

## Heading off the terrorist threat

# CANADA TAKES DECISIVE ACTION

**I**n the weeks and months following the September 11 attacks, the Government of Canada announced wide-ranging measures to counter the global threat of terrorism.

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien quickly established the Ad Hoc Committee of Ministers on Public Security and Anti-Terrorism, chaired by Foreign Affairs Minister John Manley. It is reviewing government policies, legislation, regulations and programs. The aim is to strengthen all aspects of Canada's approach to fighting terrorism and ensuring public security.

The government is rapidly implementing its anti-terrorism plan. This has five key objectives:

- to prevent terrorists from entering Canada;
- to protect Canadians from terrorist acts;
- to bring forward tools for identifying, prosecuting, convicting and punishing terrorists;
- to keep the Canada-U.S. border secure and open to legitimate trade; and
- to work with the international community to bring terrorists to justice and address the root causes of terrorism.

Since the terrorist attacks, the government has acted in support of this plan by committing an additional \$7.7 billion over the next five years to keep Canada safe, terrorists out and our borders open.

Measures include major investments to equip and deploy more intelligence and front-line investigative personnel; to boost inter-agency coordination and marine security; to improve screening of immigrants, refugee claimants and visitors (including detention and removals); to upgrade infrastructure protection and emergency preparedness and response, and contribute to an expanded anti-terrorism capacity for the military; to create a new air security organization; to enhance policing and assign armed undercover police officers to Canadian aircraft; to purchase explosives detection equipment; to strengthen Canada's ability to address threats of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attack; and to enhance border security and improve the infrastructure that supports the legitimate flow of goods and people across the Canada-U.S. border.

### **More people, technology and capacity**

In the wake of September 11, Canada put in place an array of immediate measures, including enhanced policing, security and intelligence. Among the measures: the fast-tracking of a fraud-resistant permanent resident card for new immigrants; more front-end security screening for refugee claimants; increased detention capacity and deportation activity; hiring of new staff to enforce upgraded security at ports of entry; redeployment of over 2000 federal police officers to national security duties; purchases of antibiotics to increase the national emergency stockpile system; purchases of detection equipment and other enhancements for the national network of laboratories; and technology upgrades, equipment purchases and training with a view to preventing, detecting and responding to existing and emerging national security threats and cross-border criminal activities.

Budget 2001, announced on December 10, further underscores the Government of Canada's commitment to fighting terrorism and reinforcing public and economic security.

### **Strengthening laws**

Since September 11, the Government of Canada has introduced key pieces of legislation to fight terrorism. The cornerstone of our domestic action is the Anti-Terrorism Act, which became law on December 18.

It is designed to:

- identify, prosecute, convict and punish terrorists;
- provide new investigative tools to law enforcement and security agencies; and
- ensure that Canadian values of respect and fairness are preserved through stronger laws against hate crimes and propaganda.

The Act includes the following measures:

- defining and designating terrorist groups and activities;
- tougher sentences for terrorism offences;