

Hemispheric Security: Canada in the OAS

Canada's third year in the Organization of American States (OAS) culminated in the meeting of the General Assembly in Managua in June, during which the OAS adopted a series of groundbreaking resolutions in the area of hemispheric security — thus placing security issues firmly on the OAS agenda and work program. Canada was instrumental in providing the substantive contribution and political leadership necessary to bring these issues to the General Assembly.

Building on successful efforts last year to establish the "Special Committee on Hemispheric Security," Canada pursued an action plan for engaging key Latin American partners through the OAS (as well as bilaterally) in bringing substance to the institutional framework we and OAS partners had created for ongoing discussion and practical cooperation on regional security issues. In particular, Canada focused discussions in areas such as conflict prevention, arms proliferation, conventional arms transfers and the relationship between the OAS and the UN on issues of peace and security, including the UN Secretary General's *An Agenda for Peace*. Canada also brought forward strong and clear views to the discussion on the future of the Inter American Defence Board (IADB) and its institutional relationship to the OAS.

These efforts resulted in OAS General Assembly adoption of the following decisions in the area of hemispheric security:

- Report and resolution of the Permanent Council on Cooperation for Security and Development in the Hemisphere — Regional Contributions to Global Security;
- resolution on the IADB;
- resolution on a "Meeting of Experts on Security Mechanisms and Measures to Promote Confidence in the Region";
- resolution on "Information on Defence Spending and Registry of Conventional Weapons"; and
- resolution on "Consolidation of the Regime Established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean."

Together, these resolutions span the hemispheric security agenda and define a broad program of work for the Special Committee in the coming year. They also provide a focus for activities in priority areas such as conventional arms transfers and conflict management.

The resolution on "Cooperation for Security and Development in the Hemisphere" reflected many ideas Canada had fed into the Special Committee's discussions during the last year and had pursued in contacts with the Committee's Chairman, Ambassador Hernan Patino of Argentina. As advocated by Canada, OAS states agreed in the resolution to continue and to intensify work in the Special Committee. The resolution also established a framework for "working groups of government experts" to meet to discuss selected topics on the security agenda.

The resolution outlines the work program for the Special Committee for the coming year. This will include:

- the relationship between the OAS and the UN;
- global and regional disarmament and arms control;
- the relationship between development, environment and disarmament and arms control;
- prevention of all forms of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and controls on the export of dual-use goods and technologies;

Managua General Assembly outlines work program for security committee.

- promotion of openness and transparency in the transfer of conventional weapons, including provision of information to registers on conventional weapons and exchanges of information on national policies;
- consideration of measures for conflict prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes, exchanges of information and consideration of measures to promote confidence and transparency; and
- examination of the special problems of small states including issues such as drug traffic, illicit arms trade and disaster management.

Canada will be an active participant in all of these areas. We will continue to work to strengthen the OAS role in hemispheric security and to establish the Special Committee on Hemispheric Security as the central forum within the OAS for discussion and practical cooperation on issues relating to hemispheric security. ■

Canada Hosts CBM Workshop for Middle East Peace Process

At the invitation of the cosponsors of the Middle East peace process (the US and Russia), and under the auspices of the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group, Canada will host a three-day workshop on maritime confidence-building measures (CBMs) in Sydney, Nova Scotia from September 12 to 14. All of the regional participants in the peace process have been invited to the workshop, which will be the first of its kind.

The event will concentrate on two types of maritime CBMs. The first is the negotiation and implementation of agreements aimed at the prevention of incidents at sea. There are several such agreements between various NATO nations and Russia, negotiated during the Cold War. Canada and Russia have had such an

agreement since 1989. The agreements establish procedures to be observed by naval vessels when operating in proximity. The purpose is to prevent misunderstandings that could lead to an incident with serious consequences. The frequency of naval incidents — up to and including warships "bumping" each other — has dropped dramatically among parties to existing agreements. There are no equivalent agreements between or among Middle Eastern navies.

The second area to be examined is enhanced cooperation in regional maritime search and rescue activities. Though not related to military activities per se, such cooperation constitutes an important element in the development of a regional approach to