

DFAIT: WHAT WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is a remarkably complex institution. It amalgamates a foreign ministry largely forged in the cold war, a diplomatic service patterned on the British model, a trade ministry that had been hived off a domestic department, and a trade service with its own long traditions and culture. It is comprised, in part, of Canadians who spend their careers in a state of permanent mobility, others who fulfill specialized roles in Ottawa, and of employees engaged in over 150 locations around the world.

It is a network of foreign operations, a central agency of government, a policy ministry, and a service delivery provider.

We are Canada's agents, our country's purposeful intermediaries in the world. **Abroad**, we perform **one set of core functions**, whether we are doing political and trade work and whether we are in national capitals, multilateral fora or non-government power centres. To me, these core functions are to:

- act as the Canadian state's authoritative intermediaries with governments and other external centres of power
- generate **intelligence** and advice from information - synthesized, given Canadian perspective and made ready for customized use of Canadian clients;
- build **networks** to be put at the disposal of our clients when they need it. The better we are, the more customizable and available the networks are;
- **promote** the Canadian "**brand**". In all our various domains we seek to create a positive predisposition towards what our clients wish to do in our "territory (selling goods or services, promoting policies, presenting cultural products, seeking business partnerships or investment). The better we do our job as "marketers" of the brand, the easier access is for our clients;
- **impose** the Canadian **brand** (i.e. our values, our perspective, our interests) on institutions of which we are members, lead in building new rules and institutions that reflect our values and interests, and persuade partners to adopt our "brand" as their own.
- **protect** the rights and foster the safety of individual Canadians.

In some cases, we become **actors in our own right**, on the ground inside other societies in the service of the international community. This way increasingly became the case as new ways are put in place to cope with natural disaster and armed conflict.

In Ottawa, we are a multi tasked Ministry:

- a policy ministry with direct responsibility for **management of policy** in a number of domains united only by the fact that they relate to Canada's place in the broader world. As the Foreign and Trade policy Ministry, we are one of the principal clients served by posts abroad, and an important **source of advice** to Canadians about the world.