

Canadian Centre
for Foreign Policy
Development



Centre canadien
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de la politique étrangère

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**REPORT FROM THE CALGARY ROUNDTABLE:
HELPING TO DEVELOP A CANADIAN
DISCUSSION ON THE AMERICAS**

CCFPD

March 17, 1999 (Calgary)

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**REPORT FROM THE CALGARY ROUND TABLE:
HELPING TO DEVELOP A CANADIAN POLICY DISCUSSION
ON THE AMERICAS**

March 17, 1999

On March 17th the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, as a part of its mandate to engage Canadians in shaping foreign policy, organised a round table in Calgary to help develop a Canadian discussion on the Americas. Hosted by the Calgary Centre for Performing Arts, the round table was attended by a wide range of NGOs, academics, experts on the region, business people, as well as government officials. It was the first in a series of planned meetings over the next two years, beginning a Canadian conversation on issues that may deserved further public discussion and policy development attention. The meeting was broadcast live on the Internet and can be viewed in full at this address: <http://www.panam-bydesign.net/ccfpd/invitation.htm>. The following is an integrated summary of five panel presentations that launched and informed the afternoon discussions, reports from three brainstorming sessions that followed, and notes from concluding remarks.

SUMMARY OF PANEL PRESENTATIONS

The afternoon conversation was started by **Steven Lee**, National Director of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD), who set the goals for the round table. He stressed the **important role that academics, NGOs, and other Canadians have in shaping foreign policy** and the need to broaden the policy circle beyond Ottawa and the traditional stakeholders -- a goal to which, at Minister Axworthy's request, the CCFPD is dedicated. He also pointed out the importance of the Centre's partnership with Foreign Affairs and the participation of senior Foreign Affairs officials at this meeting. The purpose of the round table was to begin a conversation on hemispheric issues and to signal interests that may deserve further public discussion and policy development attention. Key goals included identifying Canadian interests and priorities in the hemisphere and the inclusion of Canadians in the policy making process.

Following the introductory remarks, **George Haynal, Assistant Deputy Minister, Americas**, outlined the government's two year program of regional events. He stressed that these events will be carried out in the **broader context of Canada's foreign policy objectives**: 1) Canadian prosperity in a prosperous world, 2) Canadian security in a stable world 3) promoting Canadian values and culture. Mr. Haynal pointed out that real engagement in the Americas is not only recent but also very rich. This signifies a shift in focus to Latin America -- a region which not only offers new opportunities but also poses important challenges. Canada's new engagement also reflects the changing environment in Latin America characterised by (mostly) democratic regimes, abandonment of import substitution policies, and recent emergence of active civil

society. The region has come a long way in the past decade. Therefore, new opportunities and objectives should be set and steps taken towards consolidation of initiatives.

Hemispheric agenda:

- Pan American Games (July/August 1999, Winnipeg)
- Heads of State/Government Spouses (September, 1999)
- Americas Business Forum (November 1999, Toronto)
- Trade Ministers of the Hemisphere (November 1999, Toronto)
- General Assembly of the Organisation of American States (hosted by Minister Axworthy, June, 2000)
- Third Hemispheric Summit (chaired by the Prime Minister)

Mr. Haynal concluded by pointing out the unique position Canada plays in the Hemisphere (i.e., well respected, not a super-power) and the importance of trying to meet challenges and expectations generated by this perception.

Barbara Arneil of the University of British Columbia outlined the following **five aspects of human security** and applied them to the Latin American realities:

- Human security is an expression for a **paradigm shift** in international relations from thinking in terms of national (state) security (i.e., realist school of thought) to emphasising the security of individual human beings. This shift reflects the notion that human beings all over the world have a heightened sense of insecurity. Within the context of Latin America, this shift poses a major concern of how to conceptualise and deal with problems of all people, especially the most marginalised, such as women, children, Indigenous Peoples, or the disabled.
- Another aspect of human security is expressed by an exhausting list of **new threats** that could be grouped into four categories: 1) threats born from a new economic environment (growing polarisation between rich and poor, instability of the capital financial markets, and so on); 2) threats born from growing "transnationalism" (drugs trafficking, environmental degradation, spread of diseases, etc.); 3) threats brought by the changing nature of conflict (conflict was perceived as primarily inter-state, today conflict occurs within state borders and often is generated by the state or para-government itself, where the state then becomes the source of insecurity); 4) another set of threats hinges on the acute problems of small arms trade and refugees. Within this category, Professor Arneil stressed the need to further build on the Santiago Summit initiatives (especially drugs-related efforts) and to work toward democratisation and reforms in judicial and electoral systems.
- Human security as an **inter-disciplinary approach** to foreign policy where the concept permeates the traditionally separate domains of national security (DND), development (Aid agencies, CIDA), and diplomacy (DFAIT). The concept also must be integrated within the UN. In Latin America, the need for coherent policy is apparent.

- Human security also means including **civil society** in traditional state interests. In the next two years the Organisation of American States could lead the process of civil society engagement in Latin America.
- Human security as a concept requires the involvement of the **international community** when necessary. In case when nation states assault human rights there should be room for the international community to protect individuals -- perhaps through the International Criminal Court. The case of General Pinochet is instructive here, ways have to be found to address injustices and protect individual potential victims.

Given these conceptual considerations, **human security could be defined as the recognition of a general sense of insecurity in the world, of new threats to individuals and most importantly a paradigm shift that aims to recognise the need to move beyond national security to include the security of all persons through the engagement of states, civil society, and when necessary through the action of the international community.**

Mark Dickerson of the University of Calgary, addressed the problem of globalisation-related insecurity and the challenges facing Canadian foreign policy in the Americas. He pointed out that despite criticisms of Western democratisation efforts abroad as neo-colonial, values such as freedom, accountability, desire for the rule of law are more universal than an observer located in the West may think. Therefore, the relationship between a prosperous economy and democratic governance may not be as complex as it appears and room exists for external ("objective") democratisation efforts.

Maureen Wilson of FOCAL talked about the negative effects that globalisation has on the capacity of states to cope with socio-economic issues such as the growing income gap among as well as within countries. She pointed out that there has been a resurgence of religious, environmental, anti-poverty and other organisations that stepped in to fill the growing vacuum left behind the "hollowed out" state. She stressed the importance of recognising the key role these organisations play in the region and the necessity of supporting them.

Liss Jeffrey from the McLuhan Program stressed the importance of factoring in the new media in the discussions of civil society in the Latin American context. The problem with advanced technology reaching the resourceless and often illiterate inhabitants of impoverished regions of Latin America is the same as in Canada and the rest of the world. It would be shortsighted to dismiss the importance of digital technology in today's world even for those who find themselves marginalised. For Canada, the new technology could be seen as a vehicle for building an informed society capable of active and meaningful participation in the democratic process -- including the shaping of foreign policy.

INTEGRATED SUMMARY OF REPORTS FROM BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS

Context of Canadian Foreign Policy in the Americas

At the three brainstorming working groups the following general points were made:

- **Human Security as an umbrella approach to foreign policy in the Americas** allows for the inclusion of issues such as poverty and individual's safety. Discussions about drugs and small arms are too limited on their own.
- The **trade agenda** alone (perceived as the primary driving mechanism for Canadian involvement in the region) has been too narrow. Therefore, it should include other issues falling under the human security umbrella (i.e., the social impact of globalisation).
- The **role and place of the United States** was discussed. Canada's approach to some issues such as, for example, resolution of conflict and the input of multicultural groups and their ideas, differs from the U.S.
- **Indirect actions of states and/or regional blocks** (US, Europe, Asian Tigers) may have consequences on the business environment in Latin America.
- The **extent to which Canada is willing to intervene to promote democracy and costs** related to such intervention in terms of defence and policing were addressed. In particular, promoting democracy without generating neo-colonial sentiments was identified as important by some.
- Canada's **capacity** for meaningful involvement in the hemisphere was raised. What effective roles can Canadians play in human rights protection? Core Canadian values should be reflected in Canada's foreign policy (especially Free Trade). There is a need for Canadians to learn more about hemisphere's environmental, social, and economic reality. Opportunities should be created to involve small and medium enterprises as well as Canadian youth.
- **Those critical of the government** policies said there were contradictions not only in Canadian foreign policy, but also in the government policy as a whole. Some critical questions were raised, including the promotion of civil society abroad amidst damage done to Canadian civil society as a result of the government cut backs or in the wake of the 1997 APEC incident. Others who perceive neo-liberal globalisation and structural adjustment policies as negative phenomena worried about poverty and insecurity. Canada needs to address problems at home to promote change abroad, they said.

Ideas for Policy Options

Participants raised several key issues they feel require further policy attention. Some propose that Canada as the host for upcoming meetings, is well positioned to lead on the following issues:

- ▶ **Protecting and strengthening civil society** was deemed a key to affecting desirable change. Canada should support the initiatives and harness the creativity of the front line

NGO activists in civil society who are producing concrete solutions at the local level (grassroots co-operatives, micro-enterprises, small-scale credit schemes, seed conservation programmes, environmental rehabilitation projects, etc.).

- ▶ **Promoting sustainable development** was identified as imperative to human security. Supporting civil society initiatives (as opposed to mega projects) often produce a more cost-effective result for sustainable development. Canada should promote and accelerate the implementation of commitments for sustainable development made at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.
- ▶ Canada's bilateral programmes and trade policy should promote **self-sufficiency and not dependency** in developing countries.
- ▶ Improvement in the quality and quantity of **aid** is needed. There is a need for quality assessment/impact assessment of aid.
- ▶ **Access to education**, including informal education, was considered crucial to human security. Therefore, Canada should support education that is responsive to the needs of the marginalised groups of people and put emphasis on providing students skills to meet basic human needs. Education should be within the local cultural and socioeconomic framework. It should be aimed at generating income for marginalised populations so that the income distribution gap is diminished. Education for women can help them assume a greater leadership role. Initiatives to enhance greater mobility for students were also encouraged.
- ▶ **Environment and ecological concerns** must remain paramount in the hemispheric agenda. Economic development must proceed with a much longer view to ecological issues.
- ▶ Human security should address **income disparity and poverty**. The goal to end poverty was considered practical and achievable by policy makers. A more equitable income and resource distribution was called for to strengthen human security.
- ▶ There was a call to respect and observe **human rights**, as enshrined in Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Canadian foreign and trade policy. The Canadian government was encouraged to provide leadership in developing a well defined and effective mechanism like the International Criminal Court, to strengthen the international human rights regime in the hemisphere.
- ▶ Some participants agreed that Canada should continue to promote **democratic development**, judicial reform, and improved public service and good governance.
- ▶ Canada should take the lead in ensuring that the **Free Trade** negotiations process is open, transparent, and politically accountable to maximise the involvement of civil society and contribute to increased democratisation in the hemisphere.
- ▶ Canada should take the lead in encouraging the G8 for a cancellation of the **foreign debt** of the world's poorest countries. The government should work within the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to develop programs of finance and development that are socially just and benefit the majority of populations. Canada should lead a process of ensuring that IFIs operate with increased transparency, openness and accountability. Furthermore steps should be taken in promoting the idea of a Tobin tax to counterbalance the negative effect that **currency speculation** has on the poor in Latin America.

CONCLUSION

At the close of the day, Stephen Randall, University of Calgary, offered a few concluding remarks about the importance of links between government and civil society in shaping Canadian foreign policy towards the Americas and extolled the shift from preoccupations with trade back to human security. He stressed the role of civil society in policy making and the necessity of creating a well informed broad policy community, perhaps with the help of new technologies. He went on to say that Canada has an important role to play in the hemisphere in promoting democracy and should draw on the positive steps taken during the Santiago Summit.

Steven Lee then closed the discussion with a commitment on the part of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development to continue the process of keeping Canadians involved in a discussion about the hemisphere and in policy development opportunities.

To briefly summarise, the key issues raised by participants at the round table were:

- Human Security is an important approach to foreign policy in the Americas
- Civil society in Canada has an important role in shaping foreign and hemisphere policy and in building civil society in the region
- environment and human rights are important elements of human security
- economic issues impact the development of the region.

While there were some concerns about Canada's capacity and authority in the Americas, there was broad consensus that Canada is well positioned to provide leadership in the Hemisphere at this time.

Human security, as a broad umbrella, was seen as central to the hemisphere agenda. With rapid changes occurring the region, enhancing human security and democratisation could lead to improved economic development. Meanwhile, finding greater balance between trade and aid will be an important component of the discussions over the next two years.

As Canadians become more involved in the Americas dialogue, the role of civil society is essential in creating a more informed and open discussion among Canadians, policy makers and decision makers in Canada and abroad. Involving youth, multicultural communities, business, women and Indigenous People will continue to be important.

The Calgary round table was a useful beginning to shaping this dialogue and process. The ideas generated will be important in designing the next stages of the issues and policy discussion.

NEW MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS IN DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY MAKING

by Liss Jeffrey

The CCFPD has been working with outside partners to demonstrate the practical possibilities of using new media to convene brainstorming and policy sessions. In March, the byDesign E Lab at the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology, University of Toronto, created a special web site as a launching pad for policy discussions on the Americas, and for dissemination of the contributions and conclusions of the Calgary Round Table on Civil Society and Human Security. During the event, the web site provided a visual backdrop for the discussions, and an information resource for those unable to be present at the meeting . With the cooperation of the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts, and staff of the CCFPD, the byDesign E Lab successfully webcast the event live. The archive can now be found at <http://www.panam-bydesign.net/ccfpd/video.htm> .

One month earlier, the CCFPD, the McLuhan Program and E Lab joined forces to present a one day workshop and visionary speaker series event on New Media and Human Rights. This session is archived at <http://www.panam-bydesign.net/humanrights/index.html>.

These sections have received thousands of hits from visitors worldwide, and a complete review of these projects is in preparation for the byDesign Digital Democracy Report. Preliminary results will be presented by Dr Liss Jeffrey at the Harvard Infrastructure project Marshall McLuhan Lecture series in May, in Helsinki at the Council of Europe conference on public access and freedom of expression, in Sherbrooke at the Learned Societies meeting, and in Quebec City at the Canadian Internet Society meeting, all in June. All of these initiatives will also be featured in the coming weeks on our new web site [vitalspace.net](http://www.vitalspace.net), a site of sites for building civil society and democratic governance using new media and policy (<http://www.vitalspace.net>).

The CCFPD contracted the byDesign E Lab to participate in the Calgary Round Table, and invited its director (also director of the McLuhan Program Research Network) Dr Jeffrey to outline why it is necessary to include new digital media in all formulations of international policy. She illustrated her points by reference to the Visionary Speaker series and electronic commons web site project developed this year by the E Lab, and called "PanAm byDesign: Building Knowledge Networks Using New Media and Policy." In recognition of the fact that Canada heads the summit of the Americas, and that our foreign policy is in the process of taking greater account of our hemispheric neighbors, the PanAm series was organized to begin discussion of visions and pragmatic steps to achieve a hemispheric network of sustainable communities. In addition to reporting on what has been learned, the PanAm project (with a four language site and translation limited by reliance on volunteers) will now work with partners, notably from the Caribbean and various South American communities, who have indicated a

willing interest in proceeding to a next stage. It appears that DFAIT may sponsor two interns at the McLuhan Program, one of whom (fluent in Spanish and the new digital language) has already been approached about the prospects of work in Latin America to cement relations in the PanAm project. The byDesign E Lab and the McLuhan Program look forward to conversations with CCFPD on plans to extend the PanAm byDesign project within Canada (as part of the initiatives to build citizen forums on policies for the Americas), and also as part of helping civil society discussion throughout the Americas. It is already apparent from our recent cyber experiences in PanAm that some travel will be required, as trust is not easily won from citizens of societies that lack certain legitimate dimensions of the traditions of civil society, such as organized peaceful citizen discussion and action. It is also apparent that some direct sharing of skills in social technologies (e.g., both how to conduct a forum technically and in practical terms of arriving at a useful outcome) is required on an urgent basis, and that Canada (and the CCFPD) could further develop its focus on research, development and export of these skills and social technologies. The byDesign E Lab at the McLuhan Program University of Toronto hopes to engage further with CCFPD to discuss the findings, improve our initial collaborative web sites and advance these objectives. Meanwhile, we are very grateful for the opportunity to work with the CCFPD and celebrate your farsightedness and willingness to go outside the routine.

AGENDA FOR THE CALGARY ROUNDTABLE

**HUMAN SECURITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY:
HELPING TO SHAPE A CANADIAN DISCUSSION/POLICY DEVELOPMENT
ON THE AMERICAS**

March 17, 1999

(12:00-6:30PM)

CALGARY CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS

205 -- 8TH AVENUE S.E., CALGARY, ALBERTA

Tel. (403) 294 - 7455

Fax. (403) 294 - 7457

12:00 Coffee and Sandwiches available

Colin Jackson, Executive Director, Calgary Centre for Performing Arts
Welcome

Steve Lee, National Director, Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development
Starting the Conversation

Panel I:

12:20-12:40 George Haynal, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Americas, DFAIT
Canada and the Americas

12:40-13:00 Barbara Arneil, Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia
Human Security in the Western Hemisphere

13:00-13:20 (TBC) Donald Barry, Department of Political Science, University of Calgary
Canadian Foreign Policy in the Western Hemisphere

13:20-13:40 Questions and Answers

Panel II:

13:40-14:00 Maureen Wilson, FOCAL
Civil Society

14:00-14:20 Darryl McLeod, Federal Treaty Negotiator, BC Commission
Indigenous Peoples in the Western Hemisphere

14:20-14:40 Liss Jeffrey, Associate Director, McLuhan Program
Connections (PanAm by Design)

14:40-15:00 Questions and Answers

15:00-16:30 Brainstorming Session:

Human Security and Civil Society: Helping to Shape a Canadian Discussion/Policy Development on the Americas.

Where Can Canada and Canadians Contribute/Lead/Make a Difference?

	Group #1	Group #2	Group #3
Facilitator	N. Hannemann	L. Reif	N.K. Seymoar
DFAIT Resource Person	M. Brock	R. Clark	G. Haynal
Rapporteur	R. Acuna	J. Chan	A. McGarth (TBC)

16:30-17:00 Reports from Groups

Stephen Randall, Dean of Social Sciences, University of Calgary
Concluding Remarks

Steve Lee, Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development
Next Steps

17:00-18:30 Stand Up Reception

The Air Theatre
Hon. David Kilgour, Secretary of State, Latin America - Africa (TBC)
Welcome

For inquiries, please contact Marketa Geisler at (613) 992 7984.

THE CALGARY ROUNDTABLE: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Human Security and Civil Society: Helping to Develop a Canadian Policy Discussion on the Americas

Calgary Centre for Performing Arts

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National Director, The Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development

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Assistant Deputy Minister, Americas, DFAIT

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Department of Political Science, University of Calgary

Maureen Wilson

FOCAL

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(see "speakers")

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