



GLOBAL STEWARDSHIP

Awakening Canada's Commitment to the World

*Stewardship: Careful and responsible management
of something entrusted to one's care*

Twenty-six years ago, seventy-eight prominent Canadians made a declaration about Canada's place in the world. That declaration gave rise to The Group of 78. During this quarter-century the Group has regularly addressed statements to the Canadian Government on many issues, recommending positive actions. But in this time Canada has changed greatly; the world has changed mightily.

Many, here and abroad, believe that Canada has lost its sense of purpose, its moral direction in world affairs. We believe it is time to commit Canada to a new vision, one of global responsibility for ourselves and the world. The following Principles and Core Objectives are offered in the hope of uniting Canadians behind that vision.

Canada as a nation is privileged and fortunate. Thirty-three million Canadians, drawn from every nation, occupy a sixth of the Earth's landmass. We have its eighth largest economy. Such good fortune carries great responsibility.

Our interests and those of the world are clear: peace, justice and the survival of all life. We call on Canadians to take up the responsibility conferred on us by history and geography. We call on Canadians to commit to the world with moral integrity, energy, enthusiasm and investment unparalleled in our history. We call on Canadians to demand that these principles guide our policies, at home and abroad.

PRINCIPLES OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

1. Peace.

Peace is essential to justice, to economic wellbeing, to human survival. Sustainable peace demands common security; an end to the threat of nuclear war; an international order based on the rule of law, a strong United Nations and effective institutions for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Canadians have the experience, knowledge and capacity – civilian, diplomatic, and military – to lead in the pursuit and achievement of peace.

2. Justice.

Prosperity, equity, inclusion and embracing diversity build peaceful communities, local, national and global. They demand the rule of law, human rights, democratic institutions, fair trade and, above all, an end to poverty. Canadians have the wealth, the experience and the generosity of spirit to lead in the pursuit of justice.

3. Survival.

The impact of modern human activity on the survival of our planet is beginning to be understood. As an Arctic nation, we in Canada are responsible for far more than our share of global resources; sadly, we are also responsible for far more than our share of environmental damage. Canadians have the geography, the resources, and the imagination to lead in the pursuit of survival.

We call on Canadians to join with others to become stewards of the world. Nothing less.

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CORE OBJECTIVES OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

A foreign policy based on global stewardship, on the principles of peace, justice and human survival, demands a commitment to what former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan called "Larger Freedom" – freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity.

Development, security and human rights go hand in hand. There will be no development without security and no security without human development. Both depend on respect for human rights and the rule of law. No state can stand alone in today's world. We share responsibility for each other's development and security. Canadians, as global stewards, must lead in the search for collective strategies, collective institutions and collective action to ensure that development and security.

Accordingly, the core objectives of Canadian foreign policy must be to:

Make a reality of human security through an explicit commitment to the common security of all people and the strengthening of international law.

Renew multilateralism through the progressive strengthening and reform of the United Nations and related international organizations.

Eliminate weapons of mass destruction and strengthen the control of conventional arms.

Prevent armed conflict through the peaceful resolution of disputes and a commitment to long-term sustainable peace-building and common security.

Protect the environment through urgent action, including adaptation and mitigation of the climate change crisis that poses a direct threat to both national and global human security. Particular concern should focus on growing water shortages in many regions.

Promote and protect human rights, with particular emphasis on the fundamental Canadian value of gender equality.

Create a fair, democratically accountable international trading system, based on equity and equitable and enforceable rules, through the transformation of the Bretton Woods Institutions.

Ensure effective development assistance, rooted in fair trade, cancellation of the debts of poorer countries and the building of long-term equitable relationships among sovereign societies.

Support and strengthen governments that are responsive and accountable to the needs and demands of their peoples.

Ottawa, 30 September 2007.

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