

GOVERNMENTS OF CANADA HAVE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE. HOWEVER, FOR VARIOUS REASONS WE DECLINED TO TAKE THE FINAL STEP. THESE REASONS REFLECT AT TIMES FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY PRIORITIES, AT TIMES CONCERNS ABOUT UNDERTAKING ADDITIONAL SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES BY ADHERING TO THE RIO TREATY, AT TIMES CONCERNS THAT FULL MEMBERSHIP MIGHT SUBJECT US TO PRESSURES FROM ONE SIDE OR ANOTHER OR RESTRICT OUR ABILITY FOR INDEPENDENT ACTION AND AT TIMES CONCERNS THAT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH INDIVIDUAL LATIN AMERICAN OR CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES, OR WITH THE UNITED STATES, MIGHT SUFFER BECAUSE OF POSITIONS THAT WE, AS NEWCOMERS IN THE ORGANIZATION, MIGHT TAKE IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE IT MORE EFFECTIVE, AS MANY OF OUR FRIENDS IN THE OAS HAVE SUGGESTED WE COULD. THE SIMPLE FACT IS THAT THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A NATIONAL CONSENSUS IN CANADA IN FAVOUR OF JOINING. FOR ALL OF THESE REASONS, SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA HAVE CONCLUDED THAT WE SHOULD NOT SEEK MEMBERSHIP.

THAT BEING SAID, CANADA IS ANXIOUS TO BE ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE IN ITS ROLE AS A PERMANENT OBSERVER, AND THAT VANTAGE POINT GIVES US A DISPASSIONATE AND PERHAPS INSTRUCTIVE INSIGHT INTO THE CURRENT ORGANIZATION. WE SHARE, FOR INSTANCE, THE DESIRE TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, BUT WE ALSO SHARE THE SAME CONCERNS OF ALL