

A Dialogue on Foreign Policy

The Government of Canada is committed to the continued expansion of a stable, rules-based global trading system. As a member of the WTO, we are participating in a new round of global trade talks. We support the legitimate demands of developing countries for better access to developed markets for their goods, including agricultural products. To this end, as of January 2003, the Government of Canada is eliminating tariffs and quotas on almost all imports from 48 least-developed countries, of which 34 are in Africa.

Both economic interests and humanitarian concerns are served when Canada contributes to meeting international development and poverty eradication goals. For this reason, the Prime Minister has announced that Canada's development assistance will double by 2010. As this assistance is delivered in the coming years, it must be effective, flexible, timely and focused on areas of greatest need; and it must be consistent with foreign policy priorities, and with long-term Canadian interests and values. The challenge is to find the best ways of combining these aims.

Canadian prosperity and global vision

While challenges of development remain acute, many developing countries are rapidly changing from within—pressing ahead with political and economic reforms, dealing with newly affluent and well-educated middle classes, and emerging as important global forces. China, India, Mexico and Brazil present Canadians with new opportunities for productive partnerships; seizing these opportunities will demand effective strategies and sustained attention.

At home, Canada's economic growth and job creation will depend on being competitive in world markets and attractive to investors. This requires an innovative society with a high level of skills, cutting-edge scientific expertise and extensive opportunities for learning. To succeed, Canada must find suitable foreign partners in investment, education and research, and we must be able to attract workers with advanced knowledge and skills.

Looking abroad, the Government recognizes that foreign investment by Canadian firms should be both competitive and responsible in its social and environmental impact. Some companies have had exemplary success in embodying Canadian values in their foreign business operations. Foreign investment is bringing substantial benefits to developing countries, and will be vital in helping to realize international development goals. In certain cases, however, it can fuel violence and unrest in