

SUMMARY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following specific policy recommendations are found in the text sections C, D & E.

1. Enhancing the legal framework: Information:

Mexican legislators and officials as well as philanthropic and non-governmental organizations have expressed interest in Canadian laws and regulations (regarding non-profit incorporation, charitable tax arrangements, etc.). A summary of legislation and practice could be shared, including comments on experience from such bodies as the Voluntary Sector Roundtable.

2 Advice and encouragement:

To what end should advice be offered? From the point of view of Mexican philanthropic and non-governmental bodies, three or four key points might be cited. Initiatives which should be considered include those:

- 1) that reinforce the idea that participation in formation and comment on legislation and in public planning, implementation and evaluation by organized civic associations is a normal, feasible and in fact advantageous to the process of effective governing.
- 2) that strengthen and professionalize civic associations will yield positive results in building national consensus.
- 3) that encourage laws and regulations governing the formation and operation of civic associations should be kept as simple, accessible and transparent as possible.
- 4) that reinforce those civic associations leading in these efforts, through bilateral relationships with Canadian organizations and through dialogues which bring together official, party/legislative, civil association and philanthropic figures around issues of reform and participation.

By what means should advice and encouragement be provided? Sensitivities at a state and individual level are important to keep in mind. The use of bilateral diplomatic, legislative and business conversations is important. The encouragement of governmental/NGO or legislative/NGO conversations as outlined below in section C.10 would contribute positively.

The support of specific meetings to review legal and procedural experience, involving Canadian and Mexican philanthropic and voluntary groups together with relevant government official or politicians would be useful.

3. Change the atmosphere for civil society organizations

3.1 Canada should strongly encourage Mexico to bring the situation of civil conflict and violence in Chiapas to a peaceful resolution through negotiations and implementation of the San Andres accords.

- The potential for a role for third parties, both state and non-state actors should be tested, including the possibility of the use of human rights monitors under international authority benefitting from the Central American experience.

3.2 In bilateral relations with Mexico, whether at the Executive or Legislative levels, Canada should discourage further extension of the role and power of the Mexican military in civilian life in Mexico.