development needs, objectives, and problems of the developing countries in a quite unique way, in a way that other international bodies could not; and it has assumed a secure and recognized place among the international organizations and agencies, with broader or with more specialized interests, which also are concerned with development matters.