

Some of the highlights include:

- defining a Strategic Framework for the Peacebuilding Initiative;
- establishing this consultative forum;
- supporting the Canadian Peacebuilding Co-ordinating Committee, which helped bring you together today;
- implementing CANADEM, the roster of Canadian experts on human rights and democracy; and
- creating two new funding mechanisms: the Peacebuilding Fund, managed by CIDA, for projects in developing countries; and the Peacebuilding Program, managed by DFAIT, for projects that fall outside CIDA's priorities.

Structures are fine, of course. But what have we actually done since October 1996 to respond to real-world challenges? Let me give you a very selective tour d'horizon of how we have used these new structures in the four geographic priorities identified this year for the Peacebuilding Fund.

In Guatemala, the peace accords were signed in December 1996. Our first project under the Peacebuilding Fund was to contribute to the Commission of Historical Clarification — Guatemala's "truth commission" — which will help establish a neutral, objective, historical record of the causes and human consequences of that country's 36-year civil war, particularly in terms of human rights violations. Canada was the first donor to contribute to the start-up costs of the Commission, thereby prompting a positive response from other donors. Since then, we have held a focussed consultation with Canadian NGOs that identified a short list of peacebuilding priorities for Guatemala. Based on this, we are examining ways of using the Peacebuilding Fund to strengthen the capacity of Guatemalan civil society to participate effectively in the various political forums created by the peace process.

In Cambodia, the process of democratization suffered a setback last July after the short but violent conflict between the forces loyal to the First and Second Prime Ministers. To assess the prospects for continued Canadian support for democratic development in Cambodia, we used the Peacebuilding Fund to send a mission there last August, co-ordinated by the Parliamentary Centre. It returned with a strong endorsement of the strategy of continued engagement in Cambodia; and since that time CIDA has provided additional financial support to the work of the Electoral Commission. We will be examining options as well for using the Peacebuilding Fund to reinforce the capacity of Cambodian NGOs to educate voters and observe their own electoral process.

In the Great Lakes of Africa, there have been cataclysmic changes, culminating in the fall of Mobutu and the installation of a new government in the newly named Democratic Republic of Congo. Through the Peacebuilding Fund, we supported the work of Mohammed Sahnoun, Ambassador Chrétien's successor as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Great Lakes, to broker a peaceful resolution of the multiple conflicts between the governments of this region. We have also used the Fund to support an innovative project, managed by the African NGO Synergies Africa, that is working to bring together civil society groups in eastern Congo and neighbouring Rwanda to find local solutions to these conflicts.

In Bosnia, the Dayton Accord has been held in place with enormous support from the international community, co-ordinated by the High Representative, Carl Westendorp, and the Peace Implementation Council. The most dramatic political changes in the past year have occurred within the Serb entity in Bosnia, the Republika Srpska, which has seen a power struggle between the hard-line faction based in Pale and the more moderate, pro-Dayton faction based in Banja Luka. Fortunately, the more moderate faction has recently gained the upper hand. We have used the Peacebuilding Fund to respond to two special appeals of the High Representative to support the emergence of a more moderate voice in this region. First, we funded a public information campaign in the Serb entity to combat hate propaganda against the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia; and more recently we provided immediate financial support for the new moderate government in Banja Luka.

We have also supported multilateral initiatives that will ultimately have an impact across a wide range of countries. For example, the Peacebuilding Fund supported the participation of delegates from