

countries to assist them in limiting emissions. The draft text of the convention included specific target levels for emissions along with timeframes for achieving those levels. These specifics were eliminated from the convention in the negotiating process.

- **The Statement on Forest Principles** is a non-binding statement which recognizes that sustainable management of forests is connected to economic, ecological, social and cultural preservation and progress. It recommends that states assess and minimize the damage to their forests from economic development. The statement also establishes a process of cooperation among states on the safe use of forests. This issue was one in which the US took a leading role and which brought confrontation along the traditional North-South lines. The majority of developing states felt that the US initiative on forests was hypocritical given the degree to which developed nations such as the US have used their own forests. For many developing countries forests are a key economic asset and the principles embodied in the convention represented an intrusion on their sovereign right to handle their own forests as they see fit.
- **Agenda 21** -- a more than 800 page-long, non-binding document -- is a blueprint for protecting and restoring the environment in the context of promoting development. Issues addressed include women, children, and poverty. The UN estimated that the plan would cost developed states \$125 billion per year to implement. Industrial states will increase their foreign aid to 0.7 percent of their gross domestic product in order to help with financing.

CURRENT CANADIAN POSITION

Canada was strongly committed to the Rio conference and to the overall need for international efforts to protect and restore the environment, and signed all five of the documents put forth by the conference. In its outline of foreign policy priorities, UNCED and the goal of sustainable development featured as a priority for the Canadian government.

In international preparations for the conference Canada was a leader in ensuring that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and aboriginal peoples participated. It contributed funds to NGOs in developing states to ensure their involvement and assisted indigenous groups in other states as well. In a letter responding to an editorial in the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mrs. Barbara McDougall, gave an outline of Canada's approach to UNCED.

Canada has played a leadership role in the work of UNCED from the beginning. We negotiated with other governments to get the official involvement of non-governmental organizations in the conference. We made sure that aboriginal people and their special perspective on the environment would be represented....Our strategy for the conference includes an emphasis on priorities such as international agreements on forestry practices and overfishing....The government has not developed these plans in isolation. We have worked