

Balancing economic and environmental considerations to create sustainable development will challenge developed and developing countries alike. Differing economic conditions, the pursuit of sustainable development practices and the multilateral sharing of global resources and responsibilities will require new levels of international co-operation -- co-operation that will prove controversial and difficult given the divergent interests involved.

Strengthening Democracy and Respect for Human Values

The third, and perhaps most complex, broad direction of Canada's foreign policy is the strengthening of democracy and respect for human values. Canada has welcomed the emerging trend internationally toward the acceptance of universal democratic values, although they are far from being fully entrenched. Today, on International Human Rights Day, it merits emphasizing that our actions and policy instruments, including development assistance, will continue to support and encourage this trend.

In his address at Stanford University earlier this fall, the Prime Minister was unequivocal in his support for emerging democracies. He said, "We must recognize that there are certain fundamental rights that all people possess -- and that, sometimes, the international community must act to defend them." In announcing a series of measures in support of democratic and economic development throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R., he defined the magnitude of the challenge facing Canada and the world. "The task we face -- in Eastern Europe, in Africa and around the world -- is nothing less than to create a commonwealth of universal democratic values."

Progress is not smooth, and, even when the flower of democracy blooms, it can often be a fragile blossom. This delicate balance hastened our resolve in responding to the unacceptable reversal of the democratic process in Haiti. It governed our positive response to the changes in South Africa. And it has stimulated us to create mechanisms through the OAS, the Commonwealth and La Francophonie to help entrench and sustain the democratic process and tradition.

At the Commonwealth Summit in October, the Prime Minister noted that since 1987, human rights have been a concrete factor in Canada's annual review of its development assistance policy. And he went further when he stressed, "For Canada, the future course is clear: we shall increasingly be channelling our development assistance to those countries that show respect for the fundamental rights and individual freedoms of their people."

Let there be no mistake. Canada will have no qualms in refusing to support abusive, corrupt and aggressive regimes that use their power to suppress their own citizens.

Some elements of Canada's new policy in support of good governance, and in particular with respect to human rights, have been only partially understood. It is not our intent to punish the poorest of the poor for oppressive policies taken by leaders of dictatorial