
Security: the Basis for Action

Shared human security: a broader concept of security.

Serious long term challenges are posed by environmental, demographic, health and development issues around the globe. Some of these challenges - such as global warming - could affect us directly. Others may provoke crises producing humanitarian tragedies, epidemics, mass migrations, and other problems from which, even if half a world away, Canada will not be immune. Still others may result in the adoption abroad of policies that ultimately degrade our economic security by undercutting labour, health, environmental or other international standards. All of this demands a broadening of the focus of security policy from its narrow orientation of managing state-to-state relationships, to one that recognizes the importance of the individual and society for our shared security.

Meeting the challenges that this broader security agenda poses means, as the National Forum on Canada's International Relations concluded, working for the promotion of democracy and good governance, of human rights and the rule of law, and of prosperity through sustainable development. Canadian foreign policy will continue to pursue these goals.

There is consensus that such a broader orientation can best be achieved - at least cost, and to best effect - through approaches that broaden the response to security issues beyond military options and focus on promoting international cooperation, building stability and on preventing conflict. The Government will advance this objective through a more integrated approach, marshalling all our foreign policy instruments.

Because of the transnational or global nature of the threats, human security demands cooperative international action. Canada will continue to work with others in a variety of fora to address these issues.

Sustainable development: a precondition for human security.

The Special Joint Committee, and the many witnesses appearing before it, recognized that Canadian international development assistance is more than an expression of Canadians' values - of our sense of justice, and of our desire to help. They saw that it also plays a critical role in addressing many of the key issues that now head the global security agenda. Problems such as environmental degradation and growing disparities between rich and poor affect human security around the world and are areas where Canada can make an effective contribution by promoting sustainable development through its