

all that happens at his post. He is the boss; there is no way out for him. The External Affairs central agency role here was to bring about consensus on this among the Departments most directly concerned. And I take particular satisfaction from the fact that the key circular document on the operations of the Head of Post was not only approved but signed by the five deputy ministers with the greatest stake in foreign operations.

The Head of Post's authority, and specifically his ability to meet post objectives, will be further enhanced by consolidation of the foreign service. Its implementation will give him greater flexibility in the allocation of resources to meet pressing needs and to derive the fullest advantage from the contribution which his staff can make.

The increased authority and accountability of the Head of Post carries with it a need for a more comprehensive and equitable appraisal of the performance of all Heads of Post. A system for appraisal of Heads of Post performance on this basis, and in a manner meeting interdepartmentally agreed criteria and standards, is firmly in place. He, or she, is now rated by the deputy heads of the departments with foreign programs, under my chairmanship, because the Head of Post is accountable to each and all of us for his activities. Of course there is still much work to be done in terms of getting adequate substantiation of commentaries on Heads of Post performance so that the fairest possible assessment is made of each Head of Post individually, as well as in relation to all others. But progress is being made, and the process is of crucial importance if authority and accountability are to go hand in hand. Let there be no mistake about it, without evaluation there will be no accountability; and without accountability there will be no authority.

A new strengthened interdepartmental inspection service has been in operation for over a year. Its task is not an easy one since Government departments, including External Affairs, do not always welcome some of the suggestions Inspectors make, while posts may react defensively. But in the long run an interdepartmental inspection service must be a positive force strengthening the operations of posts through constructive recommendations, and thus enabling the Head of Post to meet his or her responsibilities more effectively.