

A Dialogue on Foreign Policy

This paper seeks to engage Canadians in a dialogue on our foreign policy priorities in the face of new global realities. Long-standing goals that have shaped Canadian foreign policy over the years remain central: protecting the security of our nation and contributing to global security; increasing prosperity in Canada and expanding global prosperity; and promoting the values and culture that Canadians cherish, to help make a better Canada and a better world. Yet even as these goals remain, significant changes in the world make it important for the citizens and Government of Canada to reflect on some critical issues. Global changes are creating challenges and opportunities that call for a renewed assessment of how Canada should pursue its foreign policy goals. Since we cannot be everywhere and do all things internationally, we must be prepared to make choices about how our efforts and resources can best promote Canadian values and interests.

You are invited to use this paper as a springboard for reflection and discussion. Its purpose is to provide an overview of some areas of Canadian foreign policy in which recent changes have made new thinking particularly important. Beginning with general comments on Canada's current approach to foreign policy and its relation to a changing world, the paper proceeds to identify some major topics on which we would like to hear your views. Some background information is provided to highlight challenges and opportunities; and some examples are given of recent Canadian foreign policy commitments and initiatives in these areas. Of course, the paper does not provide all of the facts and perspectives that will inform your reflections. We know that Canadians will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to these matters, and we encourage you to consult the extensive information resources available on our Internet site (www.foreign-policy-dialogue.ca). We hope that you will respond, as fully as you choose, to the questions posed throughout the paper. By contributing your perspectives, you will help us to ensure that Canadian foreign policy truly represents the views of Canadians.

A Better Canada, a Better World

A better world might look like a better Canada: a place of shared security and prosperity, of tolerance and respect for diversity, of democracy and the realization of human rights, of opportunity and equal justice for all. In an increasingly integrated world, there are new possibilities for Canada to make a difference through our influence and our actions. It is equally true that events abroad affect our lives here at home