

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires
extérieures

93/53

AS DELIVERED

AN ADDRESS BY

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SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TO THE FREEDOM FORUM

"THE UNITED NATIONS: THE WILL TO REFORM"

**TORONTO, Ontario
August 18, 1993**

Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada
External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

I feel privileged to have this opportunity to talk to you today, because everyone who believes in human equality and dignity can subscribe to the Freedom Forum's objectives of promoting a free press, free speech and a free spirit.

I am particularly impressed by the Forum's International Division, which is providing timely information, training and support for the development of a free and independent press in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in the countries of the former Soviet Union. A free press and free speech are essential ingredients for the growth and health of the fragile democracies in that part of the world.

Why did the old order ultimately collapse inward on itself? In part, because it failed to understand that the desire for freedom can be suppressed for a time, but it cannot be destroyed without destroying humanity itself.

For our part, we should never believe that the struggle for freedom is complete. It is not a mortgage that can be paid, once and for all. Instead, it is organic, and it must be protected and nourished. Helping new democracies succeed is an investment not only in their futures, but also in ours.

It's hard to believe that it was only three years ago that we were celebrating the defeat of Communism and the end of the Cold War. The Iron Curtain has been drawn back, the Berlin Wall has fallen, the threat of nuclear Armageddon has given way to the promise of a new order, but we are left with a world that is as troubled as ever, and in some ways more troubled than ever before.

The world is no longer divided between two opposing camps facing each other in a nuclear stand-off. However, instead of enjoying an unprecedented era of peace, order and prosperity, we find ourselves struggling with the ugliest forms of nationalism, interethnic hatred and religious rivalries that have been released from their Cold War constraints.

Martin Jacques's excellent essay last month in *The Sunday Times* magazine, which was entitled "The End of Politics," pointed out the irony of how Communism may have lost the ideological struggle, but the West has lost its sense of unity and purpose:

The collapse of Communism did not leave the West unscathed, triumphant and unchallenged, as most expected in 1989. On the contrary, the demise of bipolarism has thrown the West into crisis. An overriding enemy provides a sense of purpose, helps to subordinate and discipline other potential conflicts, gives a clear moral framework, and furnishes a sense of identity. Without it, all these questions rise to the surface in a new way, begging answers that are novel and profound.

The images you deliver to our homes from Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Cambodia and elsewhere, are a daily reminder that we have a long way to go before peace, order, freedom and respect for human rights become the rule rather than the exception.

As the Gulf War, the democratization of Cambodia, and the United Nations efforts in Bosnia demonstrate, the old divisions no longer stop the international community from responding to regional problems. We have an unprecedented opportunity to introduce order where there is chaos, peace where there is conflict, and relief where there is pain and suffering.

The challenge of our time is to match our abilities to that opportunity.

A large part of the answer lies in our multilateral institutions, especially the United Nations. While it was hobbled by the stalemate between the superpowers, we could blame the UN's failings on the lack of fundamental consensus. We cannot do so now, when ideological schisms are behind us.

We have won a vital part of the struggle. What is needed today is the will to reform and the determination to finish the job.

The UN remains the single most important instrument we have for promoting peace, democracy and freedom in the world. Surely no task is more important than to make it as effective as possible.

Let me talk first about how we can strengthen the UN's vital role in keeping the peace.

We all share in the benefits of peace. We all must share the responsibility for building and maintaining it. The two go hand-in-hand.

No single state can or should be expected to serve as the world's policeman. The United States certainly should provide both moral leadership and material resources for peacekeeping. It has an indispensable role in revitalizing and strengthening the United Nations, as well as regional institutions, to prevent conflicts, to deal with them when they break out, to provide humanitarian relief, and to promote freedom and human rights.

In the long and troubled era since the end of World War II, America has accepted the burden of defending peace and freedom without succumbing to the temptation to once again turn inward into isolationism.

Nor does it do so now, even when the greatest challenges to its global leadership are no longer military, but economic and social, and are often domestic instead of foreign.

All of us should be encouraged by the Clinton Administration's willingness to work in partnership with other members of the international community. Multilateralism can be frustrating, particularly when your country has long been asked to carry more than its fair share of the burden. Americans have every right to look to the rest of the world to do its part.

For that matter, so do we in Canada.

Consider the fact that Canada's assessed contributions to the UN have grown from \$8 million to almost \$90 million annually. At one point last year, Canadians represented some 10 percent of forces involved in peacekeeping missions. Is it any wonder that we are also looking for other countries to pick up their fair share?

We believe in peacekeeping. We have had more experience with it than any other country in the world. With the third largest peacekeeping contingent in the former Yugoslavia, with peacekeepers in Cambodia, the Middle East and elsewhere, obviously Canada remains firmly committed to making its contribution.

For example, in September 1991, Prime Minister Mulroney led the call for the UN Security Council to deal with the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Since April 1992, we have deployed some 2400 troops and 45 Royal Canadian Mounted Police monitors with the UN Protection Force. Another 12 Canadian soldiers are deployed with a CSCE [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe] mission.

We have provided over \$38 million worth of humanitarian assistance. This July, we contributed \$250 000 to the Canadian Red Cross for medical personnel and relief action for 230 abandoned patients, mostly children. And we are continuing to explore ways of helping the victims of this tragic conflict.

Our role in peacekeeping has been a source of national pride from the very first day former Prime Minister Lester Pearson came up with the idea during the Suez Crisis.

We see it in a broad international context. We are conscious of the fact that our security and prosperity depend on a strong and stable international community, based on the rule of law and effective international institutions.

This is not just my view or the Government's. It is also the opinion of the vast majority of Canadians.

Let's look at some of the specific reforms needed to make the UN more effective.

A month from now, when the UN General Assembly begins, Canada's top priority will be to work with partners, such as the United States, to encourage a serious and determined process of reform. Prime Minister Campbell made that case forcefully at the G-7 Summit in Tokyo, and the final communiqué reflected the leaders' understanding that progress is needed now.

The United Nations needs more than fine-tuning. We need fundamental improvements in the way it is structured and operates.

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

We find ourselves struggling to cope with new demands, new expectations and new challenges, equipped with tools designed for another age and other purposes. In these circumstances, we must not allow ourselves to become discouraged or disaffected. Instead, we must be more determined than ever to give ourselves late-20th-century tools for late-20th-century problems.

The UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace is an excellent road map. Isn't it time that we stopped just reading the map and took some bold steps down the road toward a more effective UN? Steps, for example, in areas such as peacekeeping, peacemaking, enforcement, preventive diplomacy or peacebuilding?

Take, for example, the case of mandates that are given to UN peacekeeping missions. At times, these mandates have been unclear and imprecise. At times, the scope of the mandate has not been matched by the resources provided to the mission.

When UN missions are established, they must have clear and precise mandates, they must be given the authority they need to deal promptly and effectively with situations as they develop in the field, and they must be given the resources they need to get the job done.

We also need to change the culture of peacekeeping -- the fundamental concepts and attitudes underlying our approach. Too many people still think of peacekeeping as an exclusively military operation, with soldiers in blue berets keeping former combatants apart.

So much more is involved today. So much more is needed today.

For example, civilians are playing an increasingly important role in missions to restore peace. Cambodia is a case in point. Soldiers aren't the only ones on the front lines. There are also legal experts, medical personnel, and specialists in the area of

election organization and monitoring. In other situations, there may be a need for professional police, experts on infrastructure and municipal administration, or human rights observers.

That is where the notion of peacebuilding comes in. The fact is that what is often required today is not just to restore peace, but to restore communities, to rebuild roads and schools, water and sewage systems, hospitals and basic public services.

Obviously, military operations will continue to be crucial to UN intervention in matters of peace and security. But, here again, there is plenty of room for improvement, especially in the areas of planning, training, command and logistical support. When you consider the fact that there has been a sixfold increase in the number of people serving in UN forces in the last three years, it is obvious that UN Headquarters must be better equipped to plan and manage its operations around the world.

The time for reform is now:

- Let's give the United Nations a permanent general staff to plan and conduct its peacekeeping operations.
- Let's establish a UN military college to train a corps of officers who can work effectively together.
- Let's ensure that the UN has the ability to stockpile equipment and to airlift material and personnel quickly to a theatre of operations.
- Let's develop a code of conduct and common operating procedures for all personnel under the UN flag. The UN suffers from the same problems of interoperability that have plagued NATO over the years. And finally,
- Let's pledge our countries to commit troops on a stand-by basis for use by the Secretary-General on short notice as crises develop.

Other reforms are necessary as well to improve the UN's capacity to act effectively in matters of peace and security, as well as in matters of humanitarian assistance and relief.

First, there is the matter of finances. It is simply unacceptable that the UN Secretary-General must go around the world, cap in hand, urging member countries, large and small, to pay their dues.

The United Nations cannot operate properly if it is constantly facing a financial crisis. Every country that believes in the value of the UN should pay its dues in full and on time. For its part, the UN itself has an obligation to the taxpayers of the

world to ensure that it spends every single dollar wisely and properly.

We must also take a good hard look at the structure of the United Nations from two points of view: to make sure that we are making the best use of available resources; and to transform the organizational structure of the UN, including the Security Council, into something that is more relevant to today's world, not to the world as it existed 40 years ago.

Finally, we need to develop more effective working relations between the United Nations and regional institutions. The UN and the OAS [Organization of American States] are showing the way by working together to restore democracy and freedom in Haiti.

I know that this is a tall order, that we can't transform the UN in a day, a month or a year.

But when you see the savage brutality of warlords, be they in Somalia or the former Yugoslavia or elsewhere, when you see the looks of terror and despair in the eyes of hundreds of thousands of refugees, when you see the enormous suffering of so many innocent civilians, can there be any more compelling task than to give ourselves the best possible instrument for promoting peace, democracy and freedom?

Reforming our international institutions so that they can function in a world that is more complex and less predictable than ever before is both our challenge and our reward now that the Cold War has been won. Clarity of vision and unshakable determination are every bit as necessary today as they were throughout the four decades of struggle through which we have just passed with such great success.

We owe our children a safer, freer and more peaceful world.