

and cross-cutting domestic and transborder interests—the more necessary transparency will prove to be. Furtive deal-making nowadays will always be defeated by other parties, accident, and the Internet.

6. The department should do more to facilitate NGO collaboration not just for the big conferences but in the routines of DFAIT operations. Among present good practices worth enlarging: informal, quarterly conference calls between the department and NGOs around Americas issues; the network of cooperation being developed in the Peacebuilding and Human Security Division; and the potentially interactive (and already busy) "Trade Negotiations and Agreements" site on the web (at [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac)). Consultation needs to become more ordinary, less exceptional, to become more systematic and productive.

7. The democratic right to a say in powerful institutions does not stop at the border. DFAIT should redouble efforts to open multilateral institutions and processes to transparency and accountability. Skilful and determined Canadian diplomacy has gone some way, for instance, in reforming Organization of American States and Americas Summit procedures. These are not changes that appeal instantly to authorities in countries where relations between "civil society," governments and legislators remain contentious and ambiguous. (The phrase "civil society" is just as overused and unclear abroad as in Canada, and should be avoided where clarity matters.) But these reforms are important nonetheless. WTO and FTAA negotiations in particular will need a far greater transparency if they are ever to attract the popular support necessary in Canada or anywhere else.

8. Finally, it is past time now to advance beyond the rudiments of consultation—to secure real and productive engagement between DFAIT and the Canadian public. Engagement begins with transparency and dialogue, an exchange of learning. But NGOs can also become effective partners as policy implementers. Besides educating DFAIT itself, NGOs can be agents of public education and mobilization, coalition-builders abroad, and uniquely qualified collaborators on the ground, especially in capacity-poor developing countries. These are the partnerships that can give full effect to a democratic foreign policy.

This suggests what could be accomplished when ministers, deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers—together, from both sides of the trade divide—put in place a coherent and funded strategy of public consultation. The alternative—improvised and reactive exercises in risk avoidance and damage control—will bring the department nothing but trouble, and will dissatisfy Canadians. The department has done much to acknowledge the principle of public participation in Canadian foreign policy. What remains now is to put principle to work in practice.