

Illicit Drugs

Illicit drugs are recognized as a major health and social threat. The trade in illicit drugs can undermine, directly and indirectly, the legitimacy of governments, their capacity to govern, and the stability of national economies.

As agreed at the 1998 UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem, Canada will continue to support a balanced multilateral approach by addressing both demand reduction (primarily health and social issues) and supply reduction (law enforcement and interdiction issues). Canada will maintain financial support for the work of the UN International Drug Control Program, which provides assistance and policy guidance in implementing the results of the UNGASS.

Through the OAS, Canada has also been a major supporter of the implementation of an effective multilateral evaluation mechanism (MEM), an innovative peer review process among the governments of the hemisphere that will examine national and collective responses to the drug problem. The results of the MEM will be reported at the Quebec City Summit of the Americas in 2001.

Terrorism

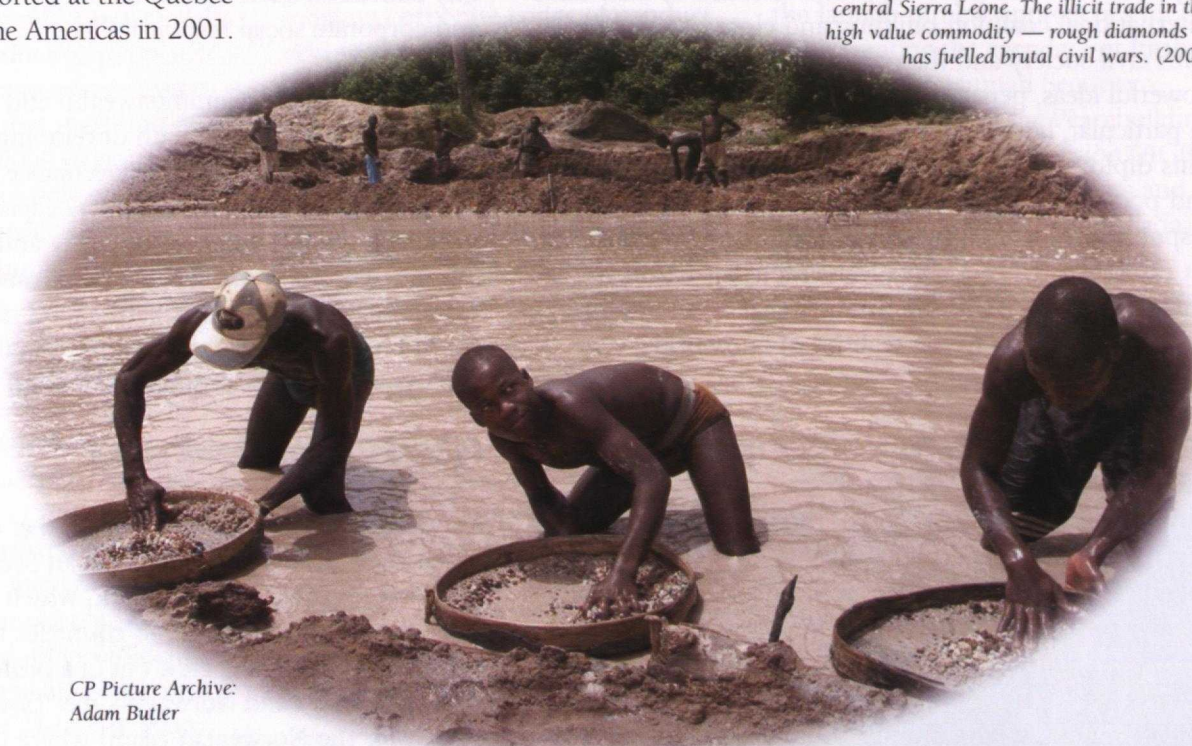
Terrorist actions, whatever the motivation of the perpetrators, use the threat to individuals as their main tool of influence. Whether through high-profile attacks on established governments or persistent low-intensity action in the context of the breakdown of authority, terrorism threatens the safety of civilians and the stability of their societies.

Canada aims to build upon and expand the existing international counter-terrorism framework to address this scourge and the impact it has on people and societies. This work includes ongoing efforts by Canada and others, including partners in the G-8, to urge worldwide ratification and adherence to the 12 conventions dealing with a range of terrorist acts. The two latest conventions — the Terrorist Bombing Convention and the Terrorist Financing Convention — will constitute important elements of this framework, once they have entered into force.

'Connectivity' and Drug Abuse Prevention

The abuse of and illicit trade in drugs poses a serious threat to the safety and well-being of people — particularly youth — in the Americas. For this reason, at the June 2000 OAS General Assembly in Windsor, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse launched the latest version of the Virtual Clearinghouse on Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (VCATOD). With support from Canada, this innovative project is designed to assist governments and NGOs throughout the hemisphere in their efforts to combat the problem of drugs. Specifically, the VCATOD uses the Internet and on-line databases to help create networks for expertise and resource sharing in support of the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, and for the dissemination of high-quality information about the nature, extent and consequences of licit and illicit drug use.

Diamond prospectors sift through the earth in central Sierra Leone. The illicit trade in this high value commodity — rough diamonds — has fuelled brutal civil wars. (2000)



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