

replace but rather to complement qualitative analyses. Indeed, one must be cautious about drawing conclusions about specific countries on the basis of a statistical snapshot which is, in some cases, several years old. Neither the most recent advances nor recent retreats in implementing sound policies are reflected here. What the Paper does try to do is to contrast, within a statistical framework, the different geographic allocations that flow from different assumptions regarding the purpose and objectives of bilateral assistance.

2. Considerations

2.1 What are Canada's interests?

In the foreign policy context, interests have usually been defined in terms of things that provide advantage or benefit to a country. By extension, theorists have usually postulated that countries act in their "self-interest", as in "Great powers do not have friends, only interests".

More generally, however, our interest refers to anything that causes special attention to an object or class of objects. Thus, interests can only be defined with reference to a given set of values and motivations, whether they be predominantly spiritual, material, altruistic or self-centred.

The 1986 Winegard Report, for example, stated that Canada gives aid:

- to express the Canadian desire to alleviate human suffering and promote social justice;
- as one means to increase stability and improve the chances for peace in the world; and
- to support the economic growth of developing countries and thereby stimulate international trade and Canada's own long-term prospects.³

On this basis, Sharing Our Future, the government's 1987 aid policy document, concluded that "the primary purpose of Canadian ODA is to help the poorest countries and people in the world."

The 1991 Foreign Policy Themes and Priorities update, on the other hand, stresses Canadian interests related to security, prosperity and a rules-based international order. Presumably, security is a Canadian interest because we wish to

³ House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade, For Who's Benefit? Canada's Official Development Assistance Policies and Programs, Ottawa, 1986.