

OPENING FOREIGN POLICY TO CANADIANS

- The world used to be a more stable, predictable place. What used to take a decade or even a generation to change now can change in a year. To continue defending our interests and values in such a volatile environment, we must constantly monitor what is happening in the world and the implications for Canadians.
- This requires systematic and regular analysis, as well as a two-way exchange of information and views between the Government and Canadians who have an interest and involvement in various aspects of our international relations. The Government believes that more open and democratic foreign policy-making is not only desirable in itself, but also makes good practical sense because it can draw useful information from the vast pool of Canadians who are involved every day in Canada's international relations.
- To that end, the Government is launching a process of ongoing consultations and discussions with Canadians. As a start, it will hold a National Forum on Canada's International Relations, designed to bring ministers and interested Canadians involved in international activity together for discussions on major international trends and developments, and how they can affect Canada's interests. Other forms of consultation will be led on a regular basis by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister for International Trade and the secretaries of state for Asia-Pacific and Africa and Latin America.