

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The Government of Canada thanks the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (the Committee) for its June 2001 report entitled *Balance, Transparency and Engagement after the Quebec Summit* and wishes to express its appreciation to the Committee for its valuable contribution during the lead-up to the Quebec City Summit of the Americas and at the Summit itself. The Government welcomes the continuous engagement of the Committee as it works toward the implementation of Summit mandates.

While follow-up to the Quebec City Summit is only in its initial stages, Canada is already engaged in the process of implementing many of the commitments contained in the *Declaration of Quebec City*, its *Plan of Action* and the *Statement on Connectivity*. The best example so far is the adoption by foreign ministers of the Inter-American Democratic Charter during a Special Session of the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly in Lima, Peru, on September 11, 2001.

Canada will remain Chair of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) for the medium term and will continue to chair the OAS Special Committee on Inter-American Summits Management. It is important to maintain the momentum created by the success of the Quebec City Summit and to continue engaging the citizens of the Americas in the Summit process. The Government of Canada believes that constructive exchanges with citizens that lead to concrete action can be reached only through dialogue that increases understanding of the positions of each stakeholder and of the complexity of the hemispheric cooperation process.

The Report of the Committee comes at a time when globalization brings new opportunities and challenges and when Canadians are increasingly engaging in international affairs. There is a growing awareness among governments in the hemisphere of the importance of being more transparent and of seeking the views of citizens on national and regional issues. As the Report outlines, Canada has been an innovator in promoting greater transparency in inter-American affairs and has taken a leadership role in taking into consideration the views of non-governmental actors in multilateral negotiations and conferences. The Third Summit of the Americas was the most transparent Summit to date, and a substantial effort was made to ensure that the concerns of the citizens of the Americas were reflected in the hemispheric agenda.

