

A Dialogue on Foreign Policy

U.S. and other countries to ensure that the United Nations and other institutions are effective, particularly in times of crisis.

We will continue to work with the U.S. and other allies to protect the values that we hold in common, such as freedom, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. We will also continue our effective cooperation under the Smart Border Declaration to ensure the flow of commerce that is so important to the North American economy. While opinion varies among Canadians about how best to protect our values and how to make a more secure world, Canada's friendship with the U.S. remains firm and close.

Recent global changes

Canada's role in the world is also being affected by recent changes across the globe. Rapid advances in information and communications technology have changed the face of international affairs, as has the boom in global trade. The growing prominence of environmental issues in international policy, the expanding partnership between Russia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the broadening and deepening of the European Union, the formation of the African Union, and the emergence of new "middle powers"—all pose questions about Canada's relative influence in the world. Closer to home, the strengthening attachment to democracy in Latin America and the progress achieved toward a Free Trade Area of the Americas create the potential for Canada to become more closely linked with the hemisphere. In addition, renewed global commitments to development assistance hold out prospects for us to work multilaterally in realizing the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Worrying developments also confront the international community: the crisis over weapons of mass destruction in Iraq; the growing number of states with nuclear weapons, and North Korea's announcement of a nuclear weapons development program; the intensification of conflict over Kashmir; the escalation of conflict in the Middle East; the hundreds of thousands of deaths in civil wars; the over 30 million refugees or displaced persons; and the economies and societies facing collapse as a result of HIV/AIDS, especially in Africa.

The Government of Canada has responded to these new realities with a range of undertakings to promote global security, advance global trade and act effectively in the Group of Eight (G8) leading industrial democracies. Most recently, Canada led a ground-breaking G8 initiative to support Africa's integration into the global economy. Progressive African leaders have drawn up the New Partnership for Africa's Development; the G8 Africa Action Plan aims to support this initiative by focusing