

and development funding despite cutbacks in many other areas. We are ensuring that our aid programs focus primarily on the poor of the world. The critical role of women in development will receive greater recognition. The proportion of aid we disburse through non-governmental organizations is already higher than for any other major donor. Canadian youth will be given the opportunity for greater involvement. We also intend to give greater attention to human resource development in our aid programs and to the potential of the private sector in developing countries.

The government shares the Committee's belief that foreign students constitute an important asset for Canada as well as for developing countries. We intend to increase substantially the number of CIDA scholarships. We are seeking to develop in cooperation with the provinces a national strategy to make it easier for foreign students to study in Canada.

The government today affirms what so many Canadians told the Committee: that the international promotion of human rights should be a fundamental and integral part of our foreign policy. The government has already changed the export control regulations so that they take greater account of human rights considerations. Henceforth officers in the Department of External Affairs will receive appropriate training if they are being posted to countries whose governments seriously violate human rights. So will officers at headquarters on geographic or other desks responsible for important aspects of relations with those countries.

The Committee made an important recommendation in favour of establishment of an institution to respond to the needs of developing countries seeking to strengthen their democratic institutions and domestic human rights. We agree. We are now identifying distinguished Canadians to advise the government on the form and mandate this institution should have.

The Committee attached great importance to the northern dimension of Canadian foreign policy. The government is determined to act vigorously in exercising control of our north. We have affirmed that Canadian sovereignty extends to all the waters of the Arctic archipelago and announced regulations establishing baselines around the perimeter of the archipelago. We are committed to construct an arctic class icebreaker.