



communiqué

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MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, today sent to His Excellency Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, UN Secretary-General a message of congratulations on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The text of that letter is attached.

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OTTAWA, ONTARIO
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October 24, 1985.

Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and people of Canada it is my pleasure to convey to you and to all those associated with the UN family of organizations our warmest wishes on this very special occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

We view this most important anniversary as much more than just a routine commemoration. It owes much of its significance to your own initiative in alerting the member states of the United Nations to the need to recommit themselves to the principles of the United Nations Charter and to the strengthening of the Organization, all the more essential in light of continuing challenges to the international community. It is an occasion for reflection on past achievements and, much more vitally, on the nature of international relationships in the future of which the UN will be the core. I am convinced that your anniversary initiative has already borne fruit, by turning the attention of all member governments to the need for a revitalized UN. The commemorative session of the General Assembly now taking place is eloquent witness to this fact. But this is only a beginning: the process should involve changes in the way we work in the UN and, even more important, sustained recognition by member governments of the UN's significance to each and every member state and the need therefore to keep it in good working order.

* Like you, Canada views this anniversary as an opportunity for strengthening the UN. We have been seeking

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His Excellency Javier Pérez de Cuéllar
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practical ways to do this, among which we count the refocussing of the UN's political mandate in its political organs, improving the UN's management, and rationalizing the work of the Security Council and the General Assembly. To succeed will require the united effort of all member states to strengthen the UN and its system. Self-discipline in the pursuit of specific causes must be applied in using the UN in their promotion. We must not, as has occurred on past occasions, abuse the UN by disregarding its mandate and the agreed rules for carrying out its responsibilities.

We also heeded your well-founded advice to use the fortieth anniversary as a means to make the United Nations better known among the public. In Canada in 1985 your own highly successful visit in March constituted an auspicious beginning of that process. As a follow up there was a series of events, such as seminars and public speeches on the United Nations and the pressing problems on its agenda. We have commissioned an anniversary publication, Canada and the United Nations: 1945-1985, from a well-known journalist which is now in preparation. Because 1985 is also International Youth Year, we have encouraged young people to participate in events such as the country-wide UN Model General Assembly, sponsored by the UN Association in Canada and held at ICAO Headquarters in Montreal. We are sending new and specially prepared comprehensive information kits about the UN to schools throughout the country.

Of particular significance for Canadians is the award of the Pearson Peace Medal this year to the Very Reverend Lois M. Wilson, O.C., President of the World Council of Churches. Lois M. Wilson has long been active in matters of direct concern to human welfare, in Canada, abroad, and in the UN context. She has been President of the Canadian Council of Churches and Moderator of the United Church of Canada from 1980 to 1982 (the first woman to hold this post). She was a delegate to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements held at Vancouver in 1976 and attended both UN Special Sessions on Disarmament in 1978 and 1982.

Canada looks forward to continued close collaboration with you and your office in support of efforts to seek solutions to the many global problems which we face.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Joe Clark