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Bilateral Case Study

Purpose

The case study focuses on how DFAIT's political and economic officers performed in managing human rights issues in a bilateral context. It is meant to stimulate discussion on the following questions:

1. What does the case say about the adequacy and consistency of human rights policy?
2. What does it contribute to our understanding of performance?
3. Given the case, what management problems and issues still need to be addressed?

Definition of the Case

The case examines the human rights element in Canadian-Paradorian relations from November 1991 to January 1996. It treats Parador and South Solo as part of the same context. Four key events have been selected for analysis: (1) the suspension of three planned aid projects following the Delgado massacre in November 1991; (2) the termination of the City University's Campo Verde project; (3) the 1993 resolution on South Solo at the UNCHR; and (4) the Team Canada trade mission to Parador in January 1996.

Canadian-Paradorian Bilateral Context

The Canadian perspective on our bilateral relations with Parador is based on domestic and foreign policy priorities, and conditions in the socio-economic environment in Parador. At home, the government is committed to creating jobs and alleviating 'national unity' problems. Canadians value equitable development, basic human rights, and greater transparency and accountability in public institutions.

Our current foreign policy objectives tend to converge with Paradorian domestic priorities. Canada wishes to promote prosperity and employment through enhanced economic linkages with Parador, while the latter pursues an outward-looking economic liberalization strategy. Canada values national security and international dialogue within a stable global framework, while Parador plays an increasingly central role in its region. Canada values tolerance, good governance and the rule of law, while Parador builds greater equity among its people, modernizes its administrative structures, and experiences an urgent need for national stability.

Bilateral Human Rights Context

Human rights monitors have indicated that the situation in South Solo remains fragile, grave and complex. The Soloese have long resisted being integrated into Parador, and characterize their struggle as one of self-determination. Acting with impunity, the Paradorian security forces deployed in the province are seen as a main cause of human rights abuse. They are also deeply involved in the economy and other areas of Soloese society.

The Paradorian government continues to believe that political compromise is not necessary because the military can suppress the opposition. Some argue that this stance only increases the level of suppression. The Western media have paid close attention to the situation, delivering images to audiences which routinely condemn human rights abusers. In Canada, the South Solo situation has caught the attention of a growing and vocal minority.

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