



November 26, 1996

On November 19th the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development hosted a consultation on Canada-China relations. The purpose of the consultation was to provide Minister Axworthy with policy options for Canada on how best to promote political stability, security and respect for human rights in China.

Participants were invited from across Canada and included academics, representatives of Amnesty International, and members of Chinese Canadian community. Minister Chan chaired the first hour of the consultation and Steven Lee the remainder. Officials from the department attended and contributed useful policy information.

The following views were widely agreed:

Political Stability

Canadian policy on institution building in China should focus on educating the judiciary and training Chinese corporations and individuals in Canadian business skills and best practices.

Special attention should be given to engaging key people and groups in outlying provinces. Where possible, information technologies should form an integral part of Canada's institution building efforts.

Human Rights

At every opportunity, the Canadian government should present lists of detained dissidents to Chinese authorities. In addition, the government should monitor and report on the Chinese government's violation of its own legal procedures, especially in light of the new legal code.

To improve respect for human rights in China as a whole, the government should work with business to formulate a code of corporate conduct for Canadian companies. The code should not be China specific but apply to all Canadian commercial activity abroad.

Security

Considering the important political role the People's Liberation Army will play in the formation of the post-Deng government, Canada needs to directly engage the PLA in track two dialogues within APEC, ASEAN and NPT and should engage the PLA in Canadian civil control of military and other relevant experience as a democratic development, confidence building and counter-nationalism effort.