

Lloyd Axworthy:

Lloyd Axworthy was Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister for almost five years, from January 1996 to October 2000. During his tenure Mr. Axworthy tirelessly championed the cause of peace, and was nominated for the 1998 Nobel

Peace Prize after the adoption of the Ottawa Convention, which bans the production, use, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel mines, in December 1997. With Jody Williams, head of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, he was the main advocate for the Convention on the global stage.

As Minister, one of his first initiatives promoting peace was the establishment of the Canadian Peacebuilding Fund and the Canadian Peacebuilding Program in the fall of 1996. The aim was to contribute to conflict prevention and post-conflict social and economic reconstruction.

In 1998, Mr. Axworthy was at the head of a group of like-minded states that pushed successfully for the creation of the International Criminal Court. This body's purpose is to prosecute individuals accused of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It will come into existence as soon as 60 states ratify the Rome Statute creating it. Currently, some 115 countries have signed the Statute and 22, including Canada, have ratified it. This fall, Mr. Axworthy announced that Canada was launching an international

a man of peace

campaign to speed up the ratification process and make the Court a reality as soon as possible.

Another major achievement was the International Conference on War-Affected Children, held in Winnipeg this past September (see p. 4), the first-ever such gathering. The Conference followed several Canadian initiatives at the United Nations and in other forums, such as the G-8, on behalf of specific goals: better protection for civilians (particularly women and children) in armed conflict; more efficient peacekeeping operations; and more humane use of sanctions.

at that time, he took part in civil rights demonstrations and supported the peace movement.

Mr. Axworthy first entered Parliament in 1979. His ambition, he once said, was to become Prime Minister; failing that, he wanted to follow in the footsteps of Lester B. Pearson, who, in 1956, gave the world the concept of UN peacekeeping missions. When he assumed the Foreign Affairs portfolio, he proved a worthy successor to Pearson, campaigning successfully for another mandate for Canada on the UN Security Council (1999–2000), for UN system reforms, and for Security Council resolutions and action that would advance world peace and (above all) enhance the protection of women and children in armed conflict.

Lloyd Axworthy always believed in the value of partnerships between civil society and progressive governments in order to advance the cause of peace. It was such a partnership that achieved the Ottawa Convention. Looking at his legacy, political commentator Richard Gwyn said that while Canada has had capable foreign ministers in



Lloyd Axworthy looks towards Jody Williams after signing the Ottawa Convention on landmines, December 3, 1997. Also applauding the signing are Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (right), United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan (ctr) and President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Cornelio Sommaruga.



Kofi Annan, left, listens as Minister Axworthy addresses the UN Security Council, February 12, 1999.

Mr. Axworthy's last endeavour before leaving office was the creation of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (see p. 5).

Rather than any one initiative, Mr. Axworthy's most important contribution to world peace may have been his systematic promotion of the concept of human security. In broad terms, a human security agenda involves working to ensure that people need not fear for their rights, their safety or even their lives. In Mr. Axworthy's view, safeguarding these human priorities is as vital to global peace as are arms control and disarmament.

YOUNG ACTIVIST

Lloyd Axworthy's concern for world peace goes back to his youth. He was born in December 1939 and during his first five years he barely saw his father, who was fighting in the Second World War. In the 1950s, he took a keen interest in the Korean War, the Cold War and the Suez Crisis: he debated these issues in school, in Model United Nations Assemblies and in Manitoba's Youth Parliament. In the 1960s he studied political science at the University of Manitoba and then at Princeton University in New Jersey; and like many students

the last five decades, Mr. Axworthy was the most noteworthy since Pearson: "Axworthy is the first to have come up with a new idea—the partnerships—about how Canada can use its potential to best advantage in international affairs."

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POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

NEW CAREER

Lloyd Axworthy has now embarked on a new career as head of the University of British Columbia's Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues. At the same time, he plans to pursue human security issues that matter greatly to him. "In the end," he has said, "we all have a stake in ensuring better security for all human beings in this world."

He can be expected to carry on his work with the same dignity and passion that he showed as Minister of Foreign Affairs. ●