

- **Building Bridges - Proposals**

4.9 Establish a Foundation for the Americas

One of the successful ingredients in our Asia Pacific policy was the establishment of the Asia Pacific Foundation and Pacific 2000. These may offer useful models for emulation, especially in light of the government's commitment to building linkages with the Americas as the 'fourth pillar' of Canadian foreign policy. An umbrella "Foundation for the Americas" (not to be confused with the existing Canadian Foundation for the Americas, the name under which the former Canada-Latin America Forum (FOCAL) has been incorporated since January 1993) could emphasize trade links, the environment (building on the Rio conference) and cooperation between educational institutions. It would also provide a cause around which to galvanize private sector and provincial government support.

Several institutions currently work to fill part of the need for coordinating more effectively public interest in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the Canadian Council for the Americas, the Canada-Brazil Chamber of Commerce and the aforementioned Canadian Foundation for the Americas. It is for consideration whether one umbrella foundation might present a more effective use of limited federal, provincial and private sector funding already engaged in promoting greater contact with Latin America. Potential provincial and private sector interest should be explored.

4.10 Enhanced Contacts Through Multilateral Channels

We should seek greater dialogue with Latin American countries in multilateral settings. We should, for example, seek out the views of the Latin American Group at the United Nations on a more systematic basis and coordinate positions with the Latin Americans when and where this would be appropriate. Our decision to assume full OAS membership was greeted enthusiastically by all the other members of the Organization and our performance as an OAS member has substantially enhanced our standing in the region. We should continue to use our influence with Latin American and Caribbean countries to promote institutional reform in both the UN system and the OAS.

a) Institution Building at the OAS

The OAS is central to our hemispheric policy. It is an example where the reality of our effort and the organization's willingness to change gradually have surpassed