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Chair

Mr. Bernard Patry

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● (1335)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.)): Welcome. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are studying the international policy statement.

This afternoon, from the International Institute for Sustainable Development, we have Mr. William H. Glanville, vice-president and chief operating officer on the cooperative management team; from Project Peacemakers, Mr. Derrick Martens; and from the Immigration and Refugee Community Organization, Mr. Allan Wise, director.

Welcome, all of you.

We will start with Mr. Glanville, please.

Mr. William H. Glanville (Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, Corporate Management Team, International Institute for Sustainable Development): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In making this presentation today I'll talk about three things. First of all, for those of you who are not particularly familiar with the International Institute for Sustainable Development, I'll make a few comments about the type of work we do. Second, I'll make some general comments about the international policy statement, and finally, some suggestions regarding aspects of the international policy statement that could be strengthened.

To begin with, the agenda for achieving sustainable development is an agenda for change. The challenge is to manage change in a complex and interconnected world of often competing priorities.

As a policy research and communications institute, IISD carries out research that will help to identify appropriate policies for change. We also devise strategies for engagement with policy-makers and decision-makers that will lead to change.

IISD is a Canadian-based institution, but it's international in scope. In our view, this sets up an important two-way dynamic, in which our work in Canada provides an important grounding for actions we might recommend in an international setting. And vice versa. There are tools and policy options that emerge from our international projects that have use domestically. Our international board of directors emphasizes the value of these aspects, grounding our work at home as well as learning from our work abroad for application to development challenges within Canada.

As an independent non-governmental organization, we have been in existence for 15 years. Since our creation in 1990 we have received some core funding from CIDA and Environment Canada, as well as from the Government of Manitoba. Today we raise approximately 80% of our annual revenue through proposals to funders for specific projects and through competitive bidding processes. For example, last year we raised $8.76 million for specific projects, and more than half of this was raised outside Canada.

I'll offer some general comments about the international policy framework. IISD first commented on the proposed framework two years ago in response to the dialogue paper that was released by the then foreign minister, the Honourable Bill Graham. The key recommendation in our paper then was to base Canada's foreign policy on a small number of fundamental principles that will work for all nations, not just Canada, to achieve the overarching goal of international peace and stability. I think it's worth repeating the five principles we recommended as the basis for, at that time, the foreign policy statement.

The first was achievement of basic human rights and democratic freedoms, the premise being that open, free societies that provide and protect essential rights and responsibilities are the basic building blocks of a stable world.

The second was reform of international institutions. Political institutions must change in a manner consistent with evolving societal needs in order to maintain stability. As basic rights and freedoms are established, institutions need to change to reflect and support these aspects. Particularly, multilateral institutions must also evolve to meet the needs of all members.

Third was environmental integrity. Because the quality of human life depends on healthy and well-functioning natural systems, and because they are increasingly threatened, this principle is an essential feature of all policy-setting processes and really needs to be taking a more central role in the international policy statement. One of the points I will make in my later comments is that sustainable development and restoration of ecosystem services are a set of priorities that need to be more central to our policy-making in all domains.

A fourth principle was policy coherence. Policies should work together to reinforce common objectives, rather than be at cross-purposes. This is particularly true of foreign policy, which is really the sum of policies on other issues. The international policy statement I think addresses that really quite well by bringing together the four papers and trying to create a coherent set of priorities for Canada.

The last principle we described is efficiency in policy implementation. As a country with a modest population and limited financial resources, Canada must be efficient in designing and deploying its policy instruments. This implies the use of high-leverage tools that can contribute to accomplishing key priorities and differentiating between critical and non-critical foreign policy objectives. But at the heart of this is really selectivity, and I think the international policy statement in its new form is more selective, particularly the development priorities and a focus on a narrower range of developing countries for assistance.

So in large part I think the international policy statement goes a long way to accomplishing a fundamental shift from the previous foreign policy statement, which focused, in a rather Canada-centric way, on three pillars: protection of our security; promotion of prosperity and employment; and promotion of Canadian values. The current international policy statement is much more externally focused, much more appropriate, in our view, since it starts from a point of view that peace and stability in the world are preconditions for Canadian peace and security.

So what are the elements of the current international policy statement that could be strengthened? I think the basic point of this part of my comments is that environment and sustainable development need to be more central to the overall framework of the policy. Our actions as a nation, both at home and abroad, need to be driven by the goal of achieving sustainable development and restoring ecosystem health. In the current international policy statement, particularly the development paper, which is, as I mentioned, the paper that my comments pertain to for the most part, there is a section on environmental sustainability, but it is halfway through the paper and not as central to the overall framework of policy setting as we feel it should be.

The point here is that human well-being depends on healthy ecosystems, not the other way around. The recently released millennium ecosystem assessment demonstrates the linkages between ecosystem services and human well-being. It makes clear that in order to achieve the millennium development goals, conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem services must be an integral part of poverty reduction strategies.

The development paper starts off with reference to the fact that there is a growing, or perhaps a well-identified, consensus on development priorities and actions to tackle the challenges. We have been through a period of creating a number of multilateral environmental agreements. These were brought together at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, and the millennium development goals also emerged from work around the turn of the century.

I'd like to talk for a few minutes about climate change as one example of a challenge that is quite significant, in our view, and that could be dealt with in a somewhat stronger manner in the international policy statement. The key point here is that climate change mitigation and adaptation responses have to be integrated with development priorities, particularly as we get beyond 2012 and look for ways to engage developing countries in the climate change regime beyond the so-called first budget period.

● (1340)

And there's an important role for CIDA here, particularly in terms of explicit financial support for climate change actions. The Climate Change Development Fund is indicated as something that will be renewed in the international policy statement, and I think that's good.

The Montreal meeting that Canada is hosting, the conference of the parties, at the end of November and beginning of December will focus on what the post-2012 climate change regime will look like, what are the policy options, and how can we engage developing countries more realistically and more significantly. Really, the only way to do that is to be able to integrate their development priorities with actions to either mitigate or adapt to climate change.

So there's quite a bit of work that needs to be done there, and I believe CIDA has an important role in that.

Another development-related aspect of the climate change puzzle is the clean development mechanism, which was created as a way of creating a vehicle for investment by developed countries in developing countries that would also contribute to the sustainable development of the developing countries. That isn't working as well as it ought to. We've done a little bit of research on what isn't working well, but there's a significant amount of work that needs to be done to reform the clean development mechanism.

There are two other points I'd like to make before concluding my comments. The two other areas that could be strengthened in the international policy statement include engagement of future generations.

Sustainable development is fundamentally an intergenerational concept. A classic definition, the Brundtland definition, is sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the current generation while not jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. So it's fundamentally an intergenerational concept.

At IISD, we've set an institutional priority in engaging future generations. I think in terms of building the next generation of leaders, the international policy statement should put that as a more explicit priority.

Finally, I'd like to comment on the role of policy research. It relates partly to the type of work we do, but I think it's a more general point.

There's a surprising number of knowledge gaps in many of the domains for which new public policy instruments are needed. The federal government has its own policy research initiative, and organizations such as IISD contribute valuable work on this front. Work in this domain must be innovative in order to develop policy options that will achieve the desired changes. So I think a greater emphasis could be placed on the role of policy research in setting Canada's foreign policy priorities.

In closing, I would say that the new international policy statement is a marked improvement over Canada's previous foreign policy statement. It has engaged a number of departments in creating a coherent set of directions.

Also, its emphasis on global peace and stability as a precondition for Canadian peace and security is the right starting point, but increasingly, the challenges facing us have to be seen through the lens of the imperative to maintain and restore environmental and ecosystem integrity, since human well-being depends so fundamentally on them.

Thank you.

● (1345)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Glanville.

We'll go now to Mr. Martens.

Mr. Derrick Martens (Project Peacemakers): I'm a full-time volunteer under the auspices of the Mennonite Voluntary Service as program coordinator for Project Peacemakers. Project Peacemakers is a local Winnipeg group of Project Ploughshares, which is based in Waterloo, Ontario.

The new international policy statement is an exciting document in many ways. I feel encouraged by the commitment of part of it on the responsibility to protect, as stated in Prime Minister Martin's foreword, as responsibilities to protect, to deny, to respect, to build, and to the future.

I also applaud the statement on page 4 of the overview that, “In no circumstances is violence an acceptable means for seeking to effect political change, either from within or without”, and I therefore applaud Canada's decision to stay out of the misbegotten Iraq mess.

The cornerstones of Canada's new international policy statement are expressed as the three Ds—defence, diplomacy, and development—and these are critical. However, I would venture that an effective international policy should also hold up two additional Ds—democracy and disarmament. These additional concepts, while addressed in the document, need to be brought to the fore. The internal and international threats posed by failing and failed states are triggered in part by a breakdown of democracy and democratic institutions, as well as the proliferation of arms, specifically small arms and light weapons.

The diplomacy section of the document does mention the problem of small arms and light weapons, but places the problem solely within the context of the illicit arms trade. I encourage Canadian policy to place more emphasis on the origins of these weapons, which are true and very active weapons of mass destruction, destroying huge parts of countries like Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and destabilizing entire regions.

Honourable committee members, the same five countries that are tasked with the final say over what to do regarding international conflicts, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, are responsible for 88% of reported conventional arms sales, and 80% to 90% of illicit sales begin as state-sanctioned, legal sales.

Canada is already a leader in this area, but I would like to see much more effort on preparing for the July 2006 review conference for the program for action, working on getting these weapons out of the hands of civilians and preventing the sale of small arms and light weapons to conflict areas. This would be a logical application of the document's responsibility to deny policy.

Areas of work for the conference include a better marking and tracing program and more concentration of disarmament, not only in post-conflict zones but also in areas of growing concern. Assisting the building and strengthening of democratic institutions is also critical, as populations with ineffective or corrupt democratic institutions, such as police forces, courts, and elected leaders, are less likely to trust their personal security with them and resort to arming themselves for their protection. This goes hand in hand with the stated objective on page 143 of the diplomacy section to actively support the resolution of regional disputes that are often exploited by terrorists.

What is needed is support and commitment for the International Arms Trade Treaty and making sure it has teeth. Nearly 90% of the world's top arms-selling governments have no system in place to assess whether a particular arms sale is likely to increase poverty or undermine security, despite signing up to agreements that place obligations on them.

Canada should prevent 100% of Canadian arms shipments to countries at war or to governments engaging in human rights abuses.

I believe Canada has made the right choice by saying no to the U. S. ballistic missile defence plan, and thank the government for its effort in working on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as well as working on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, both of which are stated as priorities in this document.

With the large softwood lumber dispute taking so much energy, it is hard to discuss other concerns with the U.S. However, the threats of an escalating arms race into space are becoming of greater concern as space is becoming more accessible to more countries and private companies and the U.S. continue to explore weaponizing space. The time to solidify international barriers, to arming and utilizing space for conflict, is now.

● (1350)

I encourage Canada to clearly object to the testing of weapons or weapon interceptors in space and refuse to participate in any defence schemes that utilize these weapons. In addition, Canada should not encourage Canadian businesses to enter into contracts with the U.S. military for any space weapons plans, and perhaps these contracts should be banned.

I was happy to hear last week that the U.S. is seeking to research its robust nuclear earth penetrator, or nuclear bunker buster. However, the fact remains that the NPT review conference in May failed to make headway, largely because the U.S. failed to agree to disarmament concerns and has yet to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty. I encourage the government to keep these issues at the front of its foreign policy objectives.

In summary, I would like the government to place more emphasis on the illicit and legal small arms trade, especially in advance of the program of action review conference next July, and work on solidifying an international arms trade treaty to help prevent other Rwandas and Darfurs. I believe disarmament and the strengthening of democratic institutions are just as necessary as the other Ds: diplomacy, defence, and development.

I also wish to encourage Canadian international policy to focus significant energy on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Martin.

Now we will go to Mr. Wise.

Mr. Allan Wise (Director, Immigration and Refugee Community Organization): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First and foremost, I am here as a Canadian. My comments are going to be focused on the aspect of the peace and security dimension of the document.

One of the other hats I wear is that of a teacher of politics and international relations at the University of Manitoba. I have a keen interest in following international affairs, especially regarding security issues.

Although my comments are non-attributional, or should not be attributed to the University of Manitoba, generally they stem from my research and interest in the subject.

First and foremost, I would like to welcome the policy statement. It was long overdue, and my compliments to the government of Prime Minister Martin for taking the initiative to produce this paper.

The document establishes the policy areas that are to be pursued by government well into the 21st century. As Prime Minister Martin mentions in the foreword, it's a commitment to Canadians, Canadian values, and the world.

As I said, my presentation will focus on these aspects: security, development, international cooperation, and immigration.

First, I find very refreshing that the document dispels the myth that Canada is a middle power. Canada has not been a middle power, especially since the end of the cold war. In the academic community, a lot of people still refer to Canada as a middle power for lack of a better word or lexicon. To hear the pronouncement that Canada is no longer a middle power and will no longer be able to do what we once set out to do during the cold war, is heartwarming because it gives a sense of direction and realism about what our capabilities and goals are in international affairs.

It will also pave the way for academic and policy circles to get together and come up with a lexicon or a common language that can be used and then taught to our children about what international relations and the role of Canada are in the future.

As my colleague mentioned here, the document's scope covers diplomacy, defence, development, and commerce as the four main pillars of Canadian foreign policy, which is another welcome development. As its goals, it refers to international stability—economic and political developments in many countries that essentially will lead to Canada's stability.

I must reiterate that so far I have nothing but applause for the document because it re-establishes Canada as a compassionate and pluralistic society, which traditionally is the role of Canada at home and abroad.

However, what I find disconcerting is the language of the report in certain aspects, as well as a tendency to use a terminology that is outdated or can be misconstrued as short-sighted and heavily influenced by the bandwagon of post-9/11 reactionary rhetoric on terrorism, WMDs, and security.

The three-D approach of diplomacy, defence, and development resonate with the carrot-and-stick approach to stability by the United States during the cold war: if we decide you're ready for development, we're going to come and develop you, and depending on what we decide the development is, first we'll send our armies in.

I'm not saying the document is mentioning these outright, but a lot of people familiar with the language of the cold war will see the echo of the same type of language in the document, especially when the priority all of a sudden changes from commerce to diplomacy, followed by defence.

As I said, this use of language was a legacy of the cold war. It's counterproductive and promotes the vision of the world along ideologically false lines. It signals an adherence to Huntington-type doctrines of clashes of civilizations, instead of dialogue between civilizations.

I had addressed this issue of not allowing isms to grow with the Honourable Bill Graham, then the foreign minister, when he visited the University of Manitoba two years ago. For example, calling adherence to a form of Islam by a group “Islamism” is placing ideological power in their hands. It makes them bigger than what they are and what they ought to be, and again divides us between the fault of...back then in the cold war, it was Communism and the rest of us; now it is the Islamic world and the rest of us. I do believe that to be counterproductive.

● (1355)

Referring to “rogue states”—terminology used by the United States administration in the 1990s that was stopped shortly after its inception and replaced with “states of concern” in the language—is quite disconcerting. It may signal to some people who are watching Canada and our foreign policy statement that we are reverting to, as I said, cold war dialogue again.

Talking about terrorism and announcing a desire to develop a universal definition of the term without proposing one in this statement is, I find, rather counterproductive, for lack of a better word. Adoption of undemocratic measures under the newly adopted NSA, which allows the holding of individuals under a security certificate without due process, while talking about promotion of democratic values around the world will put us in a hot spot with the people who are watching Canada.

Talking about nation building is something I found very disconcerting, because this goes back to that notion of cold war nation building and the whole idea proposed by the United States of those who are with us and those who are against us, getting into the notion of almost neo-colonialism. I submit that talking about nation building and not describing what nation building means can be counterproductive.

Talking about institutional reform and not talking about revisiting Canada's participation in NATO.... NATO is a commitment that has outlived its purpose for Canada and in my opinion should end, because the threat of the Soviet Union or their tanks coming through the Fulda Gap in Germany no longer exists. Europe is fast approaching an all-European defence identity. Canada is no longer a middle power and no longer can use Europe as a counterbalance to the United States, as we have become more and more an integral part of North American trade and defence.

Use of NATO assets, if that would be the argument for Canada's participation in NATO in operations that Canada wants, is argumentative, because Canada's assets committed to NATO are NATO assets and cannot be used without the agreement of all parties.

There is promoting democracy—not as a system of rules, which is very counterproductive again, but as a personal rule that would facilitate commerce and prosperity for the west or western-friendly elites of the countries we deal with.

There is talk about immigration and refugee policy that is reflective of Canada's values. Nonetheless, we proceeded to sign a safe third country agreement with the United States that disallows many, many people who want to make Canada their home from arriving here, and they are being mistreated while being deported to the United States. I might add that signing of this agreement was a field day for those who are involved in the illicit and illegal immigration business.

Especially not having an appeal system in the process points out to those who are watching our humanitarian policies that there is a disconnect between the immigration department and our foreign affairs department in making the decisions on who should enter Canada and who should not.

I am going to conclude my remarks with a few recommendations, and these follow.

I will quote from my very favourite Canadian Prime Minister, the late Prime Minister Trudeau. I know it might come as a shock to you that a westerner actually can applaud somebody like Trudeau.

Mr. Trudeau said: “Canada must be a just society”. This is in all aspects of its governance in domestic and international and in all five areas mentioned in the report: institutional reform, protection of civilians from conflict, denying terrorist and responsible states the acquisition of WMDs, promoting sustainable—or genuine—development, and basing all of these on fundamental human rights and the rule of law. In doing so, Canada must avoid jumping on the bandwagon in using the ideological, confrontational, and divisive language of today's security circles.

● (1400)

The Canada-U.S. relationship remains the most important economic aspect of government policy, one that dominates and influences Canada's politics and diplomacy. To that end, Canada must develop a better understanding of the U.S. and promote an understanding of Canada among the policy elites as well as the population of the United States.

Canada must commit itself to reform of the UN, to promoting institutions that uphold international law and long-standing international treaties and agreements, and to that end, to influencing its allies not to violate them. A case in point would be the abrogation of the ADM treaty by our neighbour to the south.

With that, I conclude my remarks, and thank you for your time.

● (1405)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Wise.

We will start with Mr. Clavet, s'il vous plaît.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Thank you very much.

I find it interesting, sirs, that we seem to be questioning the very essence of the foreign policy statement.

I had a question of a more technical nature for Mr. Glanville about sustainable development, the Kyoto Protocol and the UN Conference on Climate Change that will take place in Montreal at the end of November. You placed considerable emphasis on ecosystem integrity, that is to say, on meeting commitments.

What kind of statement would have to be made in Montreal, on behalf of Canada, in order to satisfy your organization's expectations and commitment to sustainable development? What should we expect from this conference? By extension, I'd like to hear your views on n the Montreal conference.

[*English*]

Mr. William H. Glanville: Thank you.

There are four basic issues we've been working on, and they're all related to the convergence between development priorities and adaptation and mitigation of climate change effects. One of them is focusing on actions for adaptation specifically. Another is on technology transfer. A third relates to market mechanisms, such as the clean development mechanism, and making those more effective. The final one relates to the post-2012 regime.

That's a big agenda, but if there was some clear direction on how developing countries could be engaged through those four threads of activity, that would be a big step forward.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet: Mr. Wise, you alluded to Prime Minister Trudeau's just society. If Mr. Trudeau were still Prime Minister of Canada, what importance would he assign to human rights in the foreign policy statement? Do you feel that a little more emphasis would have been put on protecting human rights than is currently the case in this policy statement?

[*English*]

Mr. Allan Wise: Well, I can't really speak for Prime Minister Trudeau—

The Chair: Thank you.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Allan Wise: —but I would submit that yes, that would be the trend. Canada should focus more on humanitarian efforts around the world but not through the use of the military.

In the statement it was mentioned that $13 billion is going to be added. Now, I applaud that as well because for a long time our military has been overstretched. In all the missions we have sent them on they have suffered from either lack of material or lack of support and from long rotations, being away from home for such a long time.

But at the same time, we talk about nation building in the document. Nation building all of a sudden, for anyone who is watching Canada and Canada's proposal of such a policy, is automatically going to raise alarms. There are red flags going up. What do you mean by "nation building"? Are we talking about new colonialism, especially when we have gotten involved in places like Afghanistan?

Of course, I have to emphasize that a part of what we are doing in Afghanistan is excellent, and it's in tandem with what our international commitments are. However, a part of what we are doing there is counterproductive for how we want to be known around the world, as a fair society, as a just society, and as a society that values the rule of law and international development through humanitarian concerns, a humanitarian approach, and the rule of law.

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet: Mr. Martens, in light of you said about the trafficking and selling of handguns in regions rife with conflict, would you have liked to see Canada's foreign policy statement advocate more forcefully a commitment to ratifying international treaties with a view to controlling or regulating these weapons? Would you have wanted the statement to call for restrictions on handguns?

[*English*]

Mr. Derrick Martens: I thank you for your question.

It's not just handguns; it's small arms, including light assault weapons, AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenades, and that sort of thing. That's what this treaty, the small arms and light weapons treaty some countries are working on, is supposed to address. I think it does need more attention as too many of these weapons are in the hands of the general people, in the hands of child soldiers, and that increases instability dramatically. It's hard to work on the other diplomacy and commerce and that sort of thing if these weapons are readily accessible and militias are using them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mrs. Smith.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Thank you.

I appreciate everyone's presentation today. They were very insightful and helpful.

Mr. Glanville, I would like to ask you the first question. You had taken some time to talk about the engagement of future generations with respect to climate change, and I'm very interested in having you expand on that as to what way that would occur. We were talking about leaders of tomorrow; it was a general term. What is your vision or the IISD's vision of what those leaders of tomorrow would be engaged in?

Mr. William H. Glanville: Thank you.

Well, what I'm referring to is a sort of explicit mechanism or training program for young Canadians, and there are a number of those. IISD itself has been engaged for about eight years now in an international internship program supported partly by CIDA and partly by Foreign Affairs and International Trade. IISD has had between 30 and 35 young Canadians placed in partner organizations all over the world. That's the one formal mechanism we've been working on, and it's proven to be very effective, effective in terms of giving young Canadians experience in the field of sustainable development and effective in creating linkages with partner organizations outside of Canada, but also quite effective in raising Canada's profile in terms of how it supports the younger generation and prepares them for at least a role in this field.

The Canada Corps, I think, proposes to continue that and expand it, but I would say formal mechanisms of that sort, that place young Canadians in international settings that will give them a broader perspective, can do nothing but help get the international policy statement into force in a more thorough way.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Perhaps. I was thinking a little bit more in depth. I have known about this for quite some time, but I thought you might perhaps have some ideas that would be much more extensive than what has currently gone on.

There has been engagement of young people, but you spoke of the engagement of future generations and leaders of tomorrow. I was under the impression that because of the world climate, there was maybe something else that needed to be enhanced or expanded on, not the same thing we are doing now. I was trying to find out if you perhaps had some new ideas on it.

● (1415)

Mr. William H. Glanville: My comments in terms of engaging future generations were not particularly linked to climate change. I would say that we would like to see human resources departments placing more emphasis on more formal mechanisms for bringing young people along; more informing and sensitizing of human resources departments to the priorities of Canada's foreign policy statement; and the building of those things into the kinds of requirements for jobs, not just in government positions but in non-governmental organizations. That's one area we have been looking at as a way of strengthening this mechanism.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you.

I have a question for you. As a long-time educator, I have seen generations change within the span of a decade, depending on what was presented to them in their educational setting. Has there been any emphasis on that aspect of it?

In my view, right now there is very little knowledge about what's happening, generally speaking, in the younger generation. A few stars, a few groups, will do it.

I was interested in your comment simply because in your presentation I was led to believe that maybe you were making a bigger statement about this than you actually are, but I don't want to put words into your mouth. Maybe it's a little bit of a hobby horse of mine, because I do think we need to really engage our young people and think of ways in which we can educate them over and above involvement in IISD, but also through involvement in their daily lives.

Has there been any outreach into the public school system, into the universities, or into the libraries to be able to enhance this development? When we talk about "world leader", it has to be a sustainable program. I wonder if sustainable development has any sustainable programs for youth.

Mr. William H. Glanville: We haven't dealt with that directly at IISD, but we have supported initiatives. There was an organization, Learning for a Sustainable Future, headquartered in Montreal, that was doing a lot with public school systems and was trying to develop curriculum-related material that addresses your point directly.

We had a discussion with Learning for a Sustainable Future at one point, in terms of whether there was something we could do to complement their efforts. But generally, I would say it's an omission that I didn't mention education, because that can be a very powerful way to get the next generation thinking about these issues.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you.

Do I have time for one more?

The Chair: A short one.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you.

Derrick, if you will engage me for a few minutes, you were talking about arms control in terms of small guns and small arms. Could you make a comment on any ideas for how this could be accomplished?

I'll tell you something from a minute structure. My son is a police officer, and I know that even on the ground in Canada it's hard to control the smuggling of arms into our nation. The criminals don't really read the policies, as much as we'd like them to do that.

I'm wondering if you have any ideas from your experience about how that could be done.

Mr. Derrick Martens: Again, what I'm referring to is more at the military level, like small arms shipments of military assault weapons.

If you're asking specifically about handguns and keeping them out of Canada, I'm afraid I don't really know the answer.

● (1420)

Mrs. Joy Smith: Feel free to expand on that.

Mr. Derrick Martens: One of the proposals in this program for action, for which the conference is occurring next year, is having a reliable marking system or tracing system for all guns, whether they're Dutch-made weapons or American M16s, so that when they get into the hands of armies of child soldiers in northern Uganda, they know who made these weapons and can track who was violating international norms by selling off these original legitimate sales to third or fourth parties. They can start to track down these people who are making profits from the killing of civilians. So that's one option.

Again, I mentioned that the permanent Security Council members are the ones that are perpetuating this major weapons trade. Pressure needs to be put on them to stop selling arms to countries engaged in conflicts or to ones that are major human rights violators. That needs to be a first priority.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you so much.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll go to Ms. Phinney, please.

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Thank you very much for coming today.

Do you think we're giving NGOs enough credit? I don't just mean for the work they're doing, but for the ideas they may have and what they might be able to offer us in support in our policies, such as our foreign affairs program. That's for all of you to answer if you'd like to.

Another question I'd like to ask is the question Ms. Smith has asked. Mr. Glanville, you said we need more public policy research. Can you be more specific about that? In which areas? Who do you think should be doing the public policy research?

Mr. William H. Glanville: Thanks very much.

There's a good range of public policy research organizations now. I think we need to be looking more to policy-relevant research, particularly for the new policy instruments and new policy mechanisms. The kinds of issues we're facing are becoming more complex, and we need to be moving quicker to implement new policy solutions.

In the field of sustainable development, I have the sense that things are getting worse at a faster rate than we're actually fixing things. As a result, we're falling behind.

It's the innovation gap or the implementation gap that gets talked about a lot, so what we need is more risk-taking in terms of experimenting with new policy instruments and faster response times. Part of that relates to the comments I made earlier about putting sustainable development and environmental integrity at the centre of policy research, in that we should be looking for ways—I'll just take one example, subsidies—to provide incentives that will move us more quickly toward more positive...or restoration of environmental integrity rather than further degradation. That would be one example.

Ms. Beth Phinney: Did you want to comment on the NGOs?

Mr. William H. Glanville: I think NGOs are given appropriate credit. Over the last few years there has certainly been a move away from the notion that government by itself is responsible for implementing a lot of policy initiatives, with acceptance of the idea that it takes a greater partnership between government, non-government, and the private sector in order to get things done.

That seems to be a pretty well-accepted approach in the field of sustainable development: that one sector acting alone is not going to achieve the kind of change that's necessary. It will take multiple actors at multiple levels to achieve the type of change necessary.

So I think there's recognition of the role played by the non-governmental sector to a greater extent.

● (1425)

Ms. Beth Phinney: Mr. Martens.

Mr. Derrick Martens: I don't really know. Personally, it's my first time in front of a committee like this, but our parent organization, Project Ploughshares, does consult and present recent papers, to Foreign Affairs specifically, most often, and I think sometimes to the Department of National Defence. But I don't really know the answer.

Mr. Allan Wise: If I may, most NGOs I have been involved with have also been not-for-profit agencies. One of the things that has limited their scope or their ability to actually do advocacy work is that under the revenue act or whatever, they can only allocate 10% of what they get in terms of government grants or whatever money they have to advocacy. This has really undermined their ability to go ahead and do the good job they have been doing.

So, by way of suggestion, that rule may be something to look at.

The Chair: Mr. Blaikie.

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Chairman, I add my own thanks to the thanks already expressed by my colleagues on the committee for the presentations here this afternoon.

I don't have that much time, so I guess I'll start off with a word of agreement with Project Peacemakers about their being five Ds instead of three: disarmament and democracy as well as defence, diplomacy, and development. Certainly, that's an approach we share in my political neck of the woods.

I want to ask a question of Mr. Glanville. He talked about putting environmental integrity at the centre of everything. It seems to me it will soon be 20 years since the Brundtland report—it's already 18. I think it was in 1987, if I'm not mistaken. You know, at that point there was a commitment made, at that time by the Mulroney government, that from there on in every policy would be subject to sustainable development analysis and criteria. I can't remember that ever happening. I don't remember it as policies were decided. I remember demanding one in 1989 with the Via Rail cuts, asking what the sustainable development piece of it was, and of course not getting an answer.

Is this the kind of thing you're asking for, basically what was asked for so long ago in terms of every policy having this type of analysis to go with it, and if it doesn't measure up, it doesn't get decided on?

Mr. William H. Glanville: To some extent it is. I think what I'm talking about is more just a change in our frame of reference in terms of thinking about these things.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: But if you were mandated and you had to think about it, you had to have a parallel document to justify the sustainability of any given policy, then it might help that along, don't you think?

Mr. William H. Glanville: That's right. For example, on energy policy, we should be thinking about long-term sustainability and providing incentives to develop renewable energy to a greater extent and at a faster rate than we are currently. That would be an example.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I have a question for Mr. Wise, Mr. Chairman.

You had expressed unhappiness with the use of the term "Islamism" by Bill Graham—and certainly it's not just Bill Graham who uses that term. Now, the way I understand, in part, what people are getting at when they use that term is they're trying to find a way to distinguish between Islam and various forms of terrorism that are done in the name of Islam, so they've come up with this other term, "Islamism".

It seems to me that at least the goal of that is legitimate, that you don't want to sort of brand Islam with everything that's done in its name, any more than you'd want to do that to any other religion. I guess what I'm asking you is—I take what you've said as a legitimate critique—what kind of language would you suggest as an alternative for when we want to refer generally to a variety of phenomena, most of them terrorist in nature, that are claimed to be done in the name of Islam?

● (1430)

Mr. Allan Wise: Thank you for your question.

What I meant by referring to the use of Islamism as counter-productive was when you use the word "Islamism", you create a block. You create an ideology. When you study all these groups that are actually engaging in various activities, or whatever you want to name it, in the name of Islam, they are not a coherent or a cohesive or an all-together ideology or a front that we could refer to as a block. My suggestion stems from the fact that after the fall of the Soviet Union, in security circles there was this need for new language for defining the new threat. Because the policy circles were used to—

Hon. Bill Blaikie: They were used to isms.

Mr. Allan Wise: Exactly, fifty years of isms.

All of a sudden they just jumped onto this bandwagon of Islamism, which, like it or not, bulks together all those people, the terrorists and the peaceful Muslims around the world as well. I find that quite counterproductive, because in doing so, we are not only alienating the good Muslims, let's say, for lack of a better word, out there, we are also galvanizing our societies again—

Hon. Bill Blaikie: In a way of thinking.

Mr. Allan Wise: Exactly, we are promoting a way of thinking that, oh, there is a new block, there are new bad guys. It stems from Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations?*

Hon. Bill Blaikie: And this predates 9/11, right?

Mr. Allan Wise: It started in 9/11, but it gained prominence more after 9/11.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: It seems to me I certainly heard about this Islamism a lot more after 9/11 than before, although I can remember actually giving a talk myself at Queens University back in 1990 saying that the worry would be that when the cold war was over we'd find another ism—

Mr. Allan Wise: And it seems like they have found—

Hon. Bill Blaikie: —to justify the military-industrial complex. I'm wondering if that is the sort of thing you are referring to.

Mr. Allan Wise: Well, along those lines, yes.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Blaikie.

To follow up on Mr. Blaikie, in our reports on our relations with the Muslim world we quote one witness from India, who told us, don't judge Islam based on the action of Muslims, but the actions of Muslims based on Islam.

Ms. Guergis.

Ms. Helena Guergis (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Thank you very much.

My question has to do with China and the fact that Canada continues to give foreign aid to China—over $1 billion in the past decade and $50 million alone this year. China has the second largest economy, the largest military. The World Food Programme is pulling out of China, saying that China no longer needs them. We see China giving aid relief to the United States when Katrina hit, which I applaud. We also see them giving aid to Zimbabwe and Mugabe, and I have a problem with that.

So I am curious. Do you think Canada should continue to give foreign aid to China, considering their rather abysmal human rights record too?

Mr. William H. Glanville: I think there are some contributions we can make, not necessarily through blanket foreign aid, but through policy research and policy assistance, two of them particularly on the environmental front. One of the domains that's emerging as having a large impact outside of China is the global product chain that extends backward to the countries that are supplying either raw materials or other inputs to the Chinese economy. As it grows, it is having quite an extended influence on economies and the environmental integrity of other countries.

I think there is a domain of work, of research, that we can contribute to some of the issues and policies that need to be developed in China.

● (1435)

Ms. Helena Guergis: Does anyone else have comments on that?

Mr. Allan Wise: May I make a short comment?

With respect to China, I don't think we are giving ourselves a bit of credit here—and I must add that that comment includes a bit of sarcasm vis-à-vis China. I mean, we cannot ignore China. China is a big player in Southeast Asia. Eighty per cent of our daily trade is done with our neighbour to the south, the United States, who has continuously. since the 1980s, since their open-door policy with Deng Xao Ping, been assigning most favoured nation status to China. So who are we not to consider China?

Canada is not a big player, as I said, and as was mentioned in the statement, we are no longer even a middle power. So what is out there for us to do when China, for example, goes into Tibet and takes over the country and constantly oppresses the people of Tibet? Canada is not a part of the triangle of power that is of importance in Southeast Asia. That is made up of the United States, Japan, and China.

What remains is that 5% trade surplus we have with most countries in Southeast Asia, which includes China, and Canada, being a trading nation, cannot really ignore that huge pot of money sitting there when everybody else in the world is taking advantage of it.

This is one of those few occasions on which I would say the Canadian government should forget about morality and get into the business of trade. China is a case in point. That's where the government has weighed which one matters most.

To sort of draw a parallel, in the 1980s, the Government of Canada, under Prime Minister Mulroney, could afford to be moralistic about the issue of apartheid in South Africa because we did have this much trade surplus with South Africa. With China, we have closer to a 2.5% to 3% surplus, if I'm correct on that number, so when everybody else is taking advantage of it, I think the government is not going to look the other way and say, “Well, they have a bad human rights record, let's not give them money.”

Ms. Helena Guergis: Mr. Wise, I don't really think we should be linking our foreign aid to our trade with China. Is that what I'm hearing? You think if we were to stop giving foreign aid to China, perhaps it would be affecting our trade? I have heard and asked this question of other experts and they don't seem to think including—

Mr. Allan Wise: Well, that has to do with my cynical nature, I would say.

But again, as a personal comment—this is my personal opinion—when the issue of Iraq came up, our Prime Minister said we're not going to take part. When the issue of Afghanistan came up, we took part. At the same time, we had a trade dispute over softwood lumber with the United States.

I don't know whether these things matter. I do say, as a country whose well-being is based on its trade, yes.

Ms. Helena Guergis: You'd be the first person I've heard that from.

I do have one more comment, if that's okay. It's on ballistic missile defence. We've heard several comments at the committee table saying it was the right decision not to go in. Others are saying it wasn't, and many people actually commented that the whole process was mishandled.

I simply want you to know that as a member of Parliament, I was not given any information as to what exactly Canada was asked to do, so for me to actually make a decision on behalf of my constituents, I couldn't do so without that information.

So I'm curious, if you do have time to answer, do you think the idea of having a full debate in the House of Commons on whether Canada should have participated or not, and having a vote, would have been an appropriate way to deal with it, much more than the way the Prime Minister did?

Mr. Derrick Martens: There were debates earlier. I don't remember offhand which years those were. There were two days in February 2001 or 2002 that were on that question.

But, yes, I agree with you that the process wasn't handled well. It was a major decision for Canada to undertake. When the Prime Minister made the decision, it wasn't handled well. It could have been done a lot better, with public inquiries, really trying to get what Canadians thought was necessary, and then making the announcement properly.

● (1440)

Ms. Helena Guergis: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Smith.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you.

My question is for Allan Wise. Allan, do you mind answering the same question that Ms. Guergis brought forth to Mr. Martens? I'd like to have your opinion on that. As a member of Parliament, I too did not have any information on why the decision was made the way it was. Could you comment on that?

Mr. Allan Wise: Well, I would agree with you that probably....

Of course, I didn't really watch this closely, but I'm aware of a few academics who were consulted on the issue, and there were papers written. I don't know to what extent it was distributed amongst you and your colleagues.

However, my understanding of the issue is that because we are already in a security agreement, a bilateral security agreement for the defence of North America under NORAD with our neighbour to the south, it was not deemed feasible, let's say, to enter a field of expertise that, at best, is very shaky right now.

Most of the tests that have been done in the United States by various forces that are engaged in research and development of anti-ballistic missile defence have not really given the expected outcome—that is, the missile has come out and has not hit the target. Some people disagree with that. Some people say "Well, yes, some of them did; some of them didn't." But the same thing was going on during the first or the initial Gulf War, when out of 140 scuds that were fired—I'm not sure if I got the number correct, so don't quote me on it—out of around 140 Patriot missiles that were fired, maybe one or two hit the target. So the technology is not really developed well enough for a government to be able to make a decision on such a costly venture. That's my personal opinion.

Mrs. Joy Smith: I'm sorry, but you haven't answered my question. My question was, did you think it was properly handled?

Mr. Allan Wise: Ah!

Mrs. Joy Smith: In the throne speech it was quite clear that we were to be consulted.

I haven't done really a lot of background. I understand you are the director of the Immigration and Refugee Community Organization, and I'm just curious as to what your opinion is, because it's so different from some of the ones we've heard previously. So I would like to give you the opportunity to enlighten us, please.

Mr. Allan Wise: As I said, my opinion as a person is that I would have to agree with you that it was not properly handled by way of not having been brought forward in its full scope—what was the research done on it, what are the purposes of it, and why was it declined? I have to agree with you on that, especially when security, stability, and the well-being of North America are one of the linchpins of the new document produced. I would have to agree with you.

The Chair: Thank you.

I just want to comment that when we studied the BMP a little bit, Richard Garwin was the scientist from the Rumsfeld committee who said to the committee at the end, "If you're doing this to protect Canada, don't do it, but if you're doing it for a political reason, do what you think you should do for Canada." That was his comment, and I must say also that the U.S. request from Canada was, in my opinion—a very personal opinion—a blank cheque for Canada.

U.S. Congress never gave a blank cheque to the Bush administration. They said it's okay for BMD but never for Star Wars. That's a big difference also. They were asking more from the Canadian government than the U.S. Congress gave to the Bush administration.

Thank you very much for being before us this afternoon. We'll recess for a few minutes.

● (1450)

The Chair: Order, please

We have the pleasure of having with us this afternoon as a witness, Ms. Janice Hamilton, the executive director of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation.

Welcome, Ms. Hamilton. The floor is yours.

Mrs. Janice Hamilton (Executive Director, Manitoba Council for International Cooperation): Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson, members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, I want to start by thanking you for providing the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation and other Manitobans an opportunity to discuss Canada's international policy statement.

We welcome this dialogue.

As you have no doubt heard throughout the presentations today, Manitobans care dearly about the role that Canada plays internationally. MCIC has been active for the past 31 years. It is a council of faith and other voluntary non-governmental organizations that promote international development through overseas projects and public engagement in Manitoba. We have 35 member agencies.

Collectively, our members raised over $17 million for their international development work in 2004. No doubt, it will be higher this year with the outpouring of support for the Tsunami and other natural disasters that have taken place this year.

MCIC is very proud that the Manitoba government supports our members' international development project. This fund was established in 1975, and this year it is set at $750,000. In January 2005 the government announced a 50% increase to the fund for the next four years. The majority of this fund is for development of long-term development projects, and 10% of the fund is used for relief and rehabilitation.

The government sometimes allocates additional R and R dollars, as was the case for the Tsunami and the recent earthquake in Pakistan. MCIC administers this fund on behalf of our members. We have well-established guidelines and principles that must be adhered to, such as accountability; partnership in indigenous control, popular participation, and self-reliance; respect for all persons, which includes gender and development and persons with disabilities; sustainable development and environment and addressing the causes of poverty rather than the systems; and appropriate technologies. All proposals are evaluated at a peer review process.

Public engagement is also a cornerstone of MCIC's work. We encourage our members to collaborate in this regard when possible. MCIC is involved with our members in the community and in the formal education sector.

I personally have worked at MCIC for the past 16 years in various positions. We currently have three full-time staff and two part-time staff.

Now that I have established the council's background, I'd like to provide some comments on the IPS.

In many cases it appears that each of the papers—diplomacy, development, defence and commerce—were written in isolation. Some information appears in one or two but not in all. Some of them almost contradict each other. I will mainly comment on the development portion of the IPS, realizing, however, that policy coherence is needed throughout all of government.

What we liked was the responsibility to protect aspect. We also liked the portion on cancelling the debt, although we feel there should be 100% unconditional debt cancellation for the world's poorest countries.

What we are concerned about is that global poverty must be at the centre of Canada's foreign policy. Poverty is a mark of political dysfunction, and its remedy includes the promotion of human rights.

We recommend that Canada reach its commitment to 0.7% of GNI by 2015 so that Canada can contribute our share of additional aid towards the millennium development goals.

We also recommend that the government legislate a mandate for Canada's ODA that puts ending poverty as its exclusive goal within Canada's human rights obligations, and we appreciate this committee's support of this initiative.

We recommend that the Minister of International Cooperation be made a senior cabinet position so that the position can be on the same floor as the Ministers of Trade, Defence, and Foreign Affairs. Perhaps then there is a better chance that the voice of international development is heard and does not have to be yelled from the basement.

The IPS seems to have an overemphasis on Canadians promoting themselves and Canadian interests. Something that MCIC feels strongly about is the concept of global citizenship. MCIC's vision statement is Manitobans working together as global citizens. The idea of global citizenship as it is presented in the development paper is rather narrow and outdated. It refers to educating the public about Canada's role in the world and seeing Canadians as experts helping communities overseas in need.

Active global citizenship is not a new term for old behaviours. It is about a critical reflection on our values and our obligations; it is about collaborative thinking with fellow citizens around the world; and it is about the ethical decisions and actions taken here and abroad. It is not about solving or helping to solve problems as if they belonged to others.

● (1455)

The knowledge-building element of the Canada Corps is a positive step, but it seems to focus on sharing among Canadians and it is limited to the issue of governance. It misses the opportunity to enable a mutually beneficial process, where Canadians work in partnership with people in the south on these issues.

On a personal note, I went overseas with Canadian Crossroads International right after completing my BA. Crossroads then was more about bringing people together to learn about each other. I certainly did not go over thinking I could solve any of their problems. I feel I gained much more than I contributed to the community I lived in. That experience has remained with me and guided my work since then.

I have heard of other people who have gone overseas and thought they were going to change the world and have come back disillusioned. We need to be clear on our expectations and the orientation process, and I strongly believe there needs to be a two-way street. We can learn from each other, and perhaps together we can make change happen both here in Canada and elsewhere.

I think Canada must not lose sight of the important work NGOs and CSOs can do on the ground overseas and in Canada.

We strongly believe that all sizes of NGOs should be supported by CIDA funds. In the past, Canada was a leader in responsive programming through NGOs. This seems to be losing its importance. It is well-documented that NGOs are able to be innovative. They can try new approaches. They tend to work in a partnership model, thus being more closely connected to the people affected.

No doubt some of the innovation has come out of financial necessity. People with passion and commitment usually find ways to make things happen. Many NGOs are dependent on raising funds from donors who, for the most part, are individual Canadians. These NGOs are accountable to their donors and are good stewards of the funds. Because of this relationship, most NGOs keep their donors in the loop, with regular communication and updates on how their funds are making a difference. Perhaps this is why NGOs are seen as credible and trustworthy by the public.

We feel very strongly about the importance of public engagement. We were disappointed that the new public engagement strategy was not put in the IPS. This is something CIDA has been working on for a while, and we are still waiting.

Canadians expect and deserve a major say in determining Canada's role in the world. They want their values to be reflected in policies that govern our international relations and to make a meaningful contribution to addressing global challenges.

There need to be avenues in which all Canadians who want to can participate on global issues. I emphasize all, and that not all knowledge and expertise is held within the Golden Triangle. People living in the many regions of Canada also have views to share. Mind you, we need appropriate notice to prepare for that participation.

We recommend that the government engage Canadians directly in international policy dialogue, including resourcing parliamentarians to hear from their constituents on important global issues.

We also recommend that the government demonstrate political will and commit financial resources to promote a greater role in policy for civil society organizations.

Other very brief points I would like to mention are these.

Agriculture was left out of CIDA's sector priorities. As you are all aware, the vast majority of the world's poor live in rural areas, and the IPS ignored the policy that CIDA developed in 2003. I imagine the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and others have addressed this issue.

On private sector development, we are concerned about whether more liberalized trade is the way to move towards greater prosperity for all countries. Developing countries need to be able to carve out their own development strategy, whether for agriculture, health, or industrial development. Countries should be able to develop their own food security. Canada defends its own supply management system, and developing countries should also have a right to manage their own trade borders for the same purpose.

Corporate social responsibility of Canadian companies overseas I think needs also to be considered, so that our trade does not act in counter-purpose to our international development assistance.

In military and humanitarian assistance, we need to be very cautious about having Canada's military involved in humanitarian aid. I'm sure the Mennonite Central Committee would have spoken to this point earlier today.

● (1500)

Once again, thanks for allowing us to participate in this process.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Hamilton.

Ms. Smith.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you.

And thank you, Mrs. Hamilton. It was a very insightful presentation. I appreciate it very much.

You have put out some points, like agriculture being left of the policy. That is rather important. As you said, a lot of poor people live in agricultural areas. You talked about partnership with our neighbours to the south, about global citizenship, and about responsibility on a global sphere for eliminating poverty. I was at a presentation of Save the Children the other night, and I was very moved by the need all across our globe, whether it be in Pakistan, Afghanistan, or Africa. There are people going hungry, particularly children, and we haven't addressed that.

When you came to give a presentation today, you gave a very insightful one. In a few sentences, how do you think this problem can be solved in terms of being expedient about the resources we have and the interaction between rich nations? There are some nations that have had very good crops this year, yet it is my understanding food is not getting on the ground where it is needed. Do you have any ideas on this, Mrs. Hamilton?

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Obviously the challenge is enormous. I think one of the things Canada can do is contribute more to aid and working towards the millennium development goals. That really does reach children and families. We could go through each of those. On education, we know that as more girls' education is increased, family size decreases. We know there is more prosperity in the family, etc. So there are far-reaching implications if we actually concentrate in that area.

The other thing we can talk about with the interplay between rich and poor countries is we really have to be aware of our own policies and the effect they have on developing countries. So our trade policies.... Supply management is one where Canada could be an ally with the lower-income countries that are working for...there's a special word for it, but I can't recall what the term is, but on something they are trying to put forward at the WTO.

CIDA did make a positive move recently with regard to lessening the tied aid for food aid. That is something the Foodgrains Bank and Oxfam have been working on for a long time. Now 50% of the food can be sourced closer to the region. That is so critical, because in cases of drought or natural disaster, there's often food in another area of the country. As anyone who has travelled in Africa will know, sometimes you have to go back to Europe to get to another country in Africa. This can also play out within a country.

I think those are also important aspects. I don't want to underestimate the role smaller NGOs can play at a community level. But if you create a number of strong communities, it will have implications and improvements, and we do have to take it in bite-size pieces. There is obviously the micro aspect, but the micro is actually where a lot of children are going without food and security.

● (1505)

Mrs. Joy Smith: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Clavet.

Mr. Roger Clavet: Earlier, Ms. Hamilton, you said that international development occupied the basement floor, so to speak, of Canada's foreign policy building.

I'd like to know if international development co-exists peacefully with the occupants of the upper floors, namely foreign affairs and international trade, or if, in your opinion, this ménage à trois isn't quite working out.

[*English*]

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: That was my humour.

It has certainly always been the case. I've heard the statistics on how long ministers for foreign affairs usually stay in that position. I think it's about 18 months. They're not able to do as much as they could, because a lot of the time they're re-educating another MP who is taking on the position.

I think if we are really taking international development seriously as a pillar of Canada's foreign policy, it should be given similar resources and respect around the table. Defence, Trade, and Foreign Affairs can all argue that maybe they don't always get as much respect as they need, but our trade policies can cause problems for the work that we're doing in international development, and they're at cross-purposes. What's the point of that?

I think it would be better if more emphasis was placed on the international development minister.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet: I'm also interested in another area. You mentioned that parliamentarians should perhaps be encouraged to listen more to their constituents's views on international affairs. That's easy to say, but somewhat more difficult to actually do.

What do you suggest parliamentarians do to sound out their constituents on international issues and to meet people's needs? These needs are not always apparent. It's important to maintain a balance between human rights and international interests. Do you have answers to all of these questions that we often struggle with?

[*English*]

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: It's a good point. It's no doubt also the responsibility of constituents to bring those aspects to their MPs. However, that sometimes varies from MP to MP. No doubt things that touch people closer to home may get more calls, requests, and that kind of thing.

I know we've met with a number of politicians over a period of time. Some are very keen and interested, and for others, it's a different superficial discussion we might be having.

There's something else that I was going to add about that.

● (1510)

Mr. Roger Clavet: *[Inaudible—Editor]*...would it be a solution?

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: It certainly would be.

I've heard this. I don't necessarily have it completely verified, but you're probably all aware of the campaign to make poverty history that's going on. I know there have been times in the past when NGOs and their constituents have talked and it sometimes hasn't been accepted very well.

One argument could be taken, when going back to the cuts in 1995, that there was too strong a turnout for the foreign policy review and too many NGO-types were presenting. We were quickly shut out, with 100% in cuts to any kind of development and education centres or other organizations. MCIC itself was cut by 100%, but it was 78% of our funding, thanks to our provincial government support for international development.

I understand that the campaign to make poverty history has to some extent been a really successful campaign of mobilizing Canadians. I believe it was in September that all e-mails coming from the campaign to make poverty history were blocked by the PMO's office. I guess that's success in some way.

Of course, it's easy to push a button. One could argue that it's not the same as individuals going to their MPs, talking to them, and that kind of thing, but it was a system where Canadians actively signed up. They wanted to be involved. They believed in what they were e-mailing, and that kind of thing.

We quickly got around that and had people copy, paste, and send from their personal e-mail addresses, and that kind of thing. But when things like that happen, one wonders how genuine the government is about hearing from normal, everyday citizens.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet: Do you have proof of that?

[*English*]

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: I heard it directly from the people who are running the campaign, although I think it was rectified quickly.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Clavet: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Blaikie.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to follow up on one thing that was said right at the beginning. You were critical of the policy paper, in that it was too—and you didn't use this word—Canada-centric, that it was perhaps too much about Canada and not enough about the world. Sometimes you get that sense, particularly when you get into this notion of promoting Canadian values, that it's all about us and that we have this exaggerated view of Canada's role in the world, as opposed to—and here I suppose I'm trying to anticipate what you might say—our role as global citizens, to use your terminology.

I just wondered if you wanted to expand on that critique. It seems to me that there is something going on there that's worth hearing about or thinking about.

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Yes, it definitely is very Canada-centric, and there's some need to present certain aspects of that to the Canadian population in order for them to see that it's in our best interests and that sort of thing. However, when one reads it, one feels that we have all the knowledge and that our values are so important, and that this paper is going to assist in promoting Canada's values elsewhere.

We do have a number of very good values that can be promoted elsewhere, but they shouldn't be the basis of this policy paper. One should consider that we need to collaborate with people on that. We need to see that a lot of issues and problems are not just over there. They include our consumer habits here, the purchasing, the choices we make as individuals here in Canada. I often say to people who want to get involved in international development that there's a lot they can do right here.

We also hear it from our southern partners sometimes that they have enough teachers, that they have a lot of resources within their own country. What we need is to have the government support policies that will allow us to develop as we wish, remove barriers on certain agricultural products. It used to be there a lot in the textiles, that sort of thing.

I think the whole idea of global citizenship is how we view the world and how we are part of the whole. Every action of ours affects the whole. It's not just a helping mentality, one that feels people over there are needing us.

If we think about even how the general people reacted to, let's say, the horrific New Orleans disaster or 9/11—it was so close to home and, oh, my goodness, it could happen to us—it then gets relevance and people are very concerned.

One can argue that it's the same thing. You hear about accidents. You think of them in the news. But then it's your cousin or it's your friend's mother or something. All of a sudden, you want to know all of the details of it.

So I think it is a matter of building relationships and seeing the world as our neighbours, not just across the street but in another country.

● (1515)

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Yes, but it seems to me that what you're saying is that it's actually some of our values that are the problem. As long as we are always talking about Canadian values as if they are beyond.... Well, first of all, it's as if we all agree, when we don't. Secondly, if we did all agree—just leaving that question aside for a minute—it's as if there is this set of Canadian values out there that is beyond critique, when there may in fact be all kinds of domestic consumer values, ways of looking at other peoples, and ways of looking at development that are the problem. In that sense, would you agree that the paper doesn't really get into that, that it's a kind of flaw?

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: I am trying to recall if the paper actually outlines these values or if we just talk about them—

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Well, that's what I mean. What are those values?

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Exactly. I would think of them as being some pluralism and collaboration and diversity, but another person might not think of those. I am not sure if they are articulated, so, yes, on that point—

Hon. Bill Blaikie: We are out there spreading the values of an appointed Senate or....

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Yes, or democracy and things like that.

The Chair: Thank you.

Do you have any other questions, Mr. Blaikie?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I'll end with that.

The Chair: Mrs. Guergis.

Ms. Helena Guergis: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Janice, thank you very much for being here today. I appreciate it. I have done a little history on you. I see that you have been with the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation since 1997.

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Since 1987.

Ms. Helena Guergis: Oh, since 1987. You were the communications adviser and you have worked your way up.

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Yes.

Ms. Helena Guergis: Congratulations.

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: Oh my goodness, that's good work.

Ms. Helena Guergis: A great success story.

I'm the international cooperation critic for the Conservative Party, so I hear a lot of concern about Canadians being engaged in delivery of foreign aid. How can we engage them? Are they? Do they really want us to?

We have seen great public support when the tsunami hit and in Pakistan, with Canadians coming to the table and matching donations and reaching into their pockets deeper than we had even expected they would. I also see that the government seems to be moving away from using the small non-governmental organizations and focusing more on multilateral...and I do have some concerns about that.

I see that you are actually a part of the public engagement strategy that you referred to. You are a partner in that. I guess it was the 1999-2000 strategy that was developed, and I think you made mention that you were just appointed but didn't make it into the IPS. Is that right?

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: That one in 1999 was a five-year one. The five years are up, and they started working on it back in the fourth year, so we're still just.... We hear it is supposed to come out this fall, but we've heard that before.

Ms. Helena Guergis: Oh really? I look forward to that, because I think that would be an excellent mechanism for engaging Canadians in a conversation about foreign aid.

I want to talk a little bit about the NGO Project Facility Fund and the concerns that the money was suspended really with no explanation as to why. In fact, there were many reports out there saying that those that had gone through NGOs were the best in delivering their aid on the ground, faster than anyone, and they were probably the most effective method. The fund was suspended, and then we had another report suggesting it would be extended for a year. You may have heard something—I haven't—on what the ministers have to say about that at this point. I think a committee was to be formed. If you have some insight, I would really appreciate it.

Do you think the NGOs going through the Project Facility Fund was probably a really good idea, an idea to engage Canadians through the smaller NGOs? Do you have any idea what the minister may be doing, or why you think they may have cancelled? Could I have some information there?

And how many Manitoba-based NGOs were affected by the shutdown of the project?

● (1520)

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: There is a lot to discuss there. Yes, the NGO Project Facility Fund was a real shock when they pulled that out, and I think it was probably the outcry from Alberta, where a tremendous number of NGOs were affected. There was some more discussion about that. Some people would say, is this just a move to try to get NGOs out of CIDA? I don't know.

Here in Manitoba we had a few NGOs that were affected by the withdrawal of funds. One of them is the Osu Children's Library Fund, an excellent organization; it wins awards. It's on CIDA's website and different travelling displays as “Canadians Making a Difference, Kathy Knowles....” They are not able to access funds. They don't always access funds, so they have a diverse fundraising plan, but they do a lot of work and have work....

The other is IDE, International Development Enterprises, a very interesting agricultural organization that has to do with water and wells and things like that. They're very specific in their focus, very much a private sector type of organization in that they were one of the first organizations to actually sell equipment for wells and so on to the local people, so there was ownership, so it was properly maintained and so on. It was also resourced and made locally. It's kind of a capacity-building project as well, and it was written up recently—it's a Canadian and U.S. organization—in *Forbes*. They are no longer able to access funds.

A few others were affected as well. A number of our members are actually too small to even access those funds, because you must have about $50,000 in fundraising over a two-year period. So some of ours are just under the radar.

We also know that some groups were waiting for the next call, because they were going to apply. They had gone through the process of being approved by CIDA, so they were only waiting for the call.

We weren't as affected as some organizations. A number of our organizations are national in scope and are maybe getting programming funding and things like that.

Yes, we would stress that NGOs are really a key part in trying to deliver a public engagement message in getting Canadians engaged. There certainly needs to be a place for NGOs. We do not want to go all multilateral, and in that multilateral aspect we have to.... I would hope it is through the UN, and I would hope that some of the questions around the WTO and how democratic it is and that sort of thing are questionable. There certainly is a role for multilateral assistance and that sort of thing, but there should be some sort of balance about that.

I understand the expert committee met last week. I haven't heard any reports back, but it was really good to see that our counterpart in Alberta was part of that discussion. It was kind of an old boys' network a little bit. There was really a gender issue on that committee I think, but—

● (1525)

Ms. Helena Guergis: I agree.

Mrs. Janice Hamilton: I think it's a start, and that's something that CIDA said they would do. At least it has started, and I think that should be commended.

The other thing about the difference between aid delivery through NGOs.... There is the example of the DART and the cost of the DART for water purification and that sort of thing. A lot of NGOs can do it for a lot less and a lot quicker, and can be there much quicker. So there are some questions about usefulness and when it should be used and that sort of thing, and with limited resources, is that the best use of resources?

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mrs. Hamilton. This brings an end to our visit here in Manitoba. Thank you very much to the interpreter *et aux gens de la console*.

Thank you, everyone.

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