

directly influence political reform in Mexico. At the same time, the projection of our values abroad -- respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law -- is a stated objective of our official foreign policy.³¹ While direct forms of promoting this goal are limited, there are nevertheless some important indirect means -- both bilateral and multilateral -- for influencing positive political change in Mexico:

- augmenting the resources disbursed by the Canadian Embassy-based Canada Fund for Local Initiatives to Mexican human rights, environmental and other organizations in order to support their democratization and civic education efforts;
- promoting human rights and democratic development through grassroots linkages between Canadian non-governmental organizations and their Mexican counterparts;
- fostering and expanding media exchange programmes along the lines of an innovative initiative by the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL),³² in order to heighten domestic awareness in Canada of Mexican issues and to promote mutual understanding;
- continuing active support for trilateral cooperative activities under the aegis of the NAFTA's side agreements on labour and environmental cooperation, including the participation of non-governmental organizations in this work;
- continuing to advance the cause of human rights and democratic development under the aegis of the Organization of American States' Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, an institution established largely through Canadian initiative; and
- encouraging Mexico's active, constructive participation in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Summit of the Americas (Miami, December 1994), which emphasized the strengthening, effective exercise and consolidation of democracy as the main political priority of the Americas.

³¹See the Government of Canada, *Canada in the World*, Government Statement, 1995.

³²FOCAL's initiative is called the Media Fellowship Programme.