

Prime Minister Chrétien in 1996 and 1997. In turn, tens of thousands of Asians - from China, southeast Asia, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - immigrate to Canada and influence its world outlook.

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade, the visits of Team Canada were designed to expand Canada's economic partnerships, and "to increase participation in Asia Pacific markets by Canadian businesses".

A secondary objective, the Department stated, was "to enhance cross cultural understanding of common concerns". Recently, Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy stated: "One of the newest areas of focus in our cooperation with Asian partners is on human security issues... with problems ranging from environmental degradation to illegal drugs, and from child labour to a global ban on land mines".

It is with this background that a pilot study of Canadians with Asian experience was conceived and carried out by Peacefund Canada.

2. Purpose, Assumptions & Methods

The study's overall purpose was to contribute to a better understanding of how Canadians might encourage democratic governance and the strengthening of human rights in Asia.

For this purpose, the study selected two groups of Canadians:

- a) business representatives who accompanied Prime Minister Chrétien on "Team Canada" tours of Asian countries in 1996-1997;
- b) non-business representatives, including those from Canadian NGOs who work in Asian countries, government, law and educational institutions, some of whom participated in Team Canada Missions.

It was assumed:

- a) that the process of modernization includes the strengthening of democratic practices and institutions;
- b) that Canadians' knowledge of, and attitudes towards Asians with whom they work or trade contribute to our understanding or misunderstanding of human security issues in Asia;
- c) that Canadian business men and women tend to have different priorities than non-business representatives involved in development activities. The former put greater emphasis on the commercial benefits of trade, the latter on human rights and social development.

The principal method of the study was a twelve-question survey (Annex A) which was mailed to 812 Canadians.