

The Group of 78

The Group of 78 is an informal association of Canadians seeking to promote global priorities for peace and disarmament, equitable and sustainable development, and a strong and revitalized United Nations system.

It began in 1980 when a small group including Andrew Brewin MP and Peggy Brewin, Murray Thomson of Project Ploughshares, Robert McClure, former Moderator of the United Church, and King Gordon, formerly of the United Nations Secretariat, drafted a statement on how best Canada could contribute to the building of a peaceful and secure world. In November 1981 that statement, Canadian Foreign Policy in the 80s, was sent to Prime Minister Trudeau. It was signed by 78 Canadians - a group of 78.

The statement set out three inter-related objectives:

1. removal of the threat of nuclear war;
2. the mobilization of world resources to achieve a more equitable international order and bring an end to the crushing poverty which is the common lot of the majority in the Third World;
3. the strengthening and reform of the United Nations and other global institutions designed to bring about a pacific settlement of disputes, foster international cooperation, promote the growth of world law and the protection of basic human rights.

That was the beginning of a dialogue between the Group of 78 and the Canadian government. In the following years, members of the Group discussed, and made their views known, about new issues facing Canada in international relations and their implications for the central, and universal, objectives of policy already mentioned.

The Group of 78

- meets in conferences to consider needed changes in foreign policy, seeking consensus on recommendations to government;
- produces publications on conference findings and special issues;
- publishes "Newslink", a newsletter for general distribution;
- organizes lunches with invited speakers.

Le Groupe des 78

Le groupe des 78 est une association à titre informel de Canadiens qui ont pour but d'atteindre que le monde considère comme priorités essentiels la paix et le désarmement, le développement soutenable et équitable pour tous et le renforcement total du système des Nations Unies.

Cette association vit le jour au bout d'une certaine réunion de personnes clefs pendant laquelle on rédigea une déclaration sur le rôle de Canada dans la marche vers un monde de paix et de sécurité. Parmi ces personnes clefs se trouvèrent le député Andrew Brewin et Peggy Brewin, Murray Thomson du Project Ploughshares, Robert McClure, ancien modérateur de l'Eglise Unie et King Gordon, autrefois du Secrétariat des Nations Unies.