



Sovereignty and the Interdependence of Nations: Implications for Canada

Group of 78 Annual Policy Conference 2004

Conclusions and Proposals

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Econiche House: 32 River Road, Cantley, Quebec J8Y 3A1

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The following conclusions and recommendations were adopted by the plenary session of the Group of 78 annual policy conference, *Sovereignty and the Interdependence of Nations: Implications for Canada*, Sunday September 12, 2004.

Population Growth and Decline; Resource Consumption and Climate Change

1. Population and the Empowerment of Women

In many parts of the world, women have poor access to health care and family planning services, and have little economic, social and political power. The empowerment of women is both desirable for its own sake and a key element in achieving the stabilization of population. The Group of 78 strongly urges that Canada meet the commitments it made at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 and commit more resources to support family planning, education and reproductive health services in the context of primary health care.

2. The Transition to Renewable Energy

The only feasible alternative to energy obtained from fossil fuels, both a rapidly diminishing non-renewable resource and the principal cause of climate change, is renewable energy. Renewable energy options include hydro, wind, solar voltaic, biomass and geothermal. Canada has adopted limited measures to assist the development and introduction of renewable energy technologies. It is recommended that additional measures to accelerate the transition to renewable energy be implemented, including appropriate regulatory change to increase energy conservation and efficiency, subsidies to support the production of renewable energy, a transfer of tax benefits from fossil fuels to renewable energy and other appropriate incentives.

The Globalization Of Poverty

1. Take a leadership role in promoting an enhanced national understanding of and commitment to global poverty issues and the importance of the Millenium Development Goals.

We recommend that the G-78 focus its efforts on increasing the level of awareness among the Canadian public of global poverty issues and the importance of paying significant attention and commitment to poverty eradication strategies. To do so the G-78 group should immediately embark upon educating its members and the broader Canadian public on the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs). In particular emphasis should be paid on MDG 1, which calls for halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 and MDG 3, which seeks to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. Some of the actions proposed for effecting this recommendation are, *inter alia*:

- Having a hyperlink to the MDGs and the Global Compact on the G-78 website to educate members and visitors.
- Each year the G-78 should identify a developing country with significant abject poverty to focus its efforts on.
- Communicating to the relevant government departments and the Government of Canada as a whole the importance of establishing their own guidelines and fulfilling their commitment towards achievement of the MDGs and their need to demonstrate leadership among developed countries in this arena.
- Encouraging CIDA to focus greater resources and development efforts on the achievement of MDGs.
- Supporting initiatives such as those of Educating for Peace and the United Nations Association of Canada to encourage teachers to integrate poverty, peace and gender issues into the curriculum of Canadian schools; and initiatives to have Canadian immigrants who have

experienced extreme poverty give testimonials in schools.

2. Lobby the Canadian government to adopt policies which are conducive to global poverty reduction

Some of the key action areas in this regard are:

- Providing leadership in the support and achievement of the MDGs. Recognizing the intimate connection between security and development, we urge the Government of Canada, and CIDA in particular, to give greater priority to conflict prevention strategies in its development programming designed to meet the MDGs.
- Increasing the level of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) from its present abysmal level of 0.26% of GNP to reach and exceed the established ODA target among donor countries of 0.7% of GNP.
- Pushing for significant additional funding so that relevant departments can provide additional financial support for Canadian civil society organizations which sponsor partnership programs for facilitating enhanced poverty reduction to support MDG 1.
- Working with other donor countries to develop less onerous and lengthy eligibility conditions for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), as well as to devote attention to those countries who have benefited from HIPC relief but are falling back into significant indebtedness.
- Notwithstanding the favourable results that have occurred from Canada's Least Developed Countries Initiative (LDCI) which removed all quota and duty restrictions on imports from these countries in 2003, there remains the need to focus greater attention on trade capacity building in LDCs, both to increase their foreign exchange earnings and their domestic industries; and a need to reduce non-tariff barriers that continue to hinder the even greater enhancement of LDC trade to Canada and other developed countries.
- The Government of Canada should promote the removal of subsidies in developed countries on domestically produced goods and services that compete with developing country exports, of which the United States subsidies on cotton production is one of the most egregious examples.
- Amending the C-5 legislation to promote the expanded provision of generic HIV/AIDS drugs to those most in need in developing countries.

The Responsibility to Protect

Preamble: “Where a population is suffering serious harm as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression, or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international responsibility to protect.” (Basic principle – Responsibility to Protect document.)

Reaffirming the need to situate the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) within the broader context of the systemic weakness of the United Nations system to enforce existing international law, particularly in relation to gross breaches of human rights;

and Given that the Responsibility to Prevent is the single most important dimension of R2P, the Group of 78 recommends the following:

1. The Government of Canada should explore, support, promote and make most prominent non-coercive approaches to conflict prevention and resolution arising from all root causes, especially the violation of human rights.
2. To this end, the Government of Canada should encourage conflict resolution institution building within multilateral organizations and the participation of civil society in these processes.
3. Finally, the Government of Canada should play a creative role in the reform of the United Nations Security Council, with a view to enhancing its legitimacy which is established on representativeness and inclusion, based on the current world order.

Strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Regime for the 21st Century

Security and Disarmament

1. Give higher priority to multilateral framework

(a) Underscoring the centrality of the multilateral non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament framework as essential to Canadian and global peace and security, The Group of 78 urges the Government of Canada to give higher priority to working with other likeminded nations at the United Nations and in other relevant bodies to strengthen this framework.

In particular the Group of 78 calls for the strengthening of the mechanisms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by ensuring that:

- i. Balanced attention is given to both vertical and horizontal proliferation (as called for by IAEA Executive Director El Baradei), thus ensuring no double standards. To this end Canada should consider, in the context of the 2005 NPT Review Conference process, how to re-energize its efforts to bring the NATO Strategic Doctrine on the role of nuclear weapons into line with the disarmament imperative of the NPT.
- ii. The Canadian initiative on regular reporting by states parties to the

NPT is carried forward and strengthened.

iii. A 'standing institutional framework', essentially a secretariat, for the NPT is established to permit both ongoing consultations and emergency meetings.

2. Averting the risk of accidental or inadvertent launch of nuclear weapons

In order to reduce the risk of accidental launch of nuclear weapons, we call on the Canadian government, as a priority, to urge all states possessing nuclear weapons to adopt immediately a 'no launch on warning' policy. This is a measure that individual states can take unilaterally, while cumulatively building mutually reinforcing steps.

3. Reject Ballistic Missile Defence

The Group of 78 has, since its founding in 1980, given priority to policies aimed at arms control and eventual disarmament. In June 2000 during the Clinton administration the Group's board of directors expressed opposition to the early proposals for Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) and at the 2003 annual policy conference urged the Canadian government not to participate in the BMD program of the current United States administration. We wish here to recapitulate briefly the reasons we then gave for opposition, and then add further points raised at the 2004 conference.

We have opposed Canadian participation for these reasons:

- The program includes at a later stage the weaponization of space to enable boost-phase interception.
- If successful, it would strengthen the Bush administration's doctrine providing for pre-emptive attacks.
- This immensely costly program is part of a degree of militarization in the world that is incompatible with sustainable development.
- Some 60 years of efforts to develop a counter-weapon to the ballistic missile have had extremely limited success. A U.S. system would appear to offer no contribution toward the protection of Canada, but rather to make for a more dangerous world.
- The development of BMD promotes the arms race, in which nations try to outdo one another in military capacity, as indicated in China's arms program.
- To the extent that views need to be exchanged between the United States and other countries on BMD issues, including theatre and battlefield missile defence, this can be done most effectively among allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and among all countries in the collective security and disarmament context of the United Nations.

To these arguments, made in 2003, the present annual conference added the following points for greater emphasis:

BMD offers no defence at all but rather a false sense of security based on unproven and unpromising technologies. In reality, BMD reduces security because it increases incentives for the development of counter-weapons and counter-measures, plunging rival countries into new arms races.

Canadian participation in such a scheme, designed to place weapons in space at a later stage, would therefore make Canada and the world less secure and run counter to the basic tenets of Canadian foreign policy.

Ballistic missile defence is unproven because its designers and proponents have not been able to prove either of the following conditions:

- That the system could meet basic requirements of operational feasibility in accordance with established principles of testing;
- That deployment of the system would be cost effective at the margins – that is, countermeasures such as decoys to defeat the system would not be cheaper and easier to develop than the system itself.

Even if these two conditions could be met and proven, BMD would still give a false sense of security. By its innate characteristics, it would destabilize the strategic balance among nations. It would, in turn, be a spur towards an arms race, and a threat to international peace and security. It would increase incentives for rival states to develop and maintain the offensive nuclear forces necessary to withstand the use of this system in conjunction with a pre-emptive strike.

4. Promote Verifiable, Irreversible Nuclear Disarmament

The Group of 78 recalls the 16 principles of verification developed initially by Canada and then agreed multilaterally at the United Nations, principles designed to ensure that disarmament agreements lead to verifiable and irreversible reductions including in particular the destruction of dismantled nuclear warheads. Without guaranteed irreversibility, dismantled nuclear warheads are more likely to be stored than destroyed, increasing the risk of terrorists gaining access to nuclear weapons and requiring the parties to the agreement to hedge against the possibility that the agreement will break down and stored weapons be reactivated.

(a) The Group of 78 therefore calls on the Government of Canada to work with other likeminded nations at the UN and in other relevant venues to reaffirm the importance of adherence to the 16 Principles of Verification and in particular, to call upon the United States and Russia to apply these principles in the following

areas:

- i. Codification and verification of the current unilateral arrangements regarding tactical nuclear weapons; and
- ii. The Moscow Agreement reducing the number of strategic nuclear weapons, which currently has no verification mechanisms and which provides only for withdrawal from service and storage, not for permanent disabling of the warheads.

5. Public Outreach and Disarmament Education

With the end of the Cold War, public attention has understandably shifted to other pressing global problems including the heightened risk of terrorism. Yet vast stocks of nuclear weapons remain, even as the alarming prospect looms of new generations of nuclear weapons being developed and new roles being found for them, in blatant contravention of disarmament obligations undertaken by the nuclear weapons states under the NPT and reaffirmed in the last Review Conference in 2000. There is an urgent need for public outreach programs to heighten public awareness of the urgent need to pursue and promote verifiable, irreversible nuclear disarmament. At the same time, the Group of 78 recognizes the complexity of these issues and the challenges in communicating them to the public.

- (a) The Group of 78 commends the Department of Foreign Affairs for its ongoing initiatives in this regard, including assistance in the development of disarmament curricula and fellowships and its support for the UN program of disarmament education.
- (b) For its part the Group of 78 undertakes to develop more concerted strategies for media outreach including:
 - i. urging the CBC and other networks in their public affairs programming to give more priority to nuclear disarmament;
 - ii. providing public affairs programmers with contact lists of experts in relevant areas;
 - iii. working with other civil society organizations in promoting the visibility of nuclear disarmament and related policy issues.

Resolutions on civil rights

1. The Group of 78 feels impelled to reaffirm its deep concern over the ill-conceived Anti-Terrorism Act. This Act, in effect, puts the Government of Canada outside the law, and it gives extra-judicial authority to the police. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has warned against over-reacting to terrorism in ways that play into the hands of terrorists. The Canadian Anti-Terrorism Act does just that, and

it must be immediately and thoroughly reviewed by Parliament and the public to ensure that it does not infringe on human rights and the protection of citizens or other persons in Canada from arbitrary arrest and detention, as already has happened.

2. In view of the detention in Canada of five men without charge on alleged secret evidence which has not been divulged to them or their lawyers, we submit the following resolution: All detainees and their lawyers must be accorded prompt access to the evidence on which the detention is based.