

News BRIEFS

CANADA TO CONTRIBUTE TO INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

Canada will contribute \$1 million to the International Fund for Ireland over the next three years, in support of international peacebuilding efforts in Ireland.

"This contribution further re-affirms Canada's commitment to the peace process in Ireland," said Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy. "We are especially pleased that Canada's contribution will be applied toward activities which support programs for disadvantaged areas and promote intercommunity links and dialogue."

Canada has a particular interest in securing peace in Northern Ireland since close to 4 million Canadians are of Irish descent.

Canadian efforts toward reaching peace in Northern Ireland also include the participation of some prominent individuals. General (Ret) John de Chastelain is head of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning; Chief Justice William Hoyt of the New Brunswick Superior Court serves on an international judicial body re-investigating the 1972 "Bloody Sunday" massacre; and Professor Clifford Shearing, head of the Centre for Criminology at the University of Toronto, provides expert recommendations to the Commission on Policing established under the Good Friday Agreement.

CANADA TO CONTROL IMAGING SATELLITES

Minister Axworthy and National Defence Minister Art Eggleton announced in June that, as the ownership of remote sensing satellites moves from the public to the private sector, Canada is developing new legislation to control commercial remote sensing satellites. The high-performance satellites can be used

for cartography, natural resources management and surveillance of the Earth.

"We need to take steps to ensure that photographs taken by these satellites are not used against Canada and its allies," said Mr. Axworthy.

Canada is a world leader in the design, construction and operation of high-performance civilian remote sensing satellites using Synthetic Aperture Radar. Among other things, the policy initiative seeks to maintain and protect Canada's critical industrial base and to promote regional stability together with the private sector.

The legislative process to implement the policy is expected to take up to two years, and implementation would precede the launch of Canada's first commercial remote sensing satellite.

HUMAN SECURITY: THE BERGEN MEETING

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy expressed his satisfaction with the progress accomplished on the human security agenda at a two-day meeting of ministers and representatives of 11 governments in Bergen, Norway, on May 19 and 20. The meeting focussed on the identification of challenges and approaches for addressing major issues, including the elimination of anti-personnel mines, measures to counter the excessive accumulation and transfer of military small arms, prohibition of the use of child soldiers, and efforts to strengthen the adherence to international humanitarian and human rights laws.

The Minister said that the meeting "illustrated a growing commitment to promote the concept of human security and reflected the increasing international importance placed on the security and safety of the individual." Besides Canada and Norway, participants included Austria, Chile, Ireland, Jordan, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand. South Africa attended as an observer.

The Chairman's Summary of the Bergen meeting is available on the DFAIT Web site (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca), attached to press release no. 117. Also available on the site is *Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World*, released by Minister Axworthy on May 14. The document sets out a rationale for a foreign policy taking safety and security for people as a central point of reference.

Commenting on the text, France's *Le Monde* said, "Within a few years, this document . . . may be remembered as one of the first attempts to develop a theory in support of limiting national sovereignty and establishing the right of intervention on humanitarian grounds."

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN: THE MAPUTO CONFERENCE

The First Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (the Ottawa Convention) was held in early May in Maputo, Mozambique. Arriving from a visit to a Kosovar refugee camp in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Foreign Affairs Minister Axworthy called on the international community to develop a capacity for rapid, co-ordinated humanitarian mine action in post-conflict situations.

"The tragedy of the Kosovars is compounded by the fact that their lands are now being mined," said the Minister. "The international community must be ready to respond urgently to ensure that when the time comes, they can return to their homes in safety."

To date, 135 countries have signed the treaty and close to 80 have ratified it. The Convention entered into force on March 1, 1999.

