

Regional Initiatives: OAS

QUESTION

What are Canada's priorities at the OAS General Assembly later this year?

SUGGESTED REPLY

- Canadian presence in the OAS is an important part of our efforts to broaden and deepen our relationship with Latin America and advance key Canadian foreign policy objectives (human security, human rights-democratization, economic integration, environmental protection and sustainable development).
- The OAS has also proven useful in advancing Canadian initiatives beyond the hemisphere (landmines, UN Security Council mandate for Haiti, Helms-Burton).

Our current priorities are:

1. Promote Human Security:

- Canada actively participated, through both its civilian and military agencies, in the San Salvador Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures which took place in February 1998. Canada wants to encourage greater collaboration between civilian and military institutions in the countries of the hemisphere.
- Our next priority is to strengthen dialogue on all aspects of conventional weapons, including small arms.

2. Encourage Ratification of the Land Mines Treaty:

- The commitment and leadership of a huge majority of the OAS members throughout the Ottawa process have been invaluable. We think the OAS should encourage rapid ratification of the Convention by its member states.