

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE
REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY TASK FORCE
ON NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

The purpose of this document is to provide an official Government response to the main recommendations of the Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relations.

The Government has been very pleased with the work of the Parliamentary Task Force and believes it has fully satisfied its mandate as contained in the Order of Reference of May 23, 1980. In the Government's view, the Task Force should, in particular, be credited with three major accomplishments: increasing public awareness; generating all-party Parliamentary support for a distinctive Canadian role in the North-South dialogue; and producing specific and constructive policy recommendations. Each task has its own importance.

The Task Force has contributed substantially to public debate and understanding of the dialogue between developing and developed countries. The Government firmly believes that greater public awareness of the significance of North-South issues to Canada will lead to increased support for a forward-looking Canadian North-South policy. The Task Force hearings provided a forum for the cross-fertilization of ideas from knowledgeable Canadians with differing views and perspectives. Its various reports have stimulated both media and public discussion. Such debate and resultant support is a prerequisite if Canada is to pursue a leadership role in the North-South dialogue, similar to the one recommended by the Task Force.

The unanimity with which the Task Force members from all three political parties urged the Government to play a leadership role on North-South economic issues will likely have the most lasting impact of all the Task Force recommendations. The call for Canada to play a "bridge-building" role to reduce the gap between the developed and Third World has encouraged the Government to pursue an active role in fostering a constructive dialogue with developing countries. The Government supports the two-pronged thrust of the reports of the Task Force. It agrees that Canada should base the development of Canadian policy on North-South issues on two major principles: the mutuality of interests of both North and South in solving global economic problems, and the humanitarian need to focus attention and resources on the world's poorest peoples and countries. These concepts will continue to motivate