

capacity. The Canadian team found that the elections were a positive step forward in the democratic process but that more remains to be done. AFN representative Chief Ghislain Picard further suggested that the electoral process could benefit from recognizing indigenous practices and customs. Just prior to the elections, Chiapas was affected by severe flooding. The **Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)** responded on September 22 with a contribution (via the Pan-American Health Organization) of \$150,000 in humanitarian assistance.

During the recent **Regional Anti-Personnel Landmines Regional Seminar** held in Mexico City January 11-12 (co-hosted by Mexico and Canada to promote regional ratification of the Ottawa Treaty), Minister Axworthy met bilaterally with Mexican Foreign Secretary Green and raised the recent country reports on Mexico by the **UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights**. At a press conference afterwards, he also reiterated Canada's support for a peaceful solution in Chiapas, and urged all parties to work with the Government of Mexico to resolve the conflict in a peaceful manner. At the recent **Canada-Mexico Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC)** meeting held February 17-19 in Ottawa, broad discussions were held between various Ministers on social and indigenous issues, including the subject of human rights.

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