

Only a genuine partnership that will contribute to the exchange of knowledge will enable us to achieve our objectives of world food equilibrium and sustainable development. It is my hope, Mr. Secretary General, that this conference being held in Canada, in the province of Quebec, will be a success and will help to advance your organization's objectives.

Now, in closing, a few words about Lester B. Pearson. His son has given us a sketch of both his diplomatic and political contributions. Allow me to point out, first, that Mr. Pearson was a visionary who, both in the United Nations and in Canadian politics, brought new life to everything he touched. The creation of the FAO, the first specialized agency of the United Nations, a few days before the creation of the United Nations, was in itself an extraordinary initiative.

Mr. Pearson's second outstanding initiative was the idea of having peacekeeping forces serving the United Nations, military forces who would keep peace in the world rather than fight wars. But perhaps Mr. Pearson's most remarkable accomplishment was his teamwork with Premier Jean Lesage, a colleague who served with him under Prime Minister Louis St Laurent. Mr. Lesage in Quebec and Mr. Pearson in Ottawa did some things that substantially changed the face of Canada and of Quebec. Before Mr. Pearson, Francophones outside Quebec had little influence, while economic life in Quebec was dominated by Anglophones. But under Mr. Pearson, and of course through the initiatives of the Quebec Premier, Francophones began more than ever to control economic affairs in Quebec - even to the point where our present Prime Minister thinks that some have too much power and say too much! But one thing is certain: Prime Minister Pearson, understanding Quebec as he did and allowing Quebec to do things in a distinct manner, enabled the Quebec government and its institutions to develop and to help Quebec's business people really take charge of their economic destiny.

Through his policy of bilingualism throughout Canada, Mr. Pearson made it possible for the million or so Francophones outside Quebec to prosper and to assume an increasingly important role. Today thousands, even tens of thousands of Anglophone students are in French immersion. Considerable progress has indeed been achieved since Mr. Pearson introduced the concepts of co-operative federalism and bilingualism. All that he did was done out of respect for others and out of a keen desire to understand and accept those who did not necessarily share his views. Lester B. Pearson was a prime minister who worked for the whole population, for those who had something to say, whether they agreed with him or not. Mr. Pearson was a great man, and I am very pleased that the Mayor of Quebec has given me an opportunity to participate in this ceremony paying tribute to him.

Thank you.