

What It Will Take to Achieve the Goals

In order to ensure that the two Departments make continuous progress on SD, it will be important to demonstrate accountability to personnel, stakeholders, Parliament and to the public at large. A SD database has been developed to facilitate mandatory reporting by officers on the individual commitments in the strategy which allows for realignment when circumstances change.

Progress in meeting the commitments made in *Agenda 2006* will be made available to personnel and to the public in an abbreviated form in the Departmental Performance Reports that are tabled in Parliament on an annual basis. A more detailed annual report will be available on the SD website: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/sustain/sd-dd/progress-en.asp>.

The two Departments recognize the importance of developing and adopting performance measurement indicators to help Canadians assess the incremental progress being made on SD. This is, however, an ongoing challenge. The Department of Foreign Affairs operates as the Canadian lead when international obligations are being negotiated, except for international trade obligations for which the Department of International Trade has the lead. Besides coordinating and advancing the Canadian position, both must consider the impact of the obligations on the other countries at the table and also on our relationships with those countries not at the table. It is never possible to predict the players, circumstances or results which makes it difficult to develop or apply performance measurement to those types of functions. Performance indicators are more pertinent once the principal obligations are established and the operational focus shifts to domestic implementation, usually by other departments. None-the-less,

both Departments will persevere in their efforts to establish performance measurement indicators for those areas where they are realistically applicable to their work.

With the understanding that partnerships are fundamental to effective SD, it will be essential to nurture relationships with other departments, other levels of government and with our stakeholders - many of whom have been so supportive in the development of this strategy. It will also be important to reflect on better ways to make SD a basic premise to our working relationships with other countries and in international organizations.

We continue to hear from employees and stakeholders that SD is not always easy to understand and that therefore communication must be a priority. We must try to make SD as tangible as possible and to communicate our commitment, our successes and our challenges through as many different means as possible.

One would hope that within ten years, SD strategies will no longer be required because the incorporation of SD principles will have become fundamental to how all organizations function, and be the context in which individual citizens make their choices. Until that time, federal departments must continue to focus on ways to improve their performance. Fortunately there are now more reliable sources of SD information and expertise, more available tools, and more indications of the progress being made by other countries, international organizations and the corporate sector. The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of International Trade will take advantage of all of them while working to be innovative in our own right.