

I. The first National Forum on Canada's International Relations met at a time of dramatic change in the global environment. Forum members met in intensive workshops for two days and in plenary session with the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defence, and the Minister for International Trade. Participants were asked

- *to identify the most important economic, technological, scientific, social, cultural, political, and military forces that are directly relevant to Canada and Canadian policy;*
- *to consider the principles and priorities of Canadian foreign and defence policies;*
- *to address the kinds of multilateral, regional, bilateral, and transnational partnerships that Canadians should build; and*
- *to examine how Canadians can best build policies that can meet the challenges of an increasingly global and multilayered international society and command public support and engagement.*

Forum participants identified several important challenges as they grappled with the principles and priorities of Canada's international relations. Drawing from the diversity of views expressed at the Forum, this report expresses the sense of the discussion among its participants.

II. While the general principles that underpin Canadian foreign policy enjoyed wide support, members of the Forum emphasized *the necessity to make choices* among priorities. Forum participants emphasized that dramatic changes in the global system, the close connection between foreign and domestic policy, fiscal constraints at home, and the need to democratize Canada's international relations -- all demand that Canadians and their government make the difficult, but careful and forward-looking choices that maximize Canada's capacity to be effective.

Forum members spoke of the new realities of sovereignty in the global environment, the importance of active engagement, and the need to make the most effective use of Canadian resources as guiding principles of Canadian foreign and defence policies.

1. *The New Sovereignty: Opportunities, Constraints, and Institutional Lags.* Forum participants identified a striking irony. Now that the Cold War is over, the Government of Canada, like other governments, has greater freedom to make independent choices, but is simultaneously more constrained by international institutions and transnational flows of capital, investment, finance, and trade. Governments with less autonomy must at the same time address a broadening international agenda that includes trade, finance, investment, migration, sustainable development, human rights, and defence.