

REPORT OF THE 1997 ROUNDTABLE  
ON BURMA

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"Consider Burma as a  
because of repression.  
But when the sun comes out and the ice melts,  
you find out there was a lot of life underneath all  
along." (Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, 1997)

The Roundtable was held at Simon Fraser University on 23 April 1997. Steven Lee, Director of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development welcomed the Roundtable participants to the event. He identified Burma as a critical issue in Canada's foreign policy as well as of great personal interest to Minister Lloyd Axworthy, his advisor on Asia-Pacific issues, Denis Stevens, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Minister, and directed their attention to two themes, among others: finding the means through multilateral contact to break the political log-jam around Burma, and countering the expansion of Burma's drug trade (which has a considerable impact in Canada).

**Report of the 1997 Roundtable on Burma**

The Roundtable's local host, Robert Anderson of Simon Fraser University opened his observations with the question [above] from Norman Webster's interview with Suu Kyi: "Consider Burma as a frozen lake". This vibrant metaphor surfaced a number of times through the Roundtable discussion. Anderson gave a personal account of one Canadian's 36-year intermittent relationship with Burma, all of it under a military government. He described his complex frustration that some of the efforts of the Burmese people have resulted in the achievement of a free, open, democratic society.

Buried deep in the Director General's South and Southeast Asia of DFAIT, explained the measures which Canada had gradually put in place around Burma since 1988 (see

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