



61 Canadian diplomat Philippe Kirsch helped establish the International Criminal Court at The Hague, where he is currently serving a six-year term as its president. He is pictured inside one of the courtrooms in The Hague in March 2005. (Source: AP Photo/Peter Dejong)



62 Young foreign-service officers help evacuate Canadians from war-torn Lebanon in July 2006. The Department is actively recruiting a new generation of foreign-service officers as it renews itself to confront the challenges of its next century. (Source: David Foxall)

The minister of foreign affairs for much of this period, Lloyd Axworthy, was obliged by the financial crisis to adjust both his foreign-policy objectives and his tactics. Adopting some of the outreach activities pioneered by the Department's trade side, Axworthy sought to mobilize public opinion and non-governmental organizations as well as departmental personnel and resources in support of a niche diplomacy that focused its efforts intensely on a limited but important set of goals. He concentrated the resources of the Department, which had been reduced by the government's restraint program, on his key priorities and placed Canada at the head of the international campaign to ban landmines and the effort to create an International Criminal Court. For many Canadians, however, Axworthy's success obscured the severe impact of the government's budget cuts on Canada's diplomatic effectiveness.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, Canada's international role and its diplomacy came under searching scrutiny. One of the sharpest critics of his country's diminished capacity to act internationally was Axworthy's successor, John Manley. A successful minister of industry, who preached the importance of good relations with Washington, Manley enjoyed a reputation for being honest and

forthright. "You can't just sit at the G8 table and then, when the bill comes, go to the washroom," he observed bitingly two months after 9/11. Indeed, this was a perspective that Chrétien's two immediate successors as prime minister, Paul Martin and Stephen Harper, readily shared. In office, both men quickly discovered how important it was to have an effective foreign and trade policy ministry. And both acted to strengthen the Department's capacity to serve Canada and Canadians the world over.

Today, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has begun to recover from the fiscal challenges of the 1990s. With 168 missions in 109 countries, including nine missions to multilateral organizations, with 13 regional offices across Canada, and with just over 9,700 employees (as of March 31, 2008), the Department's reach remains global. Perhaps more than ever before, it is focused on the key elements of its mandate: working for international peace and security; promoting trade and investment; advancing the rule of international law; and improving human rights. This is a broad and ambitious agenda that demands a foreign and trade ministry able to transform itself to meet new challenges and to realign itself with shifting priorities, something the men and women in the Department have done well for a century.