

Employment: Canada is a leader in the development of labour market information systems and has pioneered understanding of the measurement and valuation of unpaid work, knowledge that should be shared. Canada recognizes the importance of international labour standards but prefers to promote respect for these standards through mechanisms other than trade agreements. The Government supports a central role for the ILO in the follow-up to the WSSD and strengthened co-operation on social development within the multilateral system.

Social integration: Good governance and respect for the value of diversity are objectives of Canadian policy. Canada has actively promoted ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), introduced language on the elimination of violence against women in many international forums and is a leader in programs for people with disabilities. Canada is willing to assist countries wishing to better understand social policy issues and is supporting the development of indicators to monitor the situation of groups with specific needs.

Implementation and follow-up: As Chair of the recent G-7 Summit in Halifax, Canada promoted and obtained agreement that the IFIs should focus more on poverty reduction. Canada has also actively promoted a central role for the Commission for Social Development in following up on the Summit as well as the participation of civil society and expert guidance in assisting in the Commission's work. Canada is seeking better consolidation of UN reporting systems before agreeing to further national reports on social development. The Government is also committed to working with like-minded countries to enable developing countries to reduce excessive military expenditures and direct the funds to social and economic development.

A role for civil society in follow-up: Canada's partnership role with civil society was noted by many other delegations at the Social Summit. While consultations are just beginning on its follow-up, it is expected that civil society will participate in discussions on implementation of Summit agreements and indeed on follow-up to several other UN conferences that address social issues.

Conclusions: The WSSD has given a fillip to issues that have lingered on the international agenda for many years without much cohesion, commitment or co-ordinated action. The Summit achieved an international consensus that poverty eradication, employment and social integration should be objectives of social and economic policy. This consensus will permit more effective, focussed action by the international community in the future and perhaps assist the discussions of the G-7 when they meet in Lyon in 1996.

Canada has been invited by several countries to provide technical assistance in social development as a result of its active participation in the Summit and is developing strategies to market its expertise in social development. Dialogue on follow-up is just beginning and will involve consultations and concerted action with representatives of civil society and all levels of government involved in social development.