

Close to 135 representatives of various sectors of Canadian society – academia, government, NGOs – registered for the conference, making it a great achievement in terms of the number of participants and the variety of their interests. Several representatives of the Canadian-Haitian community were among the audience and participated actively during the discussion.

The event was budgeted at \$45,000, including a contribution of \$20,000 from the John Holmes Fund. All deliverables, including follow-up on the Haiti file as well as the production of a public education document, are coming in on time and within budget.

The document, a report containing the text of the presentations as well as conclusions and policy recommendations, is being produced under the direction of Denis Berthiaume, the project officer at FOCAL responsible for the organization of the conference. The final edited draft is expected no later than May 31, 1997. The report will be distributed to all participants of the conference and will be available to the public following the initial distribution.

Conclusions

Some draft conclusions about state and democratic development in Haiti were offered by most presenters at the conference. These comments tended to synthesize aspects drawn from the three axes of discussion.

- Whatever scenario is put forward for the development of Haiti – democratic, economic, or social – should be the result of long-term planning rather than simply an attempt to fix short- or medium-term development problems. The shortsighted approach currently in use can only lead to short- or medium-term solutions to Haiti's problems.
- Although a great portion of the technical expertise currently involved in Haiti comes from the international community – governmental and non governmental – Haitians must remain a driving element of the development process. In some cases, a more participative approach should be adopted in order to ensure that solutions put forward reflect the realities of life in Haiti.
- Although the situation in Haiti has somewhat improved in the past few years, it remains critical. The international community ought to realize that development in Haiti can only be the result of concerted and committed action on their part. There is no room for competition among donor countries or between international agencies. International aid also must be sustained in order to ensure that measures are carried through until their full implementation.
- The State in Haiti urgently needs to be deeply reformed. Years of repression have led to the establishment of state machinery that hinders democratic, economic, and social development.