

Country-Specific Questions: Mexico, Chiapas

QUESTION

The Canadian ambassador reportedly said that there was a good side to the Chiapas massacre. Is the Canadian Ambassador in Mexico completely out of touch with what has been happening in Chiapas?

SUGGESTED REPLY

- The Embassy met in early February with Canadian members of the international NGO observer team to Chiapas for what they thought was a positive exchange.
- It is unfortunate that some comments by Ambassador Gooch and other Embassy officials have been so dramatically distorted. What the Ambassador said was that, perversely, the massacre had accelerated efforts to find a solution to the conflict.
- The Embassy has been very active in Chiapas for a number of years. Embassy personnel visit Chiapas regularly and the Embassy was the first to visit the site of the Acteal massacre to get a first-hand assessment and express Canadian concern.
- Canada has not been silent on the subject of Chiapas. The massacre in Acteal dismayed all Canadians, and we have condemned it in the strongest terms.
- The day after the Acteal massacre, Minister Axworthy discussed Chiapas with the Mexican foreign minister.
- During Team Canada, Minister Marchi, Secretary of State Kilgour, and the Premiers discussed Chiapas with President Zedillo.