

TOWARD A NORTHERN FOREIGN POLICY FOR CANADA

For nearly 50 years Canadian policies toward the circumpolar north reflected an "outside-in" orientation. External pressures relating mainly to the Cold War were the dominant impulses for Canada's foreign policy in the Arctic. The end of the Cold War, though, opened the way for a new framework for understanding and pursuing Canada's northern foreign policy interests. The framework for a new northern foreign policy set out here is intended to re-balance Canada's approach to the north, bringing to the fore more of an "inside-out" orientation. Relative to external pressures, from now on Canadian domestic northern interests will play a more decisive role in determining Canada's northern foreign policy.

This shift does not stem from the ending of the Cold War alone. It coincided with two major domestic developments which also demand a new approach to Canada's northern foreign policy. The first is the turning of a new page in Canada's relations with northern Aboriginal peoples, as reflected in *Gathering Strength*. The second is the elevation of environmental issues to prominence in Canada's policy debate, leading to renewed public and governmental attention to the importance of the Arctic environment to global survival, and the impact of Arctic environmental degradation on northern people, particularly Aboriginal peoples.

It bears emphasizing that policy never was wholly "outside-in," nor will it now be wholly "inside-out." While the demands of security and sovereignty concerns played an overwhelming role in Canada's northern foreign policy, other objectives such as the prevention of pollution by supertankers in Canada's Arctic archipelago obviously played a part as well. Similarly, under the new approach with its "inside-out" orientation, security and sovereignty concerns will not be absent.

Canada's new northern foreign policy will revolve around seven major inter-related themes:

- sustainable development;
- environmental protection;
- social and cultural renewal;
- regional good governance and democratic development;
- northern sovereignty and security;
- bilateral relations with northern neighbours; and
- the consultative process and national unity.

Each of these themes frames a number of Canada's core foreign policy objectives relating to the Arctic, objectives which in turn form the basis for determining specific goals and action plans of Canada's northern foreign policy. The following sections provide a contextual introduction to the seven themes, followed by a discussion of the core objectives relating to them.