



In this Issue

Canada, the Americas and the Caribbean
Carlo Dade.....1

Op-Ed: For a Bolstering of Canada's Leadership in the Americas
Joe Clark.....2

Canada and the Colombian Conflict: Opportunities and Perspectives
Sandra Borda and María Paz Berger....4

Brazil and Canada: Convergent Interests
José Botafogo Gonçalves6

Chile-Canada Relations: Forging a Common Experience
Carlos Huneeus.....7

Canada's Developmental Role in the Caribbean
John Rapley.....8

Haiti-Canada, quel futur?
Jacky Lumarque.....10

News Briefs

Cuba..... 3

Argentina.....4

Facts and Figures

Latin American Views of Canada's Role in the World

Table 1 Overall Perceptions2

Table 2 Perceptions by Income.....8

Editorial Board

Carlo Dade, *Executive Director*

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Canada, the Americas and the Caribbean

Carlo Dade

On the occasion of the first *major tour* of the hemisphere by a Canadian Prime Minister over a decade, this issue of FOCAL POINT aims to take stock of bilateral relations with the countries visited by Stephen Harper—and also Brazil where Governor General Michaëlle Jean has paid a state visit—and analyze the prospects and opportunities for a strong and positive Canadian engagement to in the region.

These visits signal a significant shift in foreign policy to focus on, as the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister have put it, “our neighbourhood.” Coupled with the creation of a new post of Assistant Deputy Minister for Policy for Latin America within the Canadian Foreign Ministry and announcements of new, or renewed, trade negotiations with Central America, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Peru, these trips point to a promising new direction in foreign policy. After the United States and Afghanistan, Latin America and the Caribbean have been designated the highest priority for Canada's external relations.

The establishment of a clear foreign policy direction is as welcome as it has been long anticipated. For a few months FOCAL and other players such as Rick Waugh, CEO of Scotiabank, (one of Canada's strongest foreign presences), have pressed in these pages that the Americas are a natural choice for Canadian diplomatic, development, investment and trading enterprise. And while some initially feared that the shift toward the Americas meant we would turn our back on Africa, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister have stated publicly on several occasions that Canadian aid commitments to Africa will be kept.

It must be stressed that there are compelling reasons for our engagement in the Americas and Caribbean. As much as a middle power like Canada has hard interests, we have them in the Americas and the Caribbean. In our hyper-connected world the region's geographic proximity means that its stability is crucial for our security on the public health, crime and economic fronts. On trade, last year Canada moved ahead of Spain to become the third largest foreign investor in the Americas. It is thus crucially important that we devote resources and attention concomitant with our interests in the region.

Canada can also do so much more in the Americas than it can elsewhere. In Haiti a Latin American partnership of ‘emerging powers’ led by Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay is coalescing to rebuild that country. Working with these countries and others like Mexico as true partners, not just in Haiti but throughout the region presents unique opportunities to make deep and sustainable inroads in the fight against poverty, poor governance, corruption and exclusion. These are countries with which we share not just a hemisphere but also a belief in democracy and free markets that is informed by a deep and real concern for social justice. Working together with like-minded partners in the region we also have an ability to offer a third, more pragmatic, path between Washington and Caracas.

Op-Ed

For a Bolstering of Canada’s Leadership in the Americas

Joe Clark

Prime Minister Harper’s summer visits in the hemisphere are welcome and significant for two related reasons.

First, Canada has real interests and potential influence in the region, which will gradually atrophy if ignored, and could flourish with serious attention.

Second, the Harper government’s international focus has, so far, been extremely limited—even the important engagement in Afghanistan draws principally on the USA as a partner, and the military as an instrument. This is the first hint of a broader perspective. So, one of Mr. Harper’s challenges will be to demonstrate that he is acting independently of Washington.

There are always tensions between the USA and some of its neighbours—but one reason this visit is timely is that relations are more difficult than usual between the Bush Administration and much of the hemisphere. That means that, if we choose to do so, Canada can be a more effective interlocutor on some of the hemispheric interests we share with the USA—such as security, respect for democratic institutions, and improved trade arrangements.

That situation also gives Canada more room to make our own mark, and broaden our own reach.

There is a strong, if sporadic, history of Canadian leadership in the Americas—and Canadian initiatives have been both welcome and effective, when they occurred. Earlier Canadian governments made a real difference in our relations with Cuba, our active role in Central America, our decision to become full members in the Organization of American States, our hosting of the Quebec Summit of the Americas, which led to the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

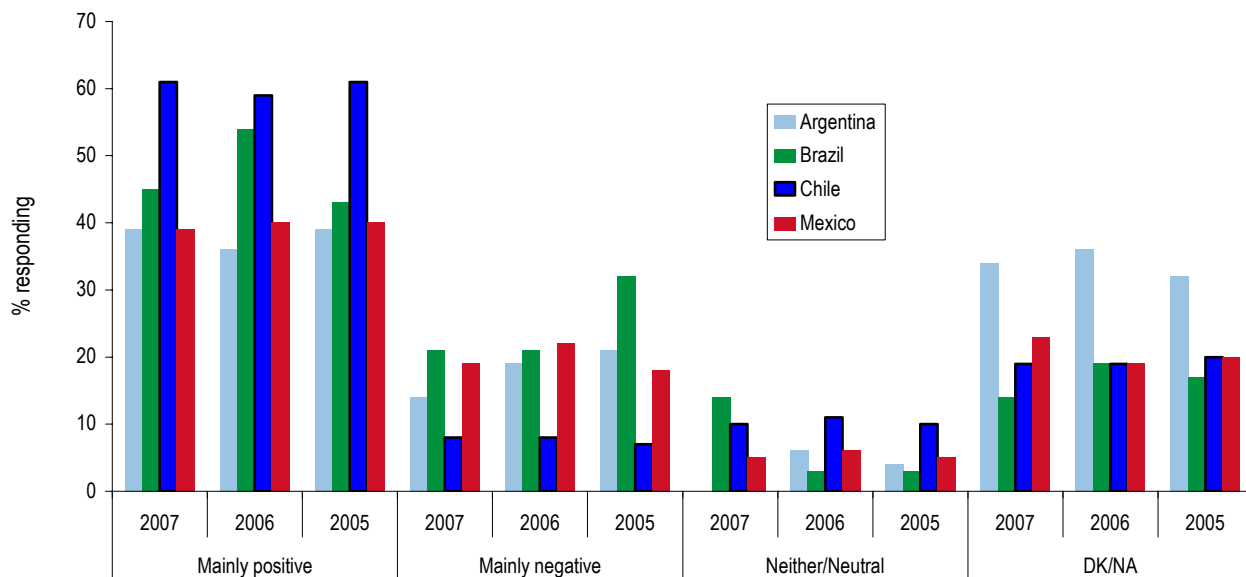
Then Canada’s profile fell in our home hemisphere. And, after 9/11, we and the world turned our attention elsewhere, even though the economic, strategic and security importance of the Caribbean and the Americas increased.

At least four factors should engage our attention now in the Americas: democracy, trade and growth, security, and the ability to help shape the future.

Democracy: We are one of the architects of the Inter-American Democratic Charter and, more to

Facts and Figures—Table 1

Is Canada having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world?



Source: BBC Poll #1 2007 GlobeScan Incorporated.

the point, our reputation is that we apply the principles we preach. In a region which has shown such courage in moving beyond authoritarian regimes, Canada can offer helpful, and acceptable, examples of how both democracy and diversity can work. That reaches beyond the essential questions of human rights and community governance. On issues like regulation and co-operation in energy development, Canadian experience could be instructive as the Caribbean and the Americas seek to harness and share their diverse resources across complex jurisdictions.

Growth and trade: The combined economies of Latin America and the Caribbean are bigger than the economy of China (World Bank, 2005). Canadian investment in the Americas is \$107.1 billion—almost three times more than Canadian investment in all of Asia, and spread across a wide range of sectors (Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2006). In the Caribbean and elsewhere Canadian banks and businesses already play leading roles, and opportunities are growing, not least for smaller business, in regions like the Caribbean.

Security: some of our closest neighbours in the Caribbean are in the violent

ARGENTINA

Senator Cristina Fernández de Kirchner announced she will run in Argentina's upcoming presidential election on October 28 as candidate for the ruling Front for Victory Alliance (FPV). The announcement from Senator Kirchner's chief of staff Alberto Fernandez came on July 2, confirming months of speculation.

As it stands, current President and husband Néstor Kirchner would likely win re-election so his decision not to run in the upcoming election is curious to some degree. Some suggest that he is stepping aside due to ill health; others see his decision as a strategic move to extend his time in power: under the 1994 constitution the President can only serve two terms in office, so having Cristina in power now would allow him to run again in 2011 or 2015.

Cristina Kirchner is well regarded at home and internationally. Elected Senator for the province of Santa Cruz in 1995, she has been involved in many areas of government, her most recent post being President of the Commission on Constitutional Rights. Should Cristina win, she would become Argentina's first elected female President.

Ms. Fernández de Kirchner maintains high popular support with 46.2% of voting intentions according to a recent opinion poll by Analogías. She has a significant lead over her nearest rival Elisa Carrió of the Affirmation for an Egalitarian Republic Alliance (ARI), who holds 12 % of public support. Other candidates include former Economy Minister Roberto Lavagna of the Radical Civil Union (UCR) who enjoys 11.1% of voting intentions, Ricardo López Murphy of Recreate (Recrear) (4.1%), and former President Carlos Menem of the Justicialist Party (PJ) with 3.7 %.

eye of the storms of drug and other smuggling, and of organized crime. These are often strong communities, with established democratic and judicial systems—but they are small, and thus susceptible to the ravages both of weather, and of international trade and other systems that are geared to serve the interests of large nations. In Haiti, there is slow, steady progress, but restoring the strength of that society is a long-term commitment, to which Canada is critical. These nations all have intimate ties to Canada—at least half a million of our citizens come from the Caribbean—and the opportunities for constructive co-operation are numerous, many of them unexamined.

The future

There have been significant changes in our hemisphere, with more to come. Once characterized by authoritarian regimes, the continent is now largely democratic, with active civil societies. Mexico has moved from being outside the international trading system to pioneering NAFTA, and trade policy is now an active factor throughout the region. As power shifts in the world, away from the dominance of the traditional "West", Brazil's role and influence grow as, to lesser degrees, does that of some other Latin Americans. In the election of the new Secretary General of the OAS, the Caribbean acted together to change the outcome, demonstrating that collaboration can trump size. The simple fact is that Latin America is becoming steadily more important in international affairs—and Canada has a privileged place at their table, if we choose to assert our interest.

There will always be arguments that Canada has only a minor influence in Latin America, so should not concentrate there. Indeed, a more generalized version of that view argues that a country Canada's size has not much influence anywhere, and so should be content with a relatively passive foreign policy, tucking ourselves into Washington's skirts, or tut-tutting those who actually enter the arena.

On the contrary. Canada's mediating skills and reputation for balance are unusually pertinent in this era of cultural conflict and shifting power. That is specifically the case in Latin America and the Caribbean, when Washington's credentials are in decline, and Canada's experience as an economy, a federation, a democracy and a neighbour are

relevant and respected.

And we have tangible interests in the region—increasing investment in resource, environmental and other fields; increasing vulnerability to the terrorism, trafficking and pandemics that become more threatening when order breaks down; a genuine capacity to protect human rights and advance democratic governance; and an opportunity to refresh our own multilateral credentials, working with hemispheric partners who will become steadily more influential as power shifts in the world. ■

The Right Honourable Joe Clark was Canada's Prime Minister (1979-1980) and Secretary of State for External Affairs (1984-1991). He is currently a member of FOCAL's Board of Directors.

CUBA

On June 18, the Fifth Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council dropped independent expert monitoring of alleged human rights abuses in Cuba and Belarus, as part of a package of new rules for the Council. In remarks to journalists, the President of the Council, Mexican Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba praised the decision as marking the beginning of "a new era for the United Nations and a new culture in dealing with human rights". (UN Press Release, 6/19/07)

At the beginning of the session, the Council heard a report on the human rights situation in Cuba by Christine Chanet, Special Representative of the High Commissioner, in implementation of the General Assembly Resolution 60/251 of March 2006. Chanet's report urges the Cuban government to halt the prosecution of citizens who exercise rights guaranteed by the UN Declaration of Human Rights, to release detained persons who have not committed acts of violence and to review laws that lead to prosecution of persons exercising freedom of expression, demonstration, assembly and association. Chanet also provided a list of prisoners of conscience still in jail since 2003.

The Cuban government has refused to recognize Chanet's mandate, and Cuba's representative to the Council responded to her report by saying that "the Cuba she was trying to convene was a picture concocted in the laboratories of the Central Intelligence Agency". (UN Press Release, 6/12/07)

The final package of measures adopted by the Council was accepted 46 votes to one. Canada broke ranks to register the single protest vote, unhappy with the decision to abolish the special UN rapporteurs for Cuba and Belarus, and also opposed to singling out the Palestinian territories for regular special attention. (DPA, 6/20/07) Havana, on its part, issued an official statement calling the decision a historic victory that puts an end to an anti-Cuban operation carried out by the US. (MINREX, 6/19/07)

Canada and the Colombian Conflict: Perspectives and Opportunities

*Sandra Borda
Maria Paz Berger*

The Colombian conflict, the only remaining theatre of internal warfare in the Americas, constitutes the last exception in a hemisphere where peace has historically prevailed over armed confrontation. It is a conflict where two wars coexist: one against an array of insurgent groups and another against the illegal drug trade. This has facilitated, on the one hand, the continued existence of a guerrilla movement spawned by the Cold War; on the other hand, it has provided fertile ground for the emergence and consolidation of a booming illegal drug industry. The respective natures of both wars and of the international system have made it enormously difficult to contain the conflict within Colombia's territorial boundaries. In fact, the tendency toward internationalization, both of the conflict and of the numerous efforts to achieve peace, has been notorious.

This trend makes it a matter of utmost urgency to coordinate efforts across the Americas to once and for all find a peaceful solution to the protracted Colombian conflict. In the search for a hemispheric understanding that will help achieve this goal, the work of the Canadian government is of undeniable relevance and may prove decisive. Canada can offer a wealth of experience in fostering negotiated conflict resolution around the world (let us not forget that it was a Canadian, Lester B. Pearson, who introduced the concept of peacekeeping before the United Nations) in the face of the exhaustion of a warmongering approach that seeks to defeat the guerrillas militarily. While international attempts to resolve the Colombian conflict by unilateral and interventionist means have been largely unsuccessful, Canada boasts a diplomacy centred on multilateralism and a demonstrated respect for international institutions that is widely acknowledged throughout the international community. Facing eroded models of external participation that recognize as sole interlocutor the weak Colombian state, Canadian diplomacy encourages the establishment of a dialogue with various civil society sectors that are affected by the conflict in one way or another and of which the role

can be critical to its resolution. In the midst of a war on drugs that is largely imposed and unilateral, and that through a strong focus on policing has effectively fostered crime, Canada lends its support to multilateral instruments to fight the problem, offers an approach that is mindful of environmental concerns and considers alternative development scenarios seriously, as opposed to mere prohibition. Within an international system that is waging a merciless war on terror seemingly without rules, Canada continues to promote the observance of human rights and International Humanitarian Law. These aspects of Canada's international diplomacy constitute a great opportunity for Colombia and for the design of a more effective solution to its armed conflict.

The Canadian experience in internal conflict resolution in this hemisphere can be translated into an important contribution to the resolution of the war in Colombia. Canada's participation in the resolution of the Central American crisis (during the 1980s) demonstrated that Canada was in a position to understand that the conflicts in that region were not merely a manifestation of the East-vs-West confrontation that prevailed at the time. Rather, Canada chose to interpret said conflicts within their own national and regional contexts and understood that they stemmed from the region's dire economic and social situation. This interpretation led Canada to support the *Contadora* Group initiative and to focus its diplomatic efforts on the Central American conflicts, mainly via multilateral channels and particularly those of the United Nations. Furthermore, its historical concern for the observance of human rights (it bears remembering that it was a Canadian, John Peters Humphrey, who wrote the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948) remained a cross-cutting theme in its involvement in the conflicts of that region.

In the Colombian case, Canadian involvement has continued to follow the same premises: Canada took part in the meetings of the peace process Support Group that accompanied the talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)—the largest and most important insurgent group in the country—during the administration of President Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002). It also acted as coordinator of the Facilitating Commission during the 2001 political negotiations with FARC and was part of the group of ten countries that provided support to the peace talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN) in the same year. Previously, Canada also led a crucial initiative for the eradication of what has turned out to be one of the most perverse by-products of the war in Colombia: anti-personal landmines. The so-called Ottawa Process (signed in 1997 by 122 countries) has led to a decline in the use of such devices around the world. These multilateral efforts to foster peace (and not the waging of war) as well as the Canada's initiatives on behalf of the victims of war (rather than the victimizers) have been crucial and their intensification is not only desirable but also necessary to advance toward peace in Colombia and to enhance security in the region. At present, Canada is part of the G-24 or Group of Support, drawn from participants in a meeting held in London in July 2003, in which a process of international support reorientation was set in motion. Canada held the presidency of this group between January and June 2005 and has played a key role in the coordination of the international community's cooperation, as it

did when it presided over the International Coordination and Cooperation Board for Colombia in February 2005.

Under these premises, a Canadian contribution to the peaceful resolution of the Colombian conflict would only improve bilateral relations, already quite significant in other areas. In fact, Colombia is Canada's fourth most important economic partner in Latin America, after Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela and, in turn, Canada ranks eighth among foreign direct investors in Colombia, with interests in industries as important as oil extraction, agro products, mining, telecommunications and transportation. But commercial integration and economic cooperation mean little if they do not translate into mechanisms that help improve the living conditions of the ordinary citizen. Greater economic prosperity should therefore be accompanied by the peaceful resolution of the armed conflict that today overwhelms Colombians, the consolidation of the Colombian democracy and of the rule of law, and greater respect for the rights of Colombian citizens. It is precisely in this area that Canada and Colombia can work together to end to the armed conflict, achieve regional stability, and thus turn the entire American hemisphere, without exceptions, into a peace zone. ■

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Brazil and Canada: Convergent Interests

José Botafogo Gonçalves

The involvement of Brazil and Canada in topics of international politics is a relatively recent, or tardy, phenomenon in the history of both countries. Up to the first half of the 20th century, Canada occupied a comfortable position in the world through its expressive participation in the Commonwealth and its growing relationship with its only bordering neighbour, the United States of America. Canada kept a distant yet benevolent eye on South America.

Brazil, in turn, for different reasons, maintained amicable but economically rare relations with its South American neighbours, and confused North America with the United States, since Mexico, in spite of its geographical location, was seen in Brazil as part of the Iberian and catholic underdeveloped "South", like all the other Latin countries from the western hemisphere.

This simplistic and schematic scenario has been changing over the last four decades. Canada is part of Organization of American States and of the Inter-American Development Bank. Its investments and trade in South America have been maintaining an accelerated pace of growth.

As for Brazil, there is a clear recognition of the specificity of the Canadian reality well separated from that of the United States through the consolidation of diplomatic, commercial, economic and cultural relations and of various initiatives of mutual international cooperation. Nevertheless, there is still a lot to be done between the two countries to achieve a convergence of short and long-term goals.

From the point of view of Brazil (and of the Southern Cone), the most immediate priority is the execution of an ambitious and necessary program of investments in logistics, particularly in the segments of energy and transportation.

The volume of resources required for the execution of such a program, without which it will not be possible to sustain reasonable rates of economic growth in the next decade, is so large that it should mobilize public and private resources (national, foreign and international) to the tune of several hundred billion dollars. An exceptional window of opportunities is opening for Canada both in the financial field and in that of the marketing of goods and equipment of high technological content, either in energy or in mining.

Considering that 80% of the Brazilian population already lives in urban centers, investments in transportation and energy will have to be supplemented by those earmarked for social infrastructure, to wit: supply of water, sewage, environmental sanitation, civil construction and the recovery of slums.

In the field of security, particularly in large Brazilian megalopolises (Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Recife, Salvador, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre) two priorities stand out: investments in basic and secondary education (with

application of modern distance education technologies) and cooperation in the sphere of activity of local police forces (professional education, use of efficient equipment and increased use of intelligence techniques in the fight against organized crime).

Canada has a great deal to offer in all these segments. Areas of cooperation of the federal government and of the provincial governments should be defined.

Brazil has the ambition to become a global trader in international commerce and a global player in the international political scenario.

Canada aims to define its role in the United Nations through its own identity and not be seen merely as an auxiliary force of the United States.

Both countries have the ability to develop a common agenda tending to favour the development of a multipolar, more economically and socially balanced world. ■

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Chile-Canada Relations: Forging a Common Experience

Carlos Huneeus

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's upcoming visit to Chile constitutes an event of paramount importance in Chile-Canada relations, which have been characterized by great dynamism since the reestablishment of democracy in 1990. The historical visit will take place on the year of the 10th anniversary of the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two countries, the negotiation of which represented an enormous technical and diplomatic challenge for the budding Chilean democracy after the country was kept politically isolated from the rest of the world by a repressive and authoritarian regime (1973-1990). For the Chilean authorities, the experience gained then proved invaluable in later negotiations with the USA and the European Union which culminated in free trade agreements that remain key instruments for the development of exports, a mainstay of the Chilean economy. Without a doubt, the FTA with Canada has had a positive impact on the economic exchange between both countries, with Chilean exports reaching US\$1.291 million and Canadian imports reported at US\$480 million. Likewise, Canada has made important investments in Chile, particularly in the mining industry, one of the key sectors in the Chilean economy.

These dynamic bilateral relations are built on a shared approach to international politics, namely support to multilateral efforts with emphasis on the strengthening of the United Nations so that it can play a more effective role in the preservation of peace and international security. This commonality has been reflected in the adoption of similar positions on different international issues, like the war in Iraq. Canada and Chile are also actively involved, within the framework of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), in the political, economic and social reconstruction of Haiti. By reinforcing the Mission's peacekeeping component with Canadian police officers and a contingent of Chilean soldiers, both countries have made a substantial contribution to the establishment of institutional foundations that guarantee the security of Haitians and, hence, the viability of their democracy.

Both countries share in the will to strengthen democracy in Latin America and promote an economic development model that caters to the needs of citizens, rejecting the populist alternatives offered in some countries of the region.

Chile places the utmost importance on its relation with Canada because of the new political and economic challenges it faces as a result of the successful policies implemented by democratic governments. The continuity of four Concertation (Concertación) governments (1990-2010) has allowed the consolidation and deepening of Chilean democracy, with the introduction of far-reaching institutional changes like the Criminal Trial reform process, which has resulted in speedier court proceedings and improved access to justice for low-income individuals. A policy of "growth with equity," launched by President Patricio Aylwin in 1990 and implemented by his Finance Minister, Alejandro Foxley, laid the foundations for a successful economic

strategy, continued and expanded by Presidents Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994-2000) and Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006). This strategy has translated into higher economic growth rates, which accompanied by dynamic social policies, have allowed a reduction in poverty from a 40% high in 1990 to as low as 13.8 % in 2006. Foxley is now Chile's Foreign Affairs Minister and his former Chief of Staff in 1990 and 1991, Andrés Velasco, is the current Finance Minister.

The government of President Michelle Bachelet (2006-2010) is implementing an economic policy in line with that of preceding administrations and has set out to make up for their main shortcoming: economic inequality. The income gap in Chile is one of the widest in the world and was deemed "shameful" by the bishops of the Catholic Church in 2005, at the beginning of the presidential campaign. This is a very complex issue to address as it has very deep socio-economic and political roots, particularly in the neo-liberal policies of the Pinochet regime which undermined trade unions and voluntary associations, the very institutions that can fight for the rights of the weak. The neoliberal vision of business imposed in those years, focused on the bottom line with total disregard for the workforce, has made Chilean wage-earners the targets of a perverse spiral that constitutes the political and institutional background for the existing inequality.

The Bachelet administration also advances a policy of social protection that seeks to correct this situation. To reinforce workers' rights, it has introduced changes in the legislation to reduce short-term employment, widely prevalent across sectors of the economy and reflected in multiple mechanisms affecting workers' incomes and labour conditions, such as subcontracting. The government is also pushing through Congress the introduction of social security reform to afford low-income workers access to a minimum pension, which they would otherwise not be entitled to under the private pension system (AFP). This is due to the fact that they require 240 months of contributions to have access to a minimum pension, which a significant proportion of low-income workers will not reach.

The challenges before Chile are enormous and complex. Its economy largely relies on natural

resources, which calls for environmentally friendly standards that the industry has failed to implement properly. Bridging the socio-economic gap demands controversial policies because it affects economic and social interests that profit from inequality. To achieve that and much more, Chile needs to modernize its weak civil service, whose mistakes prove extremely costly for the country. For the most part, such institutional weakness accounts for the issues affecting the formulation and implementation of reform policies, like the TranSantiago project, a plan to overhaul the public transit system in Santiago.

Canada has a lot to contribute to Chile's drive toward better democracy and a humane economy that caters evenly to the interests of workers and employers alike. By remaining committed to development in Chile, Canada will be sending a very powerful signal to the rest of Latin America about its commitment to democracy and development in a region currently facing very tough challenges. ■

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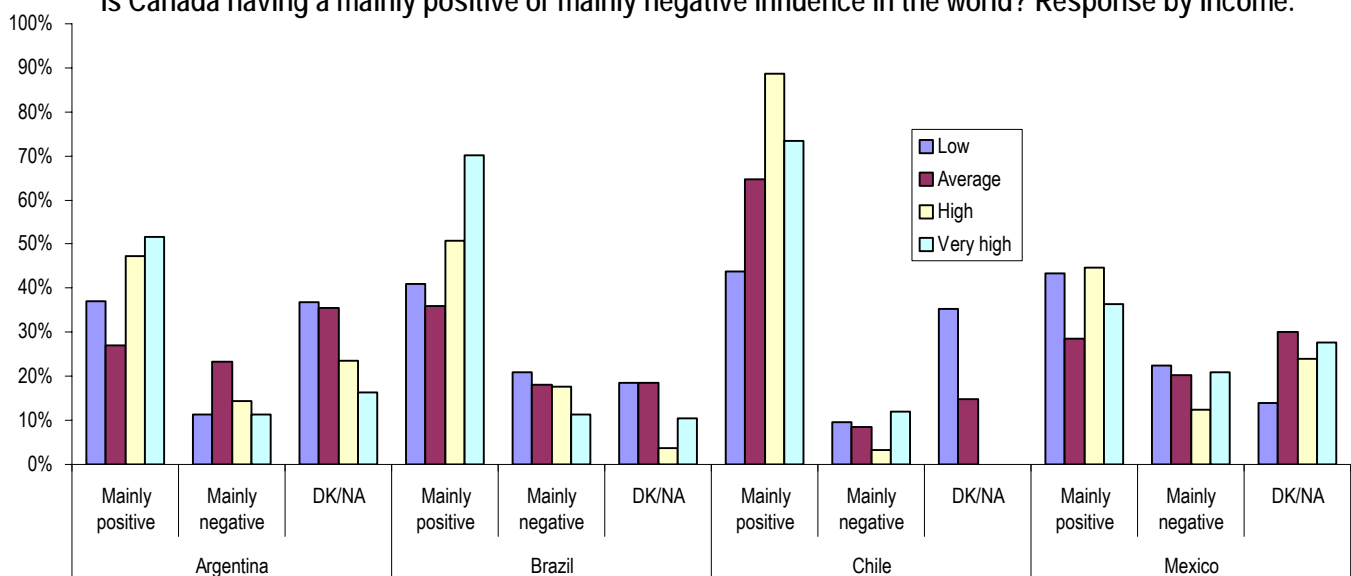
Canada's Developmental Role in the Caribbean

John Rapley

Canada is one of the leading contributors of aid to the Caribbean and this aid has been vital to the development of the region. Canadian aid programmes focus on a variety of areas including trade cooperation, private sector development and security—all of which acknowledged by the Caribbean as important to the region's future development. The Caribbean is often discussed in tandem with Latin America, but this is often not useful. The Caribbean states face unique challenges and as such it is important to delineate their particular problems in order to develop a programme of action. In discussing the potential for increased relations between Canada and the Caribbean it is also important to point out that the Caribbean is not a homogenous region. Depending on the definition used it comprises over 20 states and ranges from Haiti, which is one of the poorest countries in the world, to the Bahamas and Barbados—both of which rank high on the human

Facts and Figures—Table 2

Is Canada having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world? Response by Income.



Source: BBC Poll #1 2007 GlobeScan Incorporated.

development index. Any developmental strategy designed for the Caribbean must therefore be sensitive to this fact. For the most part Canada has recognized these differences as seen in the fact that Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has specific programmes for Commonwealth Caribbean states, and that these programmes are different from those initiated for Cuba and Haiti. However, as noted before, even the Commonwealth Caribbean states have different developmental concerns.

Economic Challenges Facing the Region

In recent years, the Caribbean states have had to reassess their place in the current globalized economic system. This reassessment is due in part to the loss of many of the trade preferences that the Caribbean previously enjoyed, and as a result these states are increasingly required to place reciprocity at the heart of trade negotiations. As reciprocity becomes the leitmotif of trade negotiations, the Caribbean is increasingly coming face to face with the reality that its economies are uncompetitive. As such high on the region's agenda is identifying new industries that will prove to be more competitive. The major problem associated with this quest is that comparative advantages have been hard to identify. One area that has increasingly dominated Caribbean economic prospects is the service sector. Across the region, the service sector is becoming an important earner of vital foreign currency and one of the leading contributors to GDP, and this sector is often seen as the most fruitful avenue for future development.

The Private Sector and the Institutional Framework

As highlighted earlier, one of the leading problems facing Caribbean states is their lack of competitiveness. In view of this it has been acknowledged across the region that private sector development is an important facet of improving competitiveness. CIDA has also identified this sphere as an area for funding. These efforts relating to the development of the private sector, whether through micro finance or other technical assistance, have been accompanied by programmes aimed at wider institutional development. The private sector is indeed to be considered the engine of growth, but there can be no development if the governmental framework continues to thwart the legal operations of firms.

Security

Security for Caribbean states is not really a matter of territorial integrity. Security issues for these small vulnerable states often include environmental security, crime and health. The Caribbean states are susceptible to natural disasters and this susceptibility is made even more acute by the size of these states. A hurricane will affect not just one part of an island, but will negatively affect the entire island. Environmental security, especially in relation to disaster preparedness and recovery, is therefore a key issue for Caribbean states.

Another important security consideration across the Caribbean is crime. This is often linked to (but not exclusive to) the drug trade, and this crime problem is identified as one of the major impediments to the economic growth of several Caribbean states. Cooperation efforts would therefore be welcomed in the Caribbean, especially in stemming the flow of drugs through the islands en route to North America and Europe. However, equally important is

controlling the inflow of illegal weapons, which often contributes as much to the crime problem as the flows of drugs.

HIV/AIDS is an important health security issue in the Caribbean region. This disease is the leading cause of death for those between 15 and 44 years of age, and the Caribbean has the second highest incidence of the disease. Caribbean states are therefore interested in accessing continued assistance in this area.

Conclusion

There are many areas of concern that necessitate further dialogue. Two such areas relate to migration and increased access to the Canadian market. In terms of migration, Canada is one of the leading destinations for Caribbean migrants. This drain of human capital is potentially damaging, but the corollary flow of remittances proves vital to the region. There is therefore room for discussions aimed at making this migratory trend more beneficial to both parties. Given the loss of preferential access to European markets, Caribbean states have market access high on their agendas. In moving Caribbean-Canada relations forward, market access is a crucial issue that must be discussed.

The Caribbean states welcome closer ties between the region and Canada. Given the numerous developmental challenges facing the region, Canada's renewed interest in Latin America and the Caribbean is potentially beneficial to both sides if dialogue continues and if the idiosyncrasies of the region are taken into consideration. Canada has proved to be an important developmental partner and the Caribbean states will undoubtedly look forward to working with Canada to achieve a more competitive and prosperous region. ■

John Rapley is Research Director of the Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CaPRI), a Caribbean think tank that promotes evidence-based policymaking in the region. Committed to the region's development, CaPRI has strong linkages with the academic community, the private sector and civil society.

Haiti-Canada, quel futur?

Jacky Lumarque

« Moun an deyò » (gens du dehors) est le label que le citoyen haïtien afflige à son congénère paysan dont la démarche, l'accoutrement et le parler trahissent qu'il est d'un autre monde, d'un monde « en dehors ». L'importance démographique de ces « morniers » (habitants des mornes) qui constituent les trois quarts de la population haïtienne a inspiré à Gérard Barthélemy l'expression de « pays en dehors » pour parler de cette majorité « autre », qui a toujours été privée de la plupart des services de base que l'État reconnaît comme un devoir de dispenser à ses citoyens.

Malgré les progrès récents, résultats d'une prise de conscience des pouvoirs publics vis-à-vis de cette « fracture » humaine et sociale, l'essentiel reste à faire; ce qui rappelle à nos leaders politiques que le défi le plus important des dix prochaines années est celui de permettre à ce pays de devenir inclusif pour tous ses Haïtiens, de cesser d'être un pays en dehors de lui-même.

Ce ne sera pas tout, car il existe un deuxième pays en dehors. Celui de nos deux millions d'Haïtiens de la diaspora qui attendent d'être inclus dans le pays, lorsqu'une constitution renouvelée leur reconnaîtra le droit de participer à la vie politique du pays. Cette partie du pays « en dehors » est quand même plus fortunée, au point de se permettre de revendiquer, avec ses 1.3 milliards de dollars de transfert annuel au pays, d'être le premier « pays » donateur d'Haïti.

Si la majorité de cette Haïti « en dehors » se trouve concentrée aux États-Unis et en République Dominicaine (un million et 800,000 respectivement selon les estimations les plus courantes), le segment localisé au Canada, en particulier, dans la province du Québec, même avec une taille moindre est peut-être celle qui revêt le plus de prestige au regard des Haïtiens. Le professeur Leslie Manigat, parlant du Canada, trouve besoin d'atténuer le caractère d'appartenance au Nord du Canada, en disant que c'est le « Nord raisonnable et compréhensif ». Ce point de vue est largement partagé dans de nombreux milieux professionnels et politiques familiers avec la pression brutale du modèle dominant de coopération « donor driven » que les partenaires traditionnels du Nord imposent au pays.

Existe-t-il donc un modèle de coopération canadienne qui soit différent des courants traditionnels ?

A la conférence du 25 juillet 2006 tenue à Port-au-Prince, sur la base de documents préparatoires élaborés par les autorités haïtiennes—fait peu coutumier dans l'histoire de la coopération d'Haïti avec ses partenaires, généralement plus entreprenants—le Canada n'a pas hésité à assumer des engagements à long terme pour aider à reconstruire et à développer le pays (520 millions de dollars sur la période 2006-2011 dont 135.5 millions programmés pour la période juillet 2006-septembre 2007). Le champ d'intervention de cette coopération s'aligne sur les quatre axes de base identifiés par le gouvernement haïtien : la gouvernance politique, les infrastructures, la reprise économique et l'accès aux services de base.

Au-delà des montants promis et engagés la coopération canadienne possède deux atouts majeurs : d'abord, c'est une coopération qui se met à l'écoute des Haïtiens, qui ne cherche pas à imposer ses idées de projets sous prétexte que tels projets auraient eu de grands succès dans des pays similaires. C'est un exercice complexe, exigeant une patience et un respect de l'autre hors du commun, et qui est rendu plus difficile par le fait que la plupart des responsables politiques s'attendent à se voir « dicter » poliment les projets que le Blanc est désireux de financer.

Un deuxième atout de cette coopération est le souci démontré pour les résultats à atteindre. Dans un pays inondé de tant de projets à zéro impact, où tous les ressorts naturels de la dynamique communautaire sont cassés par des activités artificielles sous contrôle exclusif d'agences d'exécution externes en interaction superficielle avec les acteurs locaux et les bénéficiaires, le souci de pérennité de l'initiative est déjà une petite révolution locale.

Cela étant, ces atouts ne doivent pas faire oublier les défis du moment ni les attentes des Haïtiens. Les familles les plus pauvres investissent plus de 40% de leurs revenus dans l'éducation de leurs enfants. Ce problème attend une réponse, de la part des autorités d'abord. Mais, dans leur cœur, les Haïtiens se disent qu'ils sont aussi, vis-à-vis du Canada qui a accueilli ses meilleurs cadres scientifiques et professionnels, un pays donateur et qu'une certaine forme de contrepartie doit être au rendez-vous pour faciliter des réformes d'envergure. Le Plan national d'éducation et de formation qui représente le meilleur exercice de planification stratégique concertée que les Haïtiens aient entrepris affronte cette année sa date d'expiration, sans jamais avoir été mis en œuvre. L'intérêt pour une mise à jour est, paraît-il, présent chez le partenaire canadien ; mais un tel exercice sera sans utilité, si une synergie entre tous les bailleurs n'est pas trouvée pour passer à la phase de mise en œuvre.

Le monde globalisé dans lequel le pays se trouve de plus en plus immergé (intégration dans la CARICOM, accord de partenariat économique avec l'Union Européenne, régime commercial préférentiel dans le cadre de la loi sur

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l'encouragement à un partenariat haïtien et hémisphérique d'opportunités (loi HOPE) votée par le Congrès américain) est un monde où les processus éducatifs ont une place centrale, sans oublier le rôle que doivent jouer les universités, comme accompagnateurs des changements à introduire afin de réduire la dépendance du pays vis-à-vis des expatriés, « obligés » de se substituer à des ressources locales pour la formation des maîtres ou la préparation de matériels didactiques pour l'école primaire.

Une fois le cadrage pour l'aide au développement proprement établi, un autre défi de taille sera d'assister le pays à acquérir les capacités pour entrer dans une véritable dynamique d'échanges commerciaux avec le reste du monde, le Nord en particulier, seul moyen de mettre fin au cycle de la pauvreté. Les exportations d'Haïti vers le Canada représentent à peine 3% dans l'ensemble des exportations totales du pays, bien loin derrière le géant américain, avec 70%. Pourtant, la firme canadienne Gildan, avec près de 8,000 emplois dans le secteur textile est le plus gros employeur du pays, après l'État haïtien. Le potentiel de développement de ce type de partenariat commercial se trouve considérablement agrandi par l'adoption de la loi HOPE votée par le Congrès américain en décembre 2006. Voilà un secteur de coopération où les deux partenaires ont l'assurance de sortir gagnants. ■

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The Mapping the Media in the Americas Project

In an effort to foster transparency around the role and connections between the media and democracy FOCAL, The Carter Center and the University of Calgary have undertaken the *Mapping the Media in the Americas* project. Through this project, interactive web-based maps have been created using Geographic Information Systems technology that illustrate the location, coverage and ownership structure of the media, and cross this information with electoral results and socio-demographic information. Countries mapped are Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad & Tobago and Uruguay.

The maps can be accessed at www.mediamap.info.

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