

The Canadian government has focussed its attention in building a global community to several areas of particular concern -- human rights, human security and trade. Human rights has been a classic area of concern in Canadian foreign policy. As other authors in this volume illustrate, Canadians have been long involved in drafting and upholding key international human rights standards including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. In 2000, the Canadian government took the initiative to go beyond its traditional foreign policy areas by introducing the concept of human security.

Human security places a focus on the security of people. This constitutes a major and necessary shift in international relations and world affairs, which have long placed predominant emphasis on the security of the state. By broadening the focus to include the security of people, human security encompasses a spectrum of approaches to the problem of violent conflict, from preventive initiatives and people-centred conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities to - in extreme cases, where other efforts have failed - intervention to protect populations at great risk (DFAIT 2000a).

Trade has been equally, if not more, important in Canadian foreign policy. In the most recent Trade Update, the Minister responsible for International Trade notes "In addition to providing better jobs and more opportunities for Canadians, trade finances the social security system which Canadians cherish and which reflects our values of fairness, inclusion and equality"(DFAIT 2001a). Canada is negotiating a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, responding to the rules governing international trade through the World Trade Organization, and managing trade relationships with specific countries. Trade is often described as the engine that drives economic growth in Canada.