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Bolstering Hemispheric Security

The Quebec City Plan of Action called for a Special Conference on Security to be held by 2004, with a view to concluding a review of all issues related to approaches to Hemispheric security. Following the tragic events in the United States on September 11, 2001, this conference was advanced to late 2003. In addition, the events of September 11 revitalized the fledgling Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), an OAS institution. The Committee quickly took stock of the ability of states to guard against terrorism and identify areas needing to be strengthened.

The Plan of Action also called upon states to become party to international agreements related to the fight against terrorism. Canada participated actively in the creation of a new instrument, the Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism, and was the first to ratify it in December 2002. All of its provisions have already been implemented. Canada also contributed significantly to the second (2002) and third (2003) regular sessions of CICTE, which further strengthened hemispheric cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Canada helped fund CICTE development of an on-line reference and referral database system for both government entities and specialized experts on terrorism issues in the Americas.

Canada has been a leader in the fight against drugs in the Americas—both within the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and in developing the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, which provides a peer-review mechanism for monitoring the progress of individual and collective efforts of member countries. In December 2002, Canada was elected CICAD Vice-Chair, and will host the CICAD session in autumn 2003, when it takes the chair. In recent years, Canada's annual contributions to CICAD have supported initiatives related to the fight against drugs, including training for judges and prosecutors on money laundering, and support for the Andean Community Regional Anti-Drug School.

Canada is committed to cooperation in the fight against money laundering. Canada is a Cooperating and Supporting Nation of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), an organization that implements anti-money laundering measures on a coordinated basis. Canada provided financial support to the 2002-03 CFATF Typologies exercises, and it contributed training in handling the proceeds of crime under the Caribbean Anti-Money Laundering Program.

Canada was the driving force behind the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (the Ottawa Convention) and ensured that the Santiago (Chile) and Quebec City Summits supported this initiative. The Americas are poised to become the first mine-free hemisphere: 33 of the 34 Summit countries have signed the Ottawa Convention, and 32 have ratified it to date. Canada has taken on several initiatives to ensure that the Hemisphere succeeds in implementing the Convention, that the needs of mine-affected communities are met and that more resources are allocated to mine action.

In recent years, it has been recognized that security encompasses both matters of territorial integrity and national sovereignty, as well as emerging, non-traditional threats to the state and to the safety, security and well-being of people in the region. In an age of globalization and regional integration, there is a need to consider how to address threats that affect people, states, regions and the world as a whole in order to consolidate hemispheric security. Canada has been at the forefront of efforts to expand traditional security concepts and approaches in order to address new and non-traditional threats; these include political, economic, social, health and environmental challenges that can endanger individuals and societies, and can compromise the ability of legitimate democratic governments to govern effectively.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Canada was the driving force behind the Americas Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility—the first meeting of its kind, held in Miami from September 22 to 24, 2002. The conference had been mandated by Leaders in the Quebec City Summit Plan of Action. It was attended by more than 500 participants from 28 countries, representing all sectors of society, including government, the private sector, civil society and multilateral organizations.

A notable Conference achievement was a renewed commitment from multilateral organizations (including the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States and the World Bank) to support the efforts of governments, civil society and business leaders towards creating a favourable framework for socially responsible corporate activities. It was also recognized that governments can help businesses operate responsibly by providing good governance, regulatory certainty and support for voluntary corporate social responsibility initiatives.