

misunderstanding. To cite some of the objectives commonly expressed in DFAIT and in the NGOs:

- Policy improvement—by eliciting informed advice from academics, for example, or from NGOs with unique first-hand experience in the field;
- Democratization—by engaging Canadians in formulating, implementing and evaluating the foreign policy of their own government;
- Assessment of domestic public opinion—to determine what Canadians want, expect or will tolerate in foreign policy, sometimes in preparation for an attempted modification of public attitudes;
- Legitimation—to attract public acceptance of the procedures and outcomes of policy-making, thereby reinforcing policy durability;
- Relationship-building—to create and institutionalize a routine of consultation between DFAIT and the interested Canadian public;
- Persuasion—to convince skeptics and critics that Government intentions and conduct are reasonable within the bounds of “the possible”;
- Co-optation—to subdue public criticism of the Government by recruiting potential critics into the policy process;
- The Demonstration Effect—encouraging other governments to open themselves to public scrutiny and advice by a display of productive openness in Canada.

All these objectives, and others besides, are cited either as actual or desirable aims of participants in DFAIT’s public consultations. Plainly, they do not all sit easily together. More to the point, uncertainties about intentions have led to disappointments and frustrations on all sides.