

WORKSHOP 1: IS THERE A CASE FOR STUDYING ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY?

SUMMARY OF PAPERS PRESENTED:

Michael Keating: "Overview of threatening ecological factors and situations"

Environment writer and consultant, Michael Keating is the project director and editor of *Canada and the State of the Planet*, currently undertaken by the Canadian Global Change Program.

In his paper, Michael Keating gives an overview of the environmental changes which have constituted issues of great concern over the last few years. He describes two driving forces behind environmental change: On the one side, there is high population growth in some parts of the world, and on the other side, there is increasing consumption of natural resources. The author states that the main issues of concern for our national security are disputes over mismanagement of oil and water supplies, and fish stocks. In the longer term, he argues that we ought to worry about the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming (which will increase the probability of natural disasters), and land degradation. He holds that these problems directly threaten our health, food supplies, economic development and enjoyment of life. If our current or potential partners slide into ecological decline, the author claims that this will trigger economic decline, provoking political instability that will hurt us economically and drag us into military and police actions around the world. To combat these problems, he argues that we need to implement all the decisions agreed to at the Rio Conference in 1992.

Valerie Percival: "Empirical Findings From Recent Research"

Valerie Percival works as a research assistant to Thomas Homer-Dixon on the Project on Population, Environment and Security linkages at the University of Toronto. The goal of this project is to gather, evaluate, integrate and disseminate information on causal linkages among population growth, renewable resource scarcities, migration and violent conflict. The case studies include Chiapas, Gaza, Pakistan, Rwanda and South Africa.