

Freedom from fear

Canada's foreign policy for human security

I am extremely pleased to introduce this second edition of *Freedom from Fear: Canada's Foreign Policy for Human Security*. Working to enhance the safety and well-being of people abroad is a reflection of Canadian priorities, and has long been a central tenet of our foreign policy. The human security agenda incorporates long-standing Canadian objectives, including promoting human rights, alleviating humanitarian crises, supporting international peacekeeping and encouraging disarmament.

Canada's commitment to a person-centred, as well as state-centred, approach to security policy has only become stronger with time. Events in recent years have reconfirmed that, in an increasingly interdependent world, the safety and security of Canadians at home are inextricably linked to the safety of those living beyond our borders. In this context, our work to advance Canadian values abroad – human rights, democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarianism – at the same time enhances the safety and security of Canadians.

While the scale of human insecurity – whether from conflict, crime or repression – can be overwhelming, it is important to reflect on the substantial progress made in recent years. Our achievements have been significant: in landmines not laid and stockpiles destroyed, in the development of new legal norms banning child soldiers, and in the reduction of incentives for armed conflict through such measures as the regulation of the trade in rough diamonds. The UN Security Council now routinely addresses the protection of civilians in war zones, and the G8 is promoting human security through its Africa Action Plan.

Looking forward, we face the challenge of ensuring that our foreign policy is guided by the principles of justice and the rule of law that we champion at home. Our international responses must address the conditions of poverty, discrimination and oppression that may enable extremism to thrive. Our human security approach deepens efforts to address terrorism through initiatives in public safety, conflict prevention, civilian protection, peace support operations, and governance and accountability.

Genuine security can be found only by increasing respect for fundamental human rights. Through the effective and impartial functioning of the International Criminal Court, we must end impunity for those responsible for crimes against humanity. The international community must also make good on the responsibility to protect civilians facing the threat of genocide and mass ethnic cleansing, through means including the use of military force in extreme cases.

Our success in these and other human security initiatives will ultimately depend on a deepening partnership between like-minded governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. It is a task that I embrace with a deep commitment and a sense of urgency. I look forward to collaborating with you in the pursuit of a safer and more humane world.

Bill Graham
Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs

