

Here too, this hemisphere carries its share of the global burden.

The challenges to the hemispheric environment are acute, requiring changed lifestyles, altered goals and intensive dialogue.

We in the Northern half of the hemisphere must accept the burden of cleansing our air and water of the poisons we have dispensed with such abandon. We must acknowledge that the vast majority of global pollution originates in the industrialized world. We must also assist others in avoiding the mistakes we have made, for the world cannot sustain continued assaults on its environment.

Thus, the destruction of the Amazon rain forest causes us great concern, for it is here where so much of the oxygen which feeds the world is born.

The interdependence inherent in our hemispheric ecosystem is brought home by the fact that dangerous industrial chemicals - now outlawed in Canada - are showing up in our lakes and rivers, borne by winds and rain from Central America.

The awful truth to be accepted here is the irrelevance of natural borders in facing this problem, and the futility of assigning blame. We have no choice but to co-operate, for unilateral solutions won't work and joint actions fail without co-operation in each nation.

This region also bears the painful scars of the drug trade. where demand in the United States and Canada feed production in Colombia, Bolivia and Peru, and vice versa.

Here too, the only solution is to act together.

Finally, the awful burden of debt threatens the stability of the developed and developing world alike. It is particularly acute in Latin America, and poses a separate threat to the fledgling democracies of the hemisphere, demanding co-operation and assistance from the industrialized world.

Canada's new strategy for Latin America - including our membership in the OAS - is based on a straightforward proposition: that the nations of this region have a major influence on issues of global importance - and importance for Canada - whether the issue is drugs, the environment, human rights, debt, trade or the emerging dialogue between developed and developing countries.