

FROM THE DIRECTOR

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE INSTITUTE

THE MIDDLE OF 1989 marked a natural crossroads for the Institute for Peace and Security. It was the five-year point in the Institute's life; the steady growth in the funding base (as provided in our founding legislation) had reached a plateau, and the Board of Directors agreed that it was a logical time to draw on the lessons of the initial building phase and to set clear directions for the future.

As the new Director, I seized every opportunity to consult my colleagues on the Board and staff about our past experience, and undertook a programme of external consultations, to seek the most balanced perspective possible. The result was an extraordinarily useful series of speaking and media engagements, small-group discussions and "accountability sessions," in every region of the country, meeting a cross-section of Canadians who follow the Institute's work and use its services – not excluding parliamentarians, federal, provincial and territorial officials and national and local journalists.

After further internal consultation – in which all Institute staff participated – our Board considered and agreed upon a set of medium-term directions for the Institute at our two-day meeting in mid-June. These discussions allowed for a bridging between past experience and future plans, since this was the last opportunity for our founding Chairman, and for several other distinguished directors who were retiring, to sum up their impressions and suggestions. What follows is an outline of our main conclusions.

FIRST, THE "REAL WORLD" ENVIRONMENT in which the Institute pursues its mandate of increasing knowledge and understanding of issues of international peace and security is today extremely challenging, and likely to remain so for years to come. The dramatic improvement in East-West relations, and the possibilities for progress in arms control and conflict resolution, creates *more* work, not less, for our Institute and its collaborators. None of the traditional issues has gone away – working out sensible options for defence policy and concrete arms control is tougher than ever – but we must also confront the huge and exhilarating tasks of contributing to new institutions, initiatives to resolve and reduce conflicts around the world, and responses to new kinds of international security threats, such as global

climatic change. Such an agenda could easily lead to overload, or to a diffused and diluted effort, so the Institute has identified a number of areas for concentrated work, along with its general and responsive coverage, in a flexible five-year strategy.

The Board also agreed that the pre-eminent mandate and resources entrusted to us by Parliament call for a clear stamp of excellence and relevance in all the Institute's activities, especially if it is to discharge credibly its responsibility to "study and propose ideas and policies." Another basic principle is that the Institute will continue to work in partnership with a wide range of other institutions, groups and individuals in the achievement of the central goals, by fostering and funding the appropriate research, information and educational activities. In addition to working with such specialized partners, however, the Institute accepts a central responsibility for making analyses of international peace and security accessible and interesting to a much wider public, to policy-makers and opinion leaders, both in Canada and abroad. This objective requires an energetic and professional working relationship with the information media which play a vital role in shaping understanding on these questions.

WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR LEGISLATIVE mandate, our programme will continue to deal with the full range of peace and security issues, with particular attention to arms control, disarmament, defence, conflict resolution as well as some of the "frontier" questions in the field. We will maintain general monitoring, response, and referral capabilities in these areas, with our senior researchers each covering designated fields. This general issue coverage will also be maintained through the widest possible accessibility of such vehicles as our annual Guide, our streamlined publications programme, and vigorous outreach of our information services, through libraries, schools and other institutions. Six project-areas or clusters for *intensive* concentration over the next two to five years are as follows:

- The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- Canadian defence and security policy;
- Measures for strengthening international systems of peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building;
- Developing, maintaining and calling upon networks of experts concerned with particular regions of conflict or potential conflict;
- Enhancing international cooperation and security in the Arctic region;

- Exploration of new threats and new approaches to international security.

A number of these project-areas build on well-established activities undertaken or supported by the Institute, and others have already been the subject of new initiatives. For example, work on the review of defence and security policy is being launched against the background of a completed study on the future of Canadian land-forces, and the media round-table on defence, foreign policy and the federal budget held in early May. The project-area on international mechanisms for strengthening peace proceeds from a number of projects on peacekeeping, mediation and conflict resolution. Our "network" coverage of regions of conflict will draw on the lessons of the large-scale project on Cyprus conducted over the past year, and take such forms as the current programme on the transition to peace and elections in Namibia. The Arctic cooperation and security focus will bring together a large number of studies, and intensify a range of national and international contacts in these fields. New approaches to international security are already the subject of a commissioned project by a multi-university team.

THE INSTITUTE'S MANDATE TO APPROACH THE field of international peace and security "from a Canadian perspective" is not justification for any narrow nationalism. In fact, the global range of Canada's interests and potential contributions, as well as the strengths and curiosities of Canadians, mean that our agenda must be broad and innovative. By this same token, we have concluded that it is a responsibility of key Canadian institutions to concentrate resources primarily in areas of world importance where they can actually make the most difference. Thus the Institute's own analytical and educational work, and some of the work it undertakes with others, will be guided more explicitly by a sense of where Canada's strengths in enhancing international peace and security are most likely to be found over the medium-term. Our Board and staff are convinced that in the process of specializing in this way we will not only be the most effective resource for the Canadian community, but also build appropriate recognition and influence for this work world-wide. □

– BERNARD WOOD

Bernard Wood is the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Institute.