



(see attached discussion notes for further elaboration), a variety of important issues and trends emerged in all three groups. This relative consensus provides the basis for a continuing discussion of Canada's role in future peacebuilding initiatives.

An analysis of Canada's traditional role in foreign affairs provided the springboard for much of the day's discussion. Canada's image internationally as a country which strongly supports diversity within its own borders provides us with a powerful tool to aid countries struggling in the aftermath of intra-state conflict based on diversity issues (ethnic, religious etc.). In addition, Canada is not seen as a major international power, nor a neo-colonial one.

Instead, it is perceived as a country that recognizes strength in diversity, and therefore does not bring with it rigidly defined notions of successful post-conflict reconstruction. Canadians are recognized for their consultative approach to peacebuilding based on cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations in the state in question, the encouragement of indigenous grass roots movements, an acceptance of divergent opinions, and a distinctive willingness to listen and to learn from others.

Having established the strengths that could put Canada on the cutting edge of any future international efforts at peacebuilding, questions of a more practical nature began to come to the forefront of discussion. What would a Canadian peacebuilding mechanism look like, and how might it evolve.

The question of funding was of paramount importance. Concern was raised over the level of funding cuts to non-governmental and community-based organizations that are on the front lines of international peacebuilding initiatives. Although no consensus was reached, emphasis was placed on the fundamental importance of adequate financial support for

organizations working in the field of international peacebuilding, and the necessity for the creative use of available funds. Connected with the issue of funding was the need for a mechanism to target aid and to establish a method of prioritization for peacebuilding initiatives. In order to focus aid, a template is required to establish how to respond and to whom, and a strong commitment to the chosen priorities is necessary.

Emphasis was also placed on training and public education within Canadian society, as well as at the community level in post-crisis states. In order to best utilize resources, and to increase the effectiveness and rapidity of a Canadian response, it is necessary to retool and assist non-governmental organizations in their capacity to take on peacebuilding in post-crisis states. On a more general, societal level, there is a need for access to and opportunities for education and training for citizens who are skilled, and want to participate in peacebuilding.

More control in the hands of community-based peacebuilding bodies through sustained training and governmental support would provide an avenue for focused, well-planned international initiatives. The education of the general public would also furnish decision-makers with the means of legitimating peacebuilding initiatives by gauging levels of public support for particular policies.

To aid in this process, the cultivation of a network of lateral linkages is crucial. A system must be developed to enhance communication and coordination among NGOs, government, academics, the private sector, and the public at large. If communication lines were better developed, the process of peacebuilding could become more consultative, and the formulation and conduct of foreign affairs could be opened up to an already emerging, multi-sector policy network.