



Winnipeg

POLICY OPTIONS



General Summary

Education

Participants felt that more effort should be given to making the public aware of peacebuilding's contribution to national security, global stability and the affirmation of Canadian values. It was also thought that peacebuilding operations would benefit from better public understanding of Canada's peacebuilding capacities.

Consultation

Participants were unanimous in their call for increased public consultation. It was thought that the best way to develop Canada's capacity for peacebuilding was to create a permanent peacebuilding consultation mechanism. This mechanism would give government better access to the expertise of NGO, business, academic and other "civil" communities.

Policy Priorities

Participants strongly recommended that Canadian peacebuilding efforts should promote respect for human rights (drawing on Canada's multicultural experience and ethnic diversity) and human security (with emphasis on the role of women in peacebuilding and political democratization).

Participants also felt that conflict prevention, as opposed to intervention in on-going conflicts, should be a priority for peacebuilding policy and operations.

Preventive Diplomacy and Peacebuilding

Recommendations

Participants felt that there should be a greater role for civil society in Canadian peacebuilding efforts. Monitoring human rights violations to help predict and prevent conflict, providing information to government, and strengthening institutions to provide an early warning system were seen as key aspects of an enhanced Canadian civilian peacebuilding capacity.

Preventive diplomacy should be based on Canadian values. These humanitarian values are grounded on the larger idea of global security and its link with human rights. Leadership on the environment and sustainable development, as a means to ameliorate the structural causes of conflict, should remain a foreign policy priority.

Policy Options

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade should establish a coordinating mechanism to bring together government, NGOs and others to advise on the development and implementation of peacebuilding policy. This body could provide the following functions:

- defining the long-term policy context, identifying areas of Canadian expertise;
- and advising on the when's and where's of capital investment;