

in field effectiveness, particularly with respect to post-conflict peace operations where many actors and agencies are typically involved. Policing, justice reform, human rights and governance are mentioned as areas in which Canada has a demonstrated track record and could do more in international peacebuilding efforts.

Amid some disagreement about the use of Canadian military forces in post-conflict peacebuilding, some participants stress that more attention needs to be paid to strategies for the prevention of deadly conflicts. Early warning systems, conflict management and resolution processes, and development assistance addressing sources of conflict are mentioned as meriting more support. There are also appeals to further involve knowledgeable non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in peace and disarmament activities in order to design more effective, coherent and collaborative approaches.

Multilateral Cooperation and International Law

The very nature of our country, and the values we hold dear, demand that our government pursue a foreign policy that provides full support for the preservation and advancement of international law along with increasingly progressive and democratic multilateral institutions.

– Dialogue participant

Supremacy of international law and diplomatic negotiation within multilateral bodies is the key to security, not only for Canada, but for the entire planet.

– Dialogue participant

One of the most consistent themes among Dialogue participants is that despite the problems highlighted by the Iraq crisis, multilateral cooperation based on international law must remain a foundation of Canadian foreign policy. Because many global problems can be addressed only through the cooperative efforts of all nations, participants underscored the importance of an effective UN system to the broader dimensions of global human security.

On the other hand, many participants note the demonstrable weaknesses and failures of the UN Security Council in the arena of collective security, as well as evident flaws in UN bodies dealing with human rights and disarmament (though some note that the UN's member states are more at fault for these failures than the institution). Participants suggest that Canada's deep knowledge of the UN system and our respected multilateral diplomacy could help to repair rifts, re-engage the United States in the UN, and push for institutional changes.

NATO is another multilateral security organization that is attracting considerable critical attention. While some see it as increasingly less relevant, others are concerned about damaging tensions within an alliance important to Canada's multilateral interests. Again, our proximity to the United States, close relations with many like-minded European countries, and diplomatic skills are invoked as reasons for us to take a leading part in discussions about the future role and operations of the alliance. To do this effectively, some argue, Canada must bolster its military and other international capabilities in order to gain credibility among its NATO peers.

Many participants focus more on Canada's role in non-military aspects of collective security. There is strong support for our part in creating the International Criminal Court, and concerns about dealing with continued U.S. opposition to this as well as to other international treaties. Canada is seen to have much to offer in the development of effective international legal norms incorporating cross-cultural values and inclusive processes. Canada is also urged to do more to support the implementation and enforcement of existing international law obligations (particularly those bearing on human rights), both by living up to our own obligations and by taking action to pressure or assist other countries in undertaking human rights and democratic governance reforms. There is wide agreement among participants that multilateral progress in these areas is important to both Canadian and global security in the long term.