

# Statement

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**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY  
THE HONOURABLE ANDRÉ OUELLET,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE TABLING  
IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT**

**OTTAWA, Ontario  
February 7, 1995**



Government  
of Canada

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du Canada

**Canada**

## HIGHLIGHTS

International relations are no longer the concern of governments alone, but of all Canadian men and women. The Government has kept its Red Book promise to consult Canadians and to give members of Parliament a vital role in developing our foreign policy.

Based on numerous consultations with Canadians and the report of the Joint Committee, and recognizing the need for a flexible and effective foreign policy, the Government has identified three key objectives that will guide its activities on the international scene in the years to come. These objectives are:

- to promote jobs and prosperity;
- to promote our security in a stable international framework;
- to share our values and our culture.

These objectives complement one another and reflect the Government's national priorities.

Canada is in a privileged position to influence change and to benefit from opportunities as we move toward the end of the 20th century. The Government will exercise that influence responsibly to protect and promote Canada's values and interests in the world.

Thank You, Mr. Speaker.

I have the honour of rising in the House today to table the Government's response to the report of the Special Joint Committee Reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy.

Mr. Speaker, my duties as Minister of Foreign Affairs have given me many opportunities to observe the role that our country plays in the world. It had been thought in some quarters that our privileged position on the world stage would be called into question by the end of the Cold War. On the contrary, I am proud to note that our country continues to play an important role, and that the international community's expectations of us have not diminished.

Mr. Speaker, Canada occupies a position of leadership among the open, advanced societies, which are becoming increasingly influential as world power is dispersing and becoming more defined in economic terms.

Canada's geographic location gives it an important advantage as new poles of political and economic power emerge in the Pacific and Latin America.

Canada's cultural heritage gives it privileged access to the anglophone and francophone worlds as well as to the homelands of Canadians drawn from every part of the globe who make up its multicultural personality.

Canada can further its global interests better than any other country through its active membership in key international groupings, for example, hosting the G-7 Summit this year and the APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum] Summit in 1997.

Canada's history as a non-colonizing power, champion of constructive multilateralism and effective international mediator, underpins an important and distinctive role among nations as they seek to build a new and better order.

Canada, thus, is in a privileged position to influence change and to benefit from opportunities as we move toward the end of the 20th century. The Government will exercise that influence responsibly to protect and promote Canada's values and interests in the world.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee faced an enormous task, and I think that the Government's response had to reflect the depth and quality of the work done by its members.

The Government has kept the promise contained in the Red Book. It has made the development of Canadian foreign policy a democratic process by seeking the participation of Canadians and their members of Parliament.

Both the Joint Committee and the Government recognize that changes on the international scene will speed up rather than slow down. Unfortunately, the financial constraints that we face are not likely to go away in a hurry. Mr. Speaker, a responsible government must thus constantly re-evaluate its strategies openly and clearly, to reflect the interests and concerns of Canadian men and women more effectively. Canadians are increasingly aware that their actions, both individual and collective, have international consequences. The once-clear distinction between national and international affairs is quickly becoming blurred, forcing us to take a broader view of things. The number of stakeholders in foreign policy continues to grow. In short, international relations are no longer the concern of governments alone, but of all Canadian men and women. The Government is thus committed to continuing consultation and to giving members of Parliament a vital role in developing our foreign policy.

Thus, in March 1994, the Government invited Canadians from various walks of life to take part in the first National Forum on Canada's International Relations. I wish to confirm today that we intend to make this forum an annual event. Since our term of office began, we have held five parliamentary debates on key foreign-policy issues. Canadian foreign policy will no longer be developed behind closed doors; all Canadians and their members of Parliament will be involved.

With my colleagues, the two Secretaries of State, and the Minister for International Trade, I held a series of consultations and round tables across Canada. I can tell you that we will continue these consultations throughout our term of office.

Based on numerous consultations with Canadians and the report of the Joint Committee, and recognizing the need for a flexible and effective foreign policy, the Government has identified three key objectives that will guide its activities on the international scene in the years to come. These objectives are:

- to promote jobs and prosperity;
- to promote our security in a stable international framework;
- to share our values and our culture.

These objectives complement one another, Mr. Speaker, and reflect the Government's national priorities.

With regard to our first objective, I would like to begin by saying that the Government is committed to implementing a foreign policy that promotes access of Canadian goods and services to foreign markets. The objective is clear: to defend and increase Canada's prosperity, and to promote jobs and growth by diversifying our economic and trade relations.

In addition, the Government recognizes the growing importance of the major international financial institutions and firmly intends to discuss this with its foreign partners during the G-7 Summit in Halifax in June.

I shall leave the task of providing a more detailed explanation of our objectives in this area to my colleague Roy MacLaren, the Minister for International Trade.

I shall now discuss the second objective of our foreign policy: promoting our security in a stable international framework.

Mr. Speaker, the hostile environment of the Cold War kept us from concentrating our efforts on combatting other threats no less real. While the geopolitical upheavals of recent years have greatly reduced the immediate threats to our security, we must now, paradoxically, expand our definition of this concept. Today, security is no longer defined in terms of ideologies or boundaries. Environmental deterioration, massive, uncontrolled migrations, international crime, drug trafficking, AIDS, overpopulation and underdevelopment are the names of today's threats. Our security requires a deeper awareness of them.

Canadians are proud of their country's unique contribution to UN peacekeeping operations. Canada will continue to participate in these missions, but our decisions will be subject to specific criteria. As the UN and the regional security organizations have served us well, Canada will continue to serve them well.

Mr. Speaker, this includes identifying the structural problems, weaknesses and shortcomings of these organizations, and working relentlessly toward correcting them. As I announced last September, Canada is working diligently toward improving the efficiency of the United Nations. With this in mind, we are preparing, among other things, a study on the rapid intervention capability of the UN, which we will table in September at the next General Assembly in New York.

The third objective of our foreign policy, Mr. Speaker, is to promote our values and our culture abroad.

A country that isolates itself and fails to project its identity and values beyond its boundaries is doomed to anonymity and loss of influence. Our writers, artists, academics and researchers are the best ambassadors of our identity in all its diversity. They convey the creativity and knowledge essential to the prosperity, development and health of our country. Like our entrepreneurs, they have a product to sell. Like our exporters, they have a market to conquer. And like our business people, they are known for the excellence of their product. For them too, internationalization is essential to success and competitiveness.

The influence of the cultural and educational sectors on our economy is profound. These sectors hold a good deal of potential for Canada, a potential that we must take advantage of. The Government is committed to defending the competitiveness of our cultural industries and of the educational products and services of our universities and colleges, and to helping our artists penetrate foreign markets. To say that we have limited resources is no excuse for abdicating our responsibilities. On the contrary, it is an opportunity to consolidate our efforts and work with other departments and agencies to promote our culture and knowledge abroad.

Vitality in our cultural, academic and scientific interchange is essential to our success in the new knowledge-based world economy; it is also essential to our growth, prosperity and success nationally. In order to remain competitive, our institutions of higher learning, our students, our future workers need to adapt to a profoundly and constantly changing international labour market, to expose themselves to the new technologies, and to master new knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that our problems are insignificant compared to the intolerable situation in which too many of the assistance world's people still live. Official development aid is another important and integral part of our foreign policy, for it strikes at the very roots of conflict and of threats to security. Aid reflects the values of Canadians - values of compassion, co-operation and generosity.

In the Statement we are tabling today, the Government firmly intends to clarify the mandate of CIDA [Canadian International Development Agency], in order to give it a solid objective and clear priorities that will dictate the action it takes. These priorities are six in number:

- to address basic human needs;
- to support the participation of women in sustainable economic development;
- to provide infrastructure services;
- to defend human rights;
- to encourage the private sector; and
- to protect the environment.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that these objectives support the three main principles of foreign policy that I have just announced, namely the promotion of prosperity, of our security, and of our values.

The Government will encourage and help Canadians to participate in co-operative development, and will take measures to improve the effectiveness of the official development aid program.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me say that our country's foreign policy is a source of pride to all Canadians. Our foreign policy aims to bring people together, to dialogue, to build bridges, and to form ties. We must involve the people of Canada and their parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations, universities and cultural groups in the development of foreign policy, if it is to meet their expectations.

The policy that I am unveiling today takes this into account. It is innovative in its receptivity to input from Canadians and from Parliament, and depends on their continued support. It is innovative in its objectives, which are more sharply focussed than before. Economic and trade factors have a primary place in it. Risks to security are looked at in a broad perspective. And it clearly sets out the particular importance given to the promotion of Canadian culture and values.

I conclude by again thanking the Joint Committee for its excellent work, and with the hope that the already well-established dialogue among the Government, the people of Canada and Parliament will continue to bear fruit.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.