

Convention ineffectual. In contrast, proponents claim that the lack of arbitrary targets and rigid timetables are the Convention's saving grace. Quite simply, a document not open to flexibility would not have been signed by a large number of nations. On this point Elizabeth Dowdeswell told the Committee:

It won't do Canada or any other country much good if the Convention ultimately is a convention of 8 or 10 parties. We want to find a mechanism that helps to bring people to the table, rather than threatens to send them away. That is the essence of the positive nature of the Convention.⁵⁸

In further praise of the document, Elizabeth Dowdeswell said:

... it remains a very flexible instrument, one that is going to allow us to respond as the science becomes stronger, becomes better defined, and as countries are prepared to take the appropriate actions.⁵⁹

114. The Committee was encouraged to hear that Canada has initiated a "quick start agenda" to maintain international momentum on the climate change issue. According to Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Canada has pledged to:

- ratify the Convention by the end of 1992 (ratified 4 December 1992);
- promote a work plan to meet the scientific needs of the Convention (work plan accepted in November 1992);
- sponsor a meeting of officials of the Global Environment Facility and Convention negotiators to discuss interim funding for country studies (the meeting took place in late October 1992);
- host an international meeting on the application of a comprehensive approach to limiting greenhouse gas emissions;
- through contributions to a World Meteorological Organization Trust Fund, enhance climate observing systems in developing countries and assist at least two developing countries to build their capacity to meet the reporting requirements of the Convention;
- press for continued negotiations to resolve outstanding issues in time for the first meeting of the parties to the Convention. The negotiations will resume in Geneva from 7-10 December and continue through 1993; and
- prepare a National Report on Canada's actions to meet its commitments under the Climate Change Convention by June 1993.⁶⁰

REALISTIC MITIGATION OPTIONS

A. Domestic Action

Canadian action to slow climate change precedes the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*. Environment Canada has nearly completed a greenhouse gas inventory. The best available data indicates that in 1990 Canada emitted 461 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, 3.7

⁵⁸ Ibid., Issue No. 48, 30 November 1992, p. 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ E. Dowdeswell, Brief presented to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment, Appended to the *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Environment*, Issue No. 48A, 30 November 1992, Appendix Envo-18, p. 2-3.