



# Conflict Prevention

## Targeted Sanctions

Sanctions constitute an important tool that the international community can use to influence the behaviour of actors, both state and non-state, involved in the threat, instigation or perpetuation of violent conflict. UN Security Council recourse to sanctions has increased markedly in recent years. At the same time, there is a growing recognition that sanctions must be designed to take account of their effects on people. The critical challenge remains to design and enforce sanctions in ways that minimize human suffering, while maximizing their intended political and corrective impact.

Canada is taking both a global and a case-specific approach to improving sanctions regimes and, especially, their impact on human security. Actions have included highlighting the issue at the UN Security Council and providing support for a comprehensive assessment of UN sanctions in the 1990s. This assessment has produced a range of practical recommendations for making sanctions more humane and effective, such as improving capacities to target and administer sanctions and to evaluate their impact. During Canada's April 2000 presidency of the Security Council, we succeeded in establishing the first ever Council working group on sanctions policy to examine ways of promoting across-the-board sanctions reform. Working within and outside the UN Security Council, Canada will continue efforts to strengthen particular sanctions regimes, for example, by building on the work of the Angola Sanctions Committee and tightening the measures placed on UNITA (Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

## C o-operative Conflict Prevention

The international community often has ample warning when societies are threatened by deadly conflict. Rising communal tensions, chronic abuses of human rights, deteriorating conditions for vulnerable minorities, and the political exploitation of ethnic or religious divisions are among the ominous precursors. What is frequently missing, however, is timely and effective action for conflict prevention.

While calls for conflict prevention are not new, the human and financial costs of recent crises — East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone — make a compelling case for approaches that stop violent conflicts from arising or spiralling out of control. Canada will work with others at the UN and G-8, as well as in regional organizations, to tackle the root causes of conflict and to promote early and effective preventive action. As circumstances warrant, this will include support for the development of early warning systems, fact-finding missions, negotiation and mediation efforts, eminent persons groups and special envoys, and initiatives to support both formal and informal peace processes.