

- Through the Department of National Defence and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada contributed to UN missions in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala between 1989 and 1994, deploying over 200 Canadian Forces personnel to the region. Today, a member from the Canadian Forces and four police officers are working with the UN Human Rights Verification Mission to Guatemala. Under mandates of the UN General Assembly, the mission monitors the human rights situation, verifies that conditions of the peace accords are carried out, and supports the strengthening of institutions.
- Through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada provided about \$9.5 million for immediate relief in Central America in the aftermath Hurricane Mitch. In addition, Canada pledged \$100 million over four years for long-term reconstruction in the region.
- The devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch in Central America clearly demonstrated the need for improved disaster preparedness measures. Canada will continue to work with key international groups and NGOs to build local capacity for emergency preparedness.
- Following Hurricane Mitch, Canada also contributed \$3.7 million to deal with landmines unearthed by mudslides and flooding in Central America.

## **Trade and investment**

- Canada supports the efforts of Central Americans to consolidate peace, promote economic and social development, and prepare their countries for greater economic integration, both regionally and globally.
- Canada's Prime Minister and the President of Costa Rica announced in January 2000 that both countries would begin discussions regarding a possible free trade agreement. Negotiations are currently under way.
- In 1998, at a meeting of trade ministers in San José, Costa Rica, Canada signed a memorandum of understanding with Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to enhance trade and investment relations.
- Canada has long been a champion of the smaller economy countries and understands their concerns about participating in the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiating process. As chair of the Trade Negotiations Committee, Canada works closely with the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies and provides technical assistance to improve the negotiating capacity of these countries in the hemisphere.