

governments. Although foreign policy remains the prerogative of the federal government, there is much more federal-provincial consultation on matters related to foreign policy and to matters that are of direct concern to the U.N. and its system of organizations. Furthermore, provincial governments are expanding their dealings with foreign countries in matters of culture, education and even trade. Thus, for the U.N. Affairs program to be effective, it must now take into account the expanding opportunities (and perhaps desire) for provincial governments to impact the Federal role in the U.N. How much consultation, and of what nature, should the Bureau have with provincial governments? To what extent do governments try or are likely to try to circumvent External Affairs? Can the program represent provincial interests at the U.N. without conflicting with federal interests? What are the implications of possible provincial initiatives in their area, both in the U.N. and on federal-provincial relations, and what can or should be done in response?

(h) Fostering Bilateral Relations

The U.N. is a multilateral organization and presents opportunities for multilateral cooperation. The U.N.'s annual General Assembly is the world's most nearly universal and most important multilateral forum. It provides an unparalleled opportunity for nations, including Canada, to express political views and to expose their leaders and decision makers to others. But, the U.N. also provides an opportunity for fostering and initiating bilateral relations with other countries.

Furthermore, when Canada is seeking support for an issue at the U.N., it generally deals with foreign countries on a one-to-one basis. In doing so, it must take into account Canada's overall bilateral relations with these countries. Thus, the U.N. Affairs program has an important role to play in bilateral relations. How effective is it in fostering bilateral relations at the U.N. and its system of organizations? How much coordination does it have with the political Bureaux and how might U.N. opportunities be used to better advantage for fostering desirable bilateral relations?