

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires
extérieures

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE BARBARA McDOUGALL,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
AT THE
PEARSON MEDAL CEREMONY**

**OTTAWA, Ontario
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Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada
External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

Mr. Pearson, Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to be here today to participate in this ceremony which honours both the person, Lester B. Pearson, and an idea, peace. Both the person and the idea are very much part of our everyday lives here in this building that bears his name.

I am particularly grateful to Geoffrey Pearson and the Pearson family for entrusting the Nobel medal to this Department and to this building, so that it can continue to inspire all of us to follow the principles and the practices of a man whose ideas are still very much at the forefront of international diplomacy.

After a distinguished career in the Department of External Affairs, "Mike" Pearson entered politics in 1948, eventually becoming Prime Minister of Canada in 1963.

But the politics of peace were always Lester B. Pearson's greatest passion, and his commitment to this noble calling has been emulated by subsequent Prime Ministers and Ministers of External Affairs.

In 1956, Lester Pearson created the idea for the United Nations' first successful peacekeeping operation and worked closely with Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold to make the plan functional.

The objective of the exercise was simple: to ensure that nothing would endanger the ceasefire reached in Suez in the fall of 1956, so that eventually a political settlement could be reached.

In addressing Parliament on November 27, 1956, Lester Pearson said: "May this force succeed in its task. If it does, we may have started something of immense value for the future. We may have taken a step to put force behind the collective will of the international community under the law."

His words have echoed true until this very day.

We, the international community, did in fact start something of immense value for the future. The idea did take hold and the world has seen some 40 UN peacekeeping operations since then.

Canada has played a part in virtually all of them. From the jungles of Indo-China, to the mountains of the Himalayas, to the deserts of the Middle East, to the towns and cities of Europe -- Canada has played a part, far beyond our size and our apparent influence on the international scene in other matters.

When it comes to peace, Canada is seen as the master. "Canada" and "peace" are synonymous in international circles.

Not all peacekeeping missions have been successful but taken in their aggregate, they have significantly lowered the level of

conflict and made the lives of tens of millions of people less terrible than they otherwise might have been.

The UN peacekeeping mission in Cyprus began 28 years ago, shortly after Lester Pearson become Prime Minister of Canada. Our forces are still in Cyprus, and I made it clear that Canada would not continue to be part of this mission unless there was discernible progress towards peace. Several weeks ago, after visiting Cyprus, I reported that there is some progress, and that Canada will not completely withdraw its forces this year.

Peacekeeping missions are intended to create a "pause" so that conflicting sides can contemplate and initiate means for creating a lasting peace -- without peacekeepers.

In Cyprus -- although 28 years is not a model for peacekeeping -- we have been able to provide that "pause."

In Bosnia-Hercegovina, the commander of the UN mission assigned to examine the possibilities for opening Sarajevo Airport, Canadian Brigadier-General Lewis Mackenzie, has asked for "48 hours" of ceasefire before proceeding to the larger exercise of actually securing the Airport.

To date, there has been an unwillingness by the warring factions to provide even that short respite in the hostilities.

Even worse, UN peacekeepers have been the targets of attack, continuing a pattern which has seen women and children taken hostage, attacks on UN and Red Cross envoys, and other acts which violate even the most basic rules of war.

Canada and its friends do not allow peacekeeping and peacekeepers to be taken for granted -- as just another strategic element to be dealt with in the quest of individuals and nations for territory and power. In the UN and other organizations our diplomats -- who are also peacekeepers, after all, just as Mike Pearson himself was -- toil in support of UN peacekeeping missions and are tenacious in overcoming obstacles to their success.

Today these efforts and the challenges we face suggest we need new methods to deal with establishing peace -- including, if necessary, peacemaking actions.

As Lester Pearson said in Oslo in 1957, on accepting the Nobel Peace Prize: "The choice ... is as clear now for nations as it was once for the individual: peace or extinction. The life of states cannot, any more than the life of individuals, be conditioned by the force and the will of a unit, however powerful, but by the consensus of a group, which must one day include all states. Today the predatory state, or the predatory

group of states, with power of total destruction, is no more to be tolerated than the predatory individual."

It is for precisely this reason that Canada, other countries, regional organizations and the United Nations are seeking more advanced forms of peacekeeping.

The further development of the peacekeeping function and other elements of dispute settlement and conflict prevention within the expanding limits of collective security are front and centre on the UN agenda and in other regional organizations. UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, responding to a request made at this January's Security Council Summit, has issued his eagerly-awaited report on new approaches to peacekeeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy. Canada, along with Australia, New Zealand and the Nordic countries, made a series of recommendations which were used extensively by Dr. Boutros-Ghali in preparing his study.

Canada has emphasized the need for a UN capability to mount peacekeeping operations on a timely basis and we maintain troops on standby for peacekeeping purposes. We encourage other countries to maintain similar forces and we see an opportunity for much more effective UN co-ordination of such capabilities.

We also need other countries to pay their fair share for UN peacekeeping operations. Canada has always paid its bills -- on time and without question.

As an example of the cost, the mission in Cambodia has cost over \$100 million a month. However, the Gulf War cost \$1 billion a day while it lasted!

As Prime Minister Mulroney indicated in Montreal on May 24 and on innumerable other occasions, the UN is vital to Canada and Canada is vital to the UN. We will continue to pay our dues on time and we will continue to make our contributions of blue helmets.

To an increasing extent, Canadian civilian peacekeepers will play a role: working as advisors and observers on matters such as human rights, elections and policing. We will also share expertise in building credible government structures and in resettling refugees from shattered societies.

As many of you came here today along Sussex Drive, you may have noticed the last stages of construction on the monument to Canadian peacekeepers which will be inaugurated in October. You may also have noticed the peacekeeping displays around the Canadian War Museum -- maybe some day there will be a Canadian "Peace" Museum.

What a true measure of Canada and Canadians it is, that virtually in the shadow of the Peace Tower, we now have three outstanding mementoes to our role in the continuing efforts to establish peace throughout the world.

It would be ideal if the concept of peace was as clearly engrained in the minds of our children and grandchildren, as the scars of war are engrained on the millions who have suffered from its horrors in this Twentieth Century.

I think of the millions of refugees throughout the world who are unable to return to their countries of origin.

I think of the children who are trained to shoot a gun, but cannot read a book or do basic calculations.

I think of Nobel Peace Prize Winner Aung San Suu Kyi -- the courageous leader of Myanmar's National League for Democracy -- who is under house arrest, unable to lead her people because of a repressive military regime.

Lester Pearson contemplated a world of peace throughout his lifetime and in 1968 explained that: "It is not good enough to think of peace as merely the absence of war. Peace is progress, peace is growth and development. Peace is welfare and dignity for all people."

There are important thoughts for all of us as we enter a new era of international relations. May those ideas inspire all of us to seek out the means for ensuring lasting peace throughout the world.