

New York, April 29, 2002.

Mr. Under-Secretary-General,

I can only say how deeply honoured but also sincerely humbled I am to accept this Dag Hammarskjöld Medal.

Firsthand foremost, I accept on behalf of the families of those Canadians who have died while on United Nations peacekeeping operations.

I also accept on behalf of all Canadians.

In the months that follow, presentations will be taking place across Canada, and we will ensure that these are arranged with due ceremony and dignity.

We also hope that the United Nations will soon display a representational medal, along with a book of commemoration listing all those who have been awarded this medal, so that those who visit the United Nations may fully understand the supreme sacrifice paid by peacekeepers.

One hundred and eight Canadians have died while serving with the United Nations on peacekeeping.

Despite this large number, Canadians continue to support the United Nations and its core function of peacekeeping.

Canadians believe in the United Nations.

We understand the critical importance of peacekeeping.

We understand that peacekeepers have prevented wars, saved lives and preserved hope.

While Canadian acknowledge the significant risks inherent in United Nations peacekeeping, this does little to alleviate the grief that the families of Canadian peacekeepers also have lost loved ones.

We hope that the presentation of the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal to these families will help them.

On behalf of all Canadians and especially the families of those 108 peacekeepers who have died in the name of peace, I accept this medal.