

CONTRIBUTING TO A SAFER AND MORE SECURE WORLD

Canada's military has a long and proud tradition of service overseas. Vimy, the Battles of Britain and the Atlantic, Ortona, Normandy, Kap'Yong, Cyprus, the Persian Gulf, the Balkans, Afghanistan—the names have become synonymous with Canadian sacrifice and valour. Canadian soldiers, sailors and air personnel have deployed overseas to ensure that their fellow citizens at home remain safe and their way of life preserved. They have helped Canada make a difference internationally, and changed for the good the lives of countless people around the globe.

A NEW INTERNATIONAL SECURITY CONTEXT

These statements still ring true today, whether in Southwest Asia, Africa or the Middle East. The Government believes that our military has an important role to play internationally. The security of Canadians will continue to depend on our ability to address threats both in Canada and at their source overseas.

This is especially true with respect to failed and failing states. By helping stabilize these countries, we prevent threats from spreading further and deny terrorist cells the haven and support that sustain them. In turn, this helps reduce the prospect that terrorists will reach our shores and threaten Canadians directly. At the same time, Canadians are a compassionate people, and even when our own interests may not be directly at stake, we believe in helping those less fortunate than ourselves. This concern for others is one of the fundamental values that helps define our country.

Robust, combat-capable military forces are indispensable if Canada wishes to fulfill these roles. While diplomacy remains the preferred tool in the pursuit of international peace and security, our country must possess the hard military assets necessary to achieve our foreign policy goals. This includes using lethal force when necessary. In fact, as the Afghan experience has shown, military power, diplomacy and development are intimately linked and complement one another.

International Organizations

Multilateral cooperation is the foundation for a stable and peaceful international system. Our country has

stood by this principle for more than five decades, and we have been at the forefront of efforts to establish and strengthen multinational institutions. Today, there is a compelling need for greater international security cooperation. The nature and complexity of the threats facing us, from failed states to terrorism, require a coordinated approach and a level of resources that could never be achieved by governments acting on their own.

The Canadian Forces will, therefore, maintain their contributions to international institutions such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Membership in both of these organizations continues to serve Canadian interests and reflect our values. At the same time, consistent with international legal norms, when the will of the international community is clear, we will also consider participating in less formal coalitions of like-minded states, as we have seen in the international campaign against terrorism.

The United Nations

The Government believes that the UN continues to have an important role to play in peace support operations, particularly for the legitimacy that it confers on these missions. In recent years, the UN has taken several steps to improve its ability to undertake peace support operations quickly and effectively. The 2000 Brahimi Report on UN Peace Operations recommended that the world body put greater emphasis on rapid deployment, conflict prevention, peacebuilding strategies, and the role of civilians and police. Solid progress has been made in carrying out the Report's recommendations; Canada will continue to call for their full implementation.

Similarly, the Government has made clear that it intends to engage members of the United Nations in moving forward with the "Responsibility to Protect" initiative, as endorsed by the December 2004 UN Secretary-General High Level Panel Report. The objective will be to develop new rules to enable the international community to protect civilians from extreme harm when their own government is unwilling or unable to do so. National Defence will support the Government's efforts in this area.

The Government will continue to strongly support other aspects of the UN reform agenda, including the

