

Peacekeeping in the "New World Order"

The following are excerpts from an address by External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall at a seminar on "Canada's Agenda for International Peace and Security" in Ottawa on February 8.

These discussions could not be more timely. Every day, the "New World Order" seems to fall further into disarray. Somalia and the Balkans are stark visual images that have already scarred our future memories of this decade. The return of murderous quarrels in Angola, India and Pakistan, the excuse of religious dogma for widespread, vicious attacks against other ethnic groups and women, and strife in parts of the former Soviet Union provide us with almost universal evidence of the incapacity of human beings to live up to the ideals of peace and harmony that they themselves have helped to establish.

The international community and its institutions were seemingly caught off guard by the rapid and widespread descent into instability that followed the end of the Cold War. No doubt, as the Berlin Wall was enthusiastically knocked to the ground, there were entrails to be read, portents of disintegration to come.

Was the international community not paying attention? Did it ignore warning signals that could have led us towards policies and actions of a different kind? Possi-

Canada's commitments to the United Nations, to multilateralism and to peacekeeping are not at issue. We will continue to be activists when it comes to peace and security, especially through the UN.

The real focus of this seminar must be a hard look at how we can best support the UN and other organizations in achieving and maintaining peace and security in the world.

We cannot ignore the rapid and profound changes that are taking place in the world, nor can we pretend that these changes do not have significant implications for Canada and the international community. For some 40 years the developed world concentrated its attention, its energy, its ingenuity, on managing superpower rivalry. The goal was to avert another world war and, in that respect, we were successful.

But the legacy of our efforts during the Cold War is mixed. It has left us with a number of serious problems, not the least of which are vast arsenals of strategic and conventional weapons. More positively, it has left us with sophisticated alliances and global crisis management systems — possibly somewhat too primitive — to address the new reality.

In recent years, some of the worst excesses of the Cold War era have been addressed. We have worked hard to make real progress on nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, verification and confidence-building.

The signings of the START agreement and the Chemical Weapons Convention offer glimmers of hope that we are headed in the right direction. But we have more — much more — to do, especially in light of the diversity and magnitude of the new challenges we face.

Today the international community is called upon to intervene in a multitude of localized or regional conflicts caused by ethnic and religious hostility, the re-emergence of virulent forms of nationalism, famine and the abuse of human rights.

It was with these new threats to international peace in mind that the UN Secretary-General put forward his *Agenda for Peace*. I have, at every available opportunity, including at the UN General Assem-



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bly last year, expressed Canada's support for this report — the most comprehensive since the Charter — because I believe that it maps out creative and effective approaches to international peace and security.

I know that many of you are familiar with the *Agenda for Peace*, so I will not go into great detail about it tonight. However, I do think it is useful to recap briefly the distinct approaches the Secretary-General has outlined, if only to ensure that in our discussions we are all using the same vocabulary.

First, **peacekeeping** — something we are very familiar with in this country, thanks to Lester Pearson. Peacekeeping usually involves military and civilian operations that are carried out with the consent of the parties to a dispute. It may also include assistance to resolve the dispute, such as the missions in Angola and El Salvador. But even this basic definition has been expanded in recent initiatives — for example, with the provision of military escorts for humanitarian aid in the former Yugoslavia.

Second, **peacemaking**. Peacemaking involves diplomatic action, such as the London Conference on Yugoslavia, to prevent or resolve conflicts. Some people tend to

The increased risk of peace missions does not make them less necessary or less desirable.

bly, but I, for one, regard those brief few months of relaxed international tensions as a different kind of portent — a brief vision of what our world can be like if we truly accomplish what we thought we had achieved then: a new level of stability, harmony and hope.

The question the international community is wrestling with now in this period of volatility is, where do we go from here? And the situation Canada happily finds itself in is that our expressed perspective, our skills and our steadfastness to our own ideals may be what the world needs in the face of these dauntingly complex challenges.

As we begin our discussions here today and tomorrow, one thing should be clear: