



Canadian Foreign Policy and Peacebuilding Halifax Report

Introduction

The following report records the outcome of a unique meeting of Canadians from the four Atlantic provinces, who share a concern for public input into Canadian foreign policy, especially in the area of "peace development". Participants included academics and teachers, nongovernmental organizations, youth groups, businesses, media, and representatives from the Department of National Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The Forum took place on October 24 in Halifax and looked at three kinds of "peace-development" activities: confidence-building, peacekeeping interventions, and reconstruction activities. Following presentations on each of these topics, focus groups were tasked with looking into the key issues in these subject areas, and addressing a number of questions related to Canadian foreign policy options in "peace development". The questions posed to the groups are provided in this document along with the reports made to the plenary session by the three focus groups.

When preparing this document, we encouraged - and received - extra input from many Forum participants, as well as the drafting committee. The drafting committee also assisted the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development in planning and facilitating this event, and their hard

work and dedication contributed to the success of the Forum. The membership of this adhoc group included: Christine Arab, Heather Asbil, Ron Houlihan, Edna Keeble, Steven Loyst, Pat Rodee, Tim Shaw, Brian Tennyson and Katie Orr.

We hope that this document is of use to the National Forum wrap-up session in Winnipeg, and to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. We would appreciate any feedback which we can share with National Forum participants from the Atlantic region.

Reflections for the National Forum Wrap-up Session, Winnipeg.

Common themes to all Focus Groups:

- better coordination and effective use of resources should be a priority; there is a need for an on-going commitment toward crisis management and implementation of remedial measures executed by a central agency;
- a Internet site, coordinated by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development might be an appropriate vehicle to realize some of the objectives of achieving coordination. The Internet could be used as a place to build an inventory of NGO, private sector and other resources for peacebuilding;
- in the Reconstruction group, there was some discussion of using RCMP as trainers. This could be extended further (along the lines of CIDA's Partners in Development) to include constitutionalists, arbitrators, accountants and other professional associations who might be able to make an incremental contribution to pre and post-conflict CBMs.