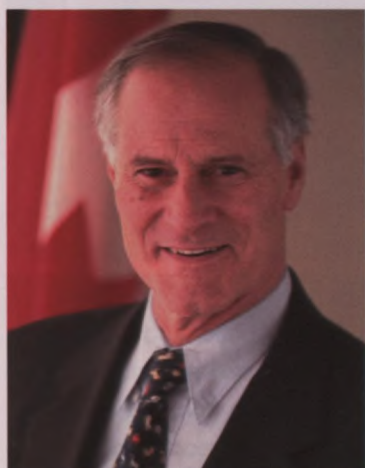


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A Message from the Honourable Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs

June 2003



The future of Canada's foreign policy lies in building on our distinctive advantages in a time of great change and uncertainty. Our diverse population makes us a microcosm of the world's peoples; our geography and population give us broad global

interests; our economy is the most trade-oriented among the G7 nations; and our relationship with the United States is extensive and deep. With these and other assets, Canadians recognize that we have a unique basis for asserting a distinctive presence in the world. They also believe that in these times of enormous change, Canada must take stock of how we want to approach new and continuing international challenges. To represent the values, interests and aspirations of Canadians as we confront these challenges, our country's foreign policy must draw as broadly as possible on the views of our citizens.

To this end, I launched *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy* in January in the form of a public discussion paper and an extensive program of consultations. The first result of the Dialogue consists in this report, which presents a summary of what we have heard from Canadians across the country over the past months. The views and expertise that citizens have shared have been extremely valuable in informing me and my government colleagues of citizens' concerns, their priorities, and how they want Canada to act in making a better world for ourselves and for others beyond our

borders. These perspectives will inform the discussions I am having with my Cabinet colleagues and departmental officials as we proceed with the work of policy development, and our commitment to set out foreign policy directions and priorities for the years ahead. In presenting this report to Canadians, I am grateful to the thousands of people who took time to contribute.

During the consultations, my own activities included leading town hall meetings across Canada, a session of the National Forum for Youth, and many expert roundtables. I also appeared before the House Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, which has produced a significant contribution to the Dialogue as well as a report on the future of North American relations and a forthcoming report on Canada's relations with the Muslim world. Through additional community discussions and written submissions, views were received from parliamentarians, provincial and territorial governments, academics, civil-society organizations, business organizations, and individual Canadians from across the country. On the Dialogue Web site, thousands of visitors downloaded the Dialogue Paper, submitted their views, participated in interactive discussions, and read weekly summaries of submissions.

The advice we received reflects both the far-reaching scope of the consultations and the heightened interest of Canadians in foreign policy, particularly amid the months of international tension surrounding the war in Iraq and its aftermath. Views differ, of course, on this and many other major issues noted in this report; yet there is also much common ground. A large majority of participants strongly believe that the best way that Canada can advance global security is to continue working within the framework of the United Nations to strengthen a multilateral system based on the rule of law. Yet Canadians also call for reforming international organizations, including the United Nations, in recognition of the need for effective multilateral institutions to serve our own long-term interests and to realize the shared global goods of security, prosperity, justice and environmental sustainability.

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