

# Statement

Minister for  
External Relations  
and International  
Development



# Déclaration

Ministre des  
Relations extérieures  
et du développement  
international

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## NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY

**THE HONOURABLE MONIQUE VÉZINA,**

**MINISTER FOR**

**EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,**

**AT THE LAUNCH OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR**

**THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**HOSTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION IN CANADA**

**IN CO-OPERATION WITH**

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE CANADA**

**OTTAWA, Ontario**  
**May 25, 1993**

It is a great honour for me to welcome you to the launch of the Canadian initiative to mark the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. This anniversary should be the occasion for the world community to embark upon a worldwide dialogue on how the UN can fulfil the promises of the Charter in the 21st Century.

We welcome today Ambassador Richard Butler, Australia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Chairman of the UN Preparatory Committee for the 50th anniversary. Ambassador Butler's knowledge of, and commitment to, the UN made him an obvious choice for the task.

I would also like to welcome the members of the Canadian National Committee for the UN's 50th anniversary. It's a true measure of the importance that we in Canada attach to this organization that such a distinguished group of Canadians, chaired by Douglas Roche, has agreed to serve on the Committee.

This Committee has been created in response to a call from United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In launching the committee today, we are setting in motion the process leading to October 24, 1995 -- the anniversary of the day the Charter was ratified 50 years before.

As Prime Minister Mulroney has noted, Canada's commitment to the principles of the Charter and to international co-operation is no fashionable pose. Since 1945, it has been a motivating force of our foreign policy. It is thus with great enthusiasm that Canadians look forward to this anniversary.

Among the celebrations that are envisaged is an international symposium, which will be held in Quebec City in October 1995, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In Montreal, a special committee has been established to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO). December 7, 1994 has been designated International Civil Aviation Day, and Canada Post will create a special stamp for the occasion.

These are only a beginning, and we expect that Canadians will be celebrating the 1995 anniversary in many different ways. Canada has much to celebrate as a member of the United Nations. Since 1945, we have woven many threads into the UN tapestry. Canada was instrumental in the drafting of both the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We have served many very productive terms on the Security Council, and many thousands of Canadians have been or are employed in the UN and its specialized agencies.

One of Canada's most challenging and visible UN roles is that of international peacekeeper. We have been actively involved in almost every peacekeeping operation since Canadian Nobel Laureate

and former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson did so much to develop the concept.

Canada is currently participating actively in the UN-supervised elections in Cambodia, and our thoughts go out today to the many Canadians and others who are working to bring peace and democracy to Cambodia.

We remain a major contributor to UN peacekeeping operations -- both through troops and civilians that we deploy and through our share of peacekeeping costs. It is a moral and financial obligation that Canada takes very seriously. This is why Canada always ensures that its regular UN budget assessments are paid in full and on time.

The international community has changed significantly in the past 50 years and the UN has evolved with it. While it is important to reflect on these changes, it is even more essential for us to look ahead to the 21st Century. We must examine what needs to be done to ensure that the UN remains a powerful and effective organization capable of carrying out the purposes and principles of its Charter.

This is not just a task for government. There is also a very important role for non-governmental organizations. In this regard, I would like to commend our host, the United Nations Association in Canada [UNA/C], for the invaluable work it does to educate Canadians about the UN and for playing such a major role in the creation of this national anniversary committee. UNA/C's dedication to the cause of the UN is well known.

The Charter speaks of "we the peoples of the United Nations," and the UN has recommended this theme for the year 1995. It is, therefore, "we the people of Canada" who must ensure that the 50th anniversary of the UN is a truly popular and democratic affair, which is marked not just in ceremony, but by actively reaffirming Canada's commitment to the principles of the UN Charter.

Thank you.