

**Remarks given by
H.E. Mr. Paul Heinbecker
before the United Nations General Assembly
following the presentation of the Report of the Security Council
New York, 17 October 2000**

M. le Président,

Lorsque nous nous sommes présentés à l'élection du Conseil de sécurité, nous vous avons promis de lutter pour:

- (i) la promotion de la sécurité humaine,
- (ii) l'utilisation de méthodes plus transparentes au Conseil, et
- (iii) faire du Conseil une entité plus efficace et crédible.

Dans les mois qui ont suivi, nous avons travaillé à l'accomplissement de ces engagements.

Il est maintenant temps de faire le point.

Le Canada a oeuvré sans désespérer pour aider à l'adaptation du mandat et des méthodes de travail du Conseil aux impératifs de sécurité et aux réalités politiques de notre temps.

Nous avons cherché à élargir la définition traditionnelle de la sécurité pour l'étendre à la sécurité des populations.

Du fait que les victimes des conflits modernes sont dans leur écrasante majorité des civils, cette démarche constitue non seulement une nécessité pratique, mais également un impératif moral.

Mr. President,

We have made some progress towards such a broader definition.

Canada has consistently argued that the Security Council must give greater weight to human rights and humanitarian principles in deciding when to act.

To this end, we promoted the protection of civilians in armed conflict as the major theme of its Council membership.

The protection of civilians now figures more and more prominently both in the Council's discourse and in the actions it mandates.

The Council must ensure, however, that its engagement on these issues is not just rhetorical but substantive and action-oriented.

Kosovo was a hard lesson on the changed nature of security and the response it demands.

That demand was faced again with the civilian suffering in East Timor.

Each must lead us toward a more consistent approach to addressing new forms of conflict, particularly those marked by gross violations of human rights or humanitarian suffering.

In the global age, mass victimization and abuse of human rights are not tolerable.

State sovereignty cannot be a shield behind which such acts are perpetrated with impunity.

There must be accountability.

In addition to addressing fundamental questions of the Council's mandate, we have supported efforts to reform the Council's basic instruments for promoting peace, namely peacekeeping and sanctions.

We remain concerned that mandates are not always equal to the realities on the ground, and that the resources provided to achieve those mandates are not always adequate.

Too often, peacekeeping operations are unduly influenced by outside political or financial considerations rather than operational necessities.

There are serious capacity problems within the United Nations that must also be addressed.

We therefore welcome the Brahimi report on United Nations Peace Operations which tackles these issues directly, with practical recommendations for action.

We are pleased that the Security Council is now actively following-up on the report and we will do our part, both on and off the Council, to see that the Brahimi reforms are implemented.

We are encouraged by recent steps to improve the instrument of sanctions.

In Angola, the Council has launched an unprecedented effort to make the sanctions against UNITA work.

I am happy to take this opportunity to applaud the work of my predecessor, Bob Fowler, a friend of many of you and, more important, a true friend of the United Nations.

He succeeded in showing that the UN means business when it imposes sanctions.

I have no doubt his work has had beneficial effects on the people of Angola.

The new monitoring mechanism to promote compliance with the Angola sanctions provides a model that should be applied to other sanctions regimes to make them more credible and effective.

In Angola, we have seen how efforts to identify sanctions-busters can lead to tighter implementation of sanctions.

We hope the Council will continue to build on this precedent.

The experience of the expert panel process that Bob Fowler inspired for Angola is now being tried in Sierra Leone and DRC.

The establishment of the Council's first-ever informal working group to study the overall effectiveness of sanctions is also a positive development.

Canada has been pleased to play a leading role in these efforts to sharpen what has historically been one of the Council's more blunt instruments.

Canada also welcomes recent debates in the Council that have contributed to creating a culture of prevention.

The risks and the costs, both human and financial, of reacting to conflict once it has broken out must lead us to focus more sharply on prevention.

The key to successful conflict prevention is a comprehensive approach to security, one which addresses the multiple factors that contribute to conflict, from small arms to human rights abuse to the economic agendas and illicit trades that fuel today's wars.

The growing unity behind this principle must now be translated into preventive strategies and action.

The Security Council can start by using the tools at its disposal for preventing conflict rather than only reacting to it, for example by authorizing more preventive peace deployments or imposing sanctions aimed at heading off armed conflict.

When our best efforts at conflict prevention fail, the international community will be confronted with the question of whether and how to step in to end and resolve conflict.

This dilemma becomes more acute in the case of intra-state conflicts, particularly those involving human rights abuse or humanitarian emergencies.

To help advance the debate on these questions, Canada has spearheaded the launch of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), the results of which will be made available to the General Assembly a year from now.

Speaking here last month as Canadian Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy expressed the hope that the Commission can diffuse the concerns that surround the issues of intervention and sovereignty and help the international community grapple with the key security challenge of our day.

As the Brundtland commission did for economic development and environmental protection, we hope the ICISS will take two apparently incompatible policy objectives, sovereignty and intervention, and produce an acceptable synthesis.

We expect that the Commission's findings will be of benefit to the Security Council, and in fact, the UN membership as a whole, in the fulfilment of the Organization's global security mandate.

The global trend towards greater openness and democracy must be reflected in the Security Council.

The legitimacy of its decisions hinges more and more on the way those decisions are reached, and the voices that are heard in the process.

Canada firmly believes that any expansion of the Council should be in the non-permanent category only.

While the Council needs to mirror the UN membership better, it is equally important that Security Council members be democratically elected and accountable to the membership as a whole, not merely to their own capitals.

More vetoes would only give the Council political sclerosis.

As for methods of work, the credibility of the Council and the action it mandates can only benefit from greater interaction with and inclusion of those who must ultimately give effect to its decisions.

Since Canada joined the Council, we have seen positive steps towards more inclusive and flexible meeting formats and more thematic debates involving the wider United Nations membership.

There have been inroads made into the Council's traditionally secretive mode of operation.

These gains must be carefully guarded and continually built upon by other reform-minded Council members.

We strongly support meetings with troop contributing countries when mandates are being drafted or revised

We also believe the Council should get the best military briefing possible before making peace operation decisions.

The Council is also benefiting from its interaction with regional organizations and other groupings in the cause of peace.

Increased coordination and communication are required to ensure that regional efforts can get the backing they need from the Council.

There is a particularly promising opportunity to work with ECOWAS in West Africa and we should help strengthen that organization.

At the same time, when regional peace agreements are being negotiated, timely consultation is needed with New York to avoid raising unrealistic expectations of the UN or the assignment of peacekeeping tasks we cannot fulfill.

The sheer volume of the Security Council's report reflects the reality of a heavy global security agenda and an increasingly busy Council.

During our time on the Council we have seen it become more deeply engaged in today's security challenges.

For example, Canada supported the sending of Council delegations to trouble spots and has participated in some of them, most recently to Sierra Leone.

We welcome such activism and continue to encourage it.

M. le Président,

Nous pensons qu'on peut honnêtement dire qu'il existe à présent une plus grande convergence de vues au Conseil autour des objectifs communs.

Le Conseil est de plus en plus uni sur les situations qui exigent son intervention et sur la manière dont son action peut être le plus constructive.

Là où persistent les divisions, le bien commun doit prendre le pas sur les intérêts nationaux exclusifs pour accomplir des progrès sur des questions cruciales de sécurité, comme c'est le cas en Iraq.

En Sierra Leone, il se dégage de plus en plus une unité de dessein qui peut être exploitée pour entreprendre résolument de porter remède au conflit et trouver une solution à ses

dimensions régionales.

Il était tout à fait juste que la première Assemblée générale du millénaire soit lancée par un sommet des dirigeants du monde.

Cette rencontre a débouché sur un renouvellement de l'attachement aux principes et objectifs de l'Organisation des Nations Unies et une détermination à l'adapter aux enjeux du nouveau siècle.

Le même engagement a été exprimé par les dirigeants au cours du sommet du Conseil de sécurité.

S'il est vrai que nombre des questions cruciales en matière de paix et de sécurité qui se posaient à l'époque de la guerre froide se sont estompées, il n'en reste pas moins que l'apparition de nouvelles formes de conflit et de misère humaine menacent tout autant non seulement la paix mondiale mais aussi notre humanité.

Lorsque nous nous sommes présentés aux élections il y a deux ans, nous vous avons demandé de nous accorder votre confiance.

Nous espérons que vous serez d'accord que nous avons fait de notre mieux pour la mériter.

Je vous remercie, M. le Président.