

In answer to the first question, Minister Axworthy pointed out that while a rapid reaction force would be helpful and has been on the agenda for a while, initiative and a longer run vision are also necessary. The UN fared much better in East Timor than in Rwanda, for instance, because Indonesia, pushed by other countries in the region, agreed to admit an international force and because Australia was ready to take on responsibilities. However, a key element to humanitarian intervention is to remain engaged after hostilities stop and help build capacity to prevent conflict from re-occurring (i.e., building institutions, schools, etc.). It is politically difficult to devote resources to post-conflict related efforts, since the media focus is often on immediate crises. Therefore, ongoing public support is imperative to justify resource allocation. It is important that Canadians are interested in these issues and engaged. Outreach and other initiatives which actively engage the public in foreign policy issues, such as the work of Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, are important. He drew attention to the CCFPD's efforts to engage young people across Canada in issues related to the world's war-affected children and said Steve Lee could provide advice to those wishing to study a model of this new kind of partnership with citizens.

Minister Axworthy also expounded on UN peacekeeping and argued it should be substantially enhanced. Severe limitations to the UN peacekeeping capacity include lack of serious planning, lack of an intelligence network, as well as lack of basic tools like radios, for instance. Rapid response reaction force is still on the agenda, but its creation is moving very slowly. Resources have to be enlarged and coalitions of voluntary contributors built to meet the growing peacekeeping demands.

To the second question, Minister Axworthy replied that the mandate for the mission to Peru came from the Organisation of the American States, with the agreement of Peru. It was a collective decision, rather than a function of one state aiming to fulfil its neo-colonial objectives. A need was identified for a third party to intervene in a situation where the state authorities and segments of civil society were in deadlock. This development could be seen positively as a real breakthrough in OAS management.

Some participants including Guenther Altenburg (Humanitarian Aid and Global Issues, Federal Foreign Office, Germany) and Deidre van der Merwe (Institute for Security Studies, South Africa) emphasised the disconnect between the emerging discourse and norms, sanctioned by the Security General, and the persistence of great power politics at the UN. The measures to enact human security objectives are less than inadequate. How do we square the objectives of justice and a democratic international relations system with a stubborn reliance on sovereign state interest?

Minister Axworthy was asked four additional questions:

1. What is the unique role of business in conflict prevention, in the context of de Beers' decision not to buy any diamonds originating in Angola (October 5, 1999), for instance.
2. Which path proves more effective: the use of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions