

# GLOBAL ISSUES: PROMOTING A NEW MULTILATERALISM

Canada will vigorously promote the UN Secretary-General's new proposal to elevate the status of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and to create a stronger, more effective Human Rights Council in place of the existing Human Rights Commission. This will help ensure that the UN is forthright in condemning abuses and encouraging progress on the ground, and that it has the capacity to do so based on monitoring and informed reports where abuses are occurring.

## Specific Initiatives

- build support for the proposed Human Rights Council;
- continue our strong support for the new International Criminal Court, and for the war crimes tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia; we will provide \$500,000 for the Court's newly established mandate to investigate and prosecute crimes against humanity in Darfur, Sudan;
- provide \$5 million to the High Commissioner's office to strengthen its monitoring capacity on the ground;
- support the establishment of a Global Centre for Pluralism in cooperation with the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada. The Centre would be located in Canada and would promote pluralism globally; and
- work within the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the OAS to encourage these organizations to take a more active role in protecting human rights within member countries, including strengthening the capacity of these organizations to take action on human rights abuses.

A key challenge in promoting good governance is to respond to those who argue that democracy and human rights are "Western," not universal norms. The spread of democracy and respect for human rights across the world has shown that these have universal appeal, irrespective of culture. Canada can play a role in demonstrating how institutions can be shaped to ensure

that universal standards are respected, while upholding cultural, ethnic and religious expression. We can do this in part by showcasing Canada's diversity internationally, including through arts and culture.

## Specific Initiative

- with the support of the Forum of Federations, and the involvement of Canadian cities, which have wide experience to share on managing diversity, Foreign Affairs will foster a dialogue on best practices in local governance and will promote cultural diversity through development of a new convention through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

## PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Good governance is key to sustainable development as well. Poorly managed economic growth can, among other things, lead to worsening environmental problems. Indeed, economic competitiveness is increasingly a function of effective environmental practices. Increased multilateral collaboration is essential to ensuring these practices are adopted and implemented. Working with Environment Canada and other Canadian actors, Foreign Affairs will pursue a new multilateralism that focuses on climate change, oceans, sustainable cities and better multilateral environmental coordination.

Global issues such as these require global networks, bringing together experts, governments and civil society to provide answers and to build consensus on the ways forward.

Foreign Affairs will work jointly with Environment Canada and other concerned departments to:

- improve international environmental governance by ensuring full implementation of new and existing agreements and by strengthening the mandates of existing organizations, including the UN Environment Programme (UNEP); and
- develop a comprehensive, effective and coherent system of multilateral environmental agreements and bilateral cooperation agreements with