

**Developing Capacities for Policy Influence:  
Promoting Canadian Civil Society Voices in International Cooperation  
CCIC/IDRC 2003/05 Program  
Final Report, August 2005**

## **1. Introduction**

This Report provides a narrative summary of progress in the five program areas identified in CCIC's project proposal for the period November 2004 to August 2005. It should be read in conjunction with the November 2004 Interim Report which covered the period October 2003 to October 2004. This Final Report also includes a narrative update for each of the CCIC Member-Based Working Groups, which have received financial support from IDRC.

A Financial Report, verified by CCIC's Director of Finance, for each program area and working group is included in Appendix 1. This Financial Report brings together the interim financial report set out in the November 2004 Interim Report and expenditures from November 2004 to the completion of the project in August 2005.

The five areas supported by the 2003/05 IDRC Program include:

- a) Governance and the Promotion of Rights in International Cooperation and Aid;
- b) Trade as a Means to Development;
- c) Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Action: Exploring NGO Policy Strategies;
- d) Developing a National Vision for Public Engagement; and
- e) International Cooperation Awards.

In addition, the Program provides annual financial support for the programs of CCIC's mandated member-based working groups – the Africa Canada Forum (ACF) and the Americas Policy Group (APG).

Publications produced with the financial assistance of the 2003/05 IDRC program since November 2004 are attached to this Report.

As you will recall, the November 2004 Interim Report set out some proposed adjustments to the original CCIC submission to IDRC. These proposed changes in the programs and allocation of resources for the period November 2004 to August 2005 responded to changes in the context for CCIC programming. They were approved by IDRC and this final report is based on the changes outlined in section 2 of the Interim Report. They related to

- a) Allocation to a newly created Asia Pacific Working Group;
- b) A workshop on issues in agriculture and trade is proposed to help frame Canadian CSO orientation to the Hong Kong 2005 Ministerial;
- c) In place of a single, national forum relating to Canadian public engagement, a series of regional consultations to explore the potential of the proposed vision and framework for multi-stakeholder public engagement on global issues; and
- d) Discontinuation of the International Cooperation Awards, and reallocation of the remaining resources to support an international conference on MDGs in association with CCIC's 2005 AGM. In the end, this conference was fully funded from other resources and the IDRC resources (\$6,424) were allocated to CCIC's involvement in the development of the themes for the 2006 *Reality of Aid Report* on conflict, security and development.

## 2. Program Areas

### 2.1 Governance and the Promotion of Rights in International Cooperation and Aid

#### Summary Objectives

1. To develop policy and promote dialogue on an international human rights framework in Canadian international cooperation with developing countries;
2. To engage senior policy makers in Canada and internationally on issues in current aid policies and strategies for governance in relation to the rights of poor and marginalized peoples.
3. To link CCIC members with an international network of more than 40 civil society organizations focusing on analysis and lobbying for poverty eradication policies and practices in the international aid regime.

All of the intended activities and outputs were achieved in the program by October 2004. As noted above, a small amount of funds (\$6,424) were reallocated to this program area in the final months of the project.

CCIC continued to participate in the Reality of Aid network up to the present, promoting the messages of the 2004 Report and developing the content and process leading to the 2006 Report on conflict, security and development. The network came together, with more than 25 participants from Europe, Canada, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Colombia, Costa Rica, Brazil, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines in Paris in June 2005 to develop the key messages. During this time in Paris, the network met with members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), including its Chair, Richard Manning, and officials from the DAC Secretariat. The IDRC reallocated resources contributed to the process with the Reality of Aid Management Committee in the development of this meeting.

#### Outputs

1. The Global Meeting held in Paris at the end of June 2006 produced a Communiqué (attached) which will inform the development of the “political chapter” for the 2006 Report. Brian Tomlinson, as a member of the global Management Team for Reality of Aid, will be producing the first draft of this chapter in the fall of 2005. For information on the Global Meeting visit the Reality of Aid web site at [www.realityofaid.org](http://www.realityofaid.org).
2. An informal relationship has been established with the OECD Development Assistance Committee with a commitment on both sides to engage in regular dialogue, including relating to the relevant ongoing working groups of the DAC, an invitation to Richard Manning, Chair of the DAC, to be present for the launch of the 2006 Report, and a focused dialogue on the messages of the 2006 Report in June 2006.

#### Outcomes

This collaboration with the global Reality of Aid network has had a number of outcomes for both CCIC’s work on aid and international cooperation as well as its members’ policy capacities.

The Reality of Aid is a unique global network that focuses exclusively on official aid in international cooperation for poverty eradication. As such it is an invaluable window into a global civil society debate on current controversial issues in aid. The Reality of Aid Reports have become known as critical global CSO voice on aid and international cooperation among donor officials at the highest levels.

CCIC has played an important role in structuring north/south CSO dialogue on aid issues which have resulted in shared analysis and messages that form the core contribution of the Reality of Aid Report. CCIC has been able to draw on the resources of the RoA network to inform council members on critical issues facing the effectiveness of the Canadian aid program. CCIC has been informed by the Reality of Aid network and has contributed perspectives on the “securitization” of aid, which is affecting several major donors and the rights of aid recipients and beneficiaries, particularly in Asia and the Americas. Debates within the Reality of Aid network on issues of conditionality in aid, rights and governance, contributed to CCIC refining its policy understanding of these issues and informing its proposals for Canadian aid policy.

## **2.2 Trade as a Means to Development**

### **Summary Objectives**

1. To advance North-South policy development and dialogue on poverty implications of international trade issues in Canada, looking in particular at food security and trade and Canadian approaches to trade related technical assistance.
2. To coordinate the elaboration of a joint Canadian CSO strategy for action for the final phase of the WTO negotiating Round.

Since the launch of a new framework agreement for the Doha Round one year ago, WTO negotiations have been under intense pressure to make progress towards the completion of a comprehensive trade round. Despite the successful reframing of the Doha Development Agenda in August 2004, member governments have been unable to break through major impasses, particularly in agriculture and non agricultural goods. As such the WTO is heading towards its fifth Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong still log jammed, and without a meaningful basis for reaching consensus on the details of the Round. CCIC remains very concerned that the parameters of the Round have become devoid of meaningful development measures. In this context, the lack of progress may mean a delay in a detrimental deal and time to negotiate for better flexibilities; however, it also intensifies the pressure on delegations to make decisions in short time frames — decision that have major consequences for the lives of the poor.

CCIC’s trade and development program aimed this past year to increase CSO’s effectiveness and involvement in policy development and dialogue on trade and poverty issues, especially in the key area of agriculture and food security. In the last quarter of this reporting period CCIC has completed numerous activities as forecast in the November interim report.

## Outputs

1. November 2004: TRIPS Seminar. A major seminar on the development implications of new trends in intellectual property regimes was successfully implemented in November, in conjunction with the North-South Institute, the Quaker's International Affairs Programme and IDRC.
  - An NGO strategy session on TRIPS was also convened at this time.
  - A full report on the seminar was circulated in English and French to participants and the international policy community following trade, and TRIPS issues.
  
2. May 2005: Conference on sustainable farm livelihoods. From December to May CCIC was heavily involved in organizing a major new initiative for Canadian NGOs, through the Food Security Policy Group. This culminated in a May Conference and learning exchange entitled *Sustainable farm livelihoods: Policy Options under threat at the WTO*. The aim of the conference was to build the basis for stronger active alliances between Canadian development organizations and Northern and Southern farmers' organizations, who are increasingly looking to each other for mutual support, and who share key strategic perspectives and goals regarding international trade rules and national agricultural policy. Prior to this, Canadian NGOs had worked alongside farm organizations sporadically, but had not forged a joint framework for action or commitment to undertake policy work in mutual support.

This year's process laid the basis for this work through the creation of a joint policy platform on global trade rules, outlining key demands and perspectives, consistent with the human rights approach to food security which has been adopted by the Canadian Food Security policy group. The platform was endorsed by NGOs and farm networks in Canada as well as major farm networks in key Southern countries including Brazil, Western and Southern Africa. Farm organizations from India also participated in this collaborative effort. The process, and its subsequent dialogue with government, has helped to break down the myth that WTO negotiations pitch the North against the South and reveals the more complex mutuality of interests among the world's farmers. The process and conference also highlighted the unique role for Canada (as yet not taken up by the government) as an advocate for a more balanced approach to liberalized trade in agriculture.

- A learning component for Southern organizations was also undertaken to share in greater depth the successful models of farm management and orderly marketing developed in Canada, particularly Supply management.
- High level policy dialogue opportunities were organized for Canadian and Southern networks to speak to their joint concerns to senior officials from Agriculture Canada, CIDA, and International Trade, including an important direct meeting with the Minister of International Trade.
- A report on this process has been prepared in French and English and distributed widely, as well as posted on the CCIC site.
- The joint statement has laid the basis for future strategic collaboration of Cdn NGO and farm networks, together with Southerners, heading towards Hong Kong. We hope to build on this basis in the next year's programme.
- A joint letter to the Minister of International Trade in July has already demonstrated the possibilities for the joint framework to facilitate greater more integrated policy dialogue and action between Canadian NGOs and farm groups. The letter outlines the

needs of Canadian farmers as well as to specific special and differential treatment flexibilities that are essential for the South in any new agriculture deal.

3. Work on the Canada-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CA4) Linkages between the CCIC trade programme and the Americas Policy group have continued to ensure support and analysis is relevant for regional trade agreements being followed by the working group. The APG has undertaken a special focus on the CA4 and investment issues. CCIC has worked to support the development of APG material that demonstrates the development implications of such a regional trade agreement and the kinds of flexibilities and development considerations that are absent in these kind of asymmetrical negotiating arrangements.

#### Outcomes

1. Greater depth and breadth in the working relationships between Canadian NGOS and Canadian farm groups and Southern farm networks
2. Enhanced Canadian CSO understanding of policy issues in trade and development in key issues areas: including on intellectual property and food security
3. Increased parliamentary understanding of the mutuality of interests between Canadian supply managed farmers and Southern farmers, and of the potential bridging role for Canada in WTO negotiations to secure allies globally for orderly marketing mechanisms for all.

### **2.3 Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Action: Exploring NGO Policy Strategies**

#### **Summary Objectives**

1. To enhance policy work within CCIC and its membership in the area of humanitarian action and its intersection with peace building and conflict prevention or reconciliation activities.
2. To identify value-added activities appropriate to the resources of CCIC and find points of synergy with existing work of members and others including current activities through the PAGER Group and the CPCC.
3. To bring a Southern perspectives to CCIC, its members, and the Canadian government on the role of Northern countries such as Canada in peacebuilding, and enhancing local capacities for responding to humanitarian crises and participating in peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

Drawing on extensive consultations with members of CCIC and the broader civil society community, in this program period, CCIC developed a focus for its policy work in the area of Peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance, and security and development issues.

Issues ranging from the broad impacts of the War on Terrorism on human rights and conflict, to donor policies toward failed and fragile states, to small arms and disarmament, proved highly relevant to the Canadian and international political contexts, and of great interest for CCIC's members and international CSO colleagues.

The IDRC funds supported work by the Policy Team to elaborate CCIC's policy ideas in the areas of security and development issues. CSOs, globally are putting renewed attention to issues in humanitarian assistance, security and development. CCIC developed its relationships with these international networks in Europe and internationally through the Reality of Aid project (see above), and the Global Security and Development Network, hosted at BOND in the UK. An important initiative supported by the Canadian Government has been the evolution of Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles. CCIC worked with international colleagues on monitoring and contributing to an assessment of the practices of donors in relation to these Principles.

#### Outputs:

1. Following the release of the International Policy Statement (IPS) in April 2005, CCIC produced an analysis for members of the peace and security elements in the statement.
2. Based on interviews with officials and analysis of programming trends, CCIC produced a major policy paper on security and development issues, *The post 9-11 security agenda and Canadian foreign policy: Implications for the Global South?*, along with a summary of recommendations and a summary of the main arguments.
3. In an effort to develop its analysis with members and the CSO community, CCIC hosted a workshop on the impacts of the post-9-11 security agenda on Canadian foreign policy. The workshop included international guest speakers from the Overseas Development Institute in the UK, BOND in the UK and the Tribhuvan University Centre for Human Rights in Nepal.
4. CCIC co-ordinated the development of a Canadian CSO statement on Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) principles in the context of Canada's for an Ottawa November 2004 donor conference. Following this Ottawa meeting, CCIC initiated and facilitated a collaborative project with humanitarian agencies to monitor Canada's progress on the GHD principles. This project is on-going, and due to be completed in March 2006.
5. CCIC drafted and facilitated a joint statement from the Global Security and Development Network (GSDN) in the context of the December Senior Level Meeting of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) dealing with security and development issues. CCIC acted as a civil society observer at the High Level Forum on aid Effectiveness in Paris, March 2005.
6. Broadening interactions with European organisations, CCIC participated in a workshop on development and security issues with Global Security and Development Network members in The Hague in February 2005, and met bilaterally with several key GSDN members in London, Utrecht, and Brussels. Later in June 2005, CCIC brought its developing expertise on these issues to the Global Meeting of the Reality of Aid network in Paris.
7. CCIC monitored and contributed to the development of CIDA's soon-to-be-released strategy on failed and fragile states. CCIC also monitored and commented on key questions and issues on the newly established Global Peace and Security Fund (GPSF) in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

#### Outcomes:

1. The period under review has enabled a deeper understanding of current trends in humanitarianism, peacebuilding, security and development issues on the part of CCIC members, and has led to the development of strategic entry points for CCIC for its future work in this area.
2. Collaborative networks were developed between CCIC and Canadian CSOs in its own membership, the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC), its Small Arms Working Group, and the Policy Action Group on Emergency Response (PAGER), as well as with European groups in the Global Security and Development Network (GSDN), and southern groups through the Reality of Aid network.
3. CCIC has developed a strong plan of action, drawing on recent activities and analysis, the activities and interests of members, and the current political environment, with particular focus on Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles, the nexus between security and development issues, and multilateral initiatives on the control of small and light arms.

## 2.4 Strengthening Collaboration for Public Engagement

### Summary Objective

1. To articulate and promote a shared national vision for public engagement with a broad constituency of key stakeholders – including federal agencies, education institutions, media representatives and related social movements – that have common ground in involving Canadians in international issues.

During this reporting period, CCIC has been making progress in terms of continuing to promote and articulate a shared vision for public engagement with CCIC members, their partners and the federal agencies and departments.

From January to April 2005, CCIC carried out a series of regional consultations on the subject of Public Engagement and Active Global Citizenship. The consultations were organized in partnership with the seven provincial councils for international co-operation. Participants in the consultations included public engagement (PE) staff and volunteers from regional council members. In some regions certain key partners (e.g. from the education sector) also participated. A total of seven, full-day consultations were held in Winnipeg, Regina, Toronto, Edmonton, Moncton, Vancouver and Montreal. The sessions were facilitated by Sue Cass of CCIC's Organizational Development team. A total of 83 people participated in the consultations and written comments were received from several others. The summary results for each of the consultations were compiled and verified for accuracy with participants in advance of completion of a final report (see attached).

The stated objectives for the consultations were:

- 1) Share information about some of CCIC's work to date on building a national framework for active global citizenship;
- 2) Carry out a mapping of the range of PE activities currently being undertaken (who is doing what, and with whom) and key strengths that could be built upon;
- 3) Undertake visioning at a regional level;
- 4) Identify key gaps and barriers to effectiveness in PE work at an organizational, regional and national level; and

## 5) Explore next steps for moving PE work forward.

An important overarching goal was to provide a rare opportunity for public engagement practitioners, particularly those affiliated with small and medium-sized organizations, to come together regionally to discuss and assess, with peers, the work they were undertaking in this area.

The consultations resulted in the demonstration of a national pool of existing knowledge, experience and human resources, and the conclusion that the full potential is not being maximized. Examples in the various sessions highlighted how regional public engagement activities have suffered under increasingly restricted resources and capacity, particularly since the mid-1990's. The lack of a clear national framework for public engagement and active global citizenship has meant that there is not a common "rallying ground" upon which the potential for deepened PE programmes, activities, and collaborative efforts could be enriched. The limited, short-term nature of available PE funding is a major constraint to carrying out the kind of repeated, long-term public engagement activities that build global citizenship: a process from awareness, to deepened understanding, to decision-making and action.

Despite these and other limitations, the regional consultations showed that Canada's international CSOs are carrying out a wide range of innovative and dynamic public engagement initiatives. The consultations confirmed that there is strong will and interest in increased collaboration, networking, sharing of knowledge and good practices, and capacity-building to strengthen the reach and effectiveness of public engagement efforts. The consultations validated the importance of continuing to work towards a solid national framework for Active Global Citizenship as a basis for sector-wide public engagement efforts.

In April, the Federal Government's release of their International Policy Statement provided an opportunity for CCIC to comment on the vision for active global citizenship as it compared to CCIC's own contribution made in October. CCIC's response included analysis of what the Statement had to say about global citizenship and public engagement and included a series of subsequent questions to the government.

An indicator of the success CCIC has had in articulating and promoting the national vision was the request for input received from the CIDA team working on defining the public engagement component of the Canada Corps initiative. Seeing this as an ideal opportunity to further promote the national vision for public engagement, the Council commissioned Betty Plewes to draft a discussion paper. After consultation with members, the paper was finalized and submitted to CIDA. The discussion document, "Promoting Global Citizenship: Canada Corps within a CIDA Policy Framework" (see attached) includes a rationale, an assessment of CIDA's public engagement work, and recommendations for CIDA to regain its leadership role in the development of innovative public engagement strategies, which involve Canadian constituencies in support of a renewed global role for Canada and Canadians. The paper recommends that CIDA develop a comprehensive agency-wide policy framework for public engagement and that Canada Corps activities be developed within this framework.

## **2.4 International Cooperation Awards (2003/04 – 2004/05)**

### **Summary Objective**

1. To profile and celebrate innovative Canadian international CSO work for poverty eradication.

### **CCIC International Cooperation Awards 2004**

As described in the November 2004 Interim Report, CCIC's Board of Directors decided to suspend and wrap up The International Co-operation Awards Program as of September 2004.

### **3. Strengthening Program and Policy Connections: CCIC Member-Based Working Groups**

#### **3.1 Africa Canada Forum (ACF)**

### **Summary Objectives**

1. To improve the quality and impact of the work of participating CSOs through reflection and analysis of current programming relationships in Africa; and
2. To provide a collaborative space for policy development and strategies for joint action and policy dialogue, in partnership with African counterparts and colleagues.

The year 2004 for the Africa Canada Forum was affected by the absence for about 6 months of a full-time Coordinator. This temporary difficulty resulted in a slowing down of some activities. However, activities planned at the beginning of the year did take place, thanks to the time and energy the members' coordinating committee. The new Coordinator, Sylvie Perras, started in mid-December. Following the six months gap, the main task was to reinvigorate the relationships with members. In early January, the ACF organized a set of meetings with members in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal to help build a work plan for the coming months. Members assessed the outcomes of ACF since its creation, reflected on what needs to be improved, and reviewed the parameters of common actions. The main comments that resulted from this exercise were: 1) the need to improve communications with members in terms of frequency, content and transparency, and 2) the need to preserve and nurture the ACF as a space for reflection, exchanges and action to influence policies, and to question Canadian CSO practices in their programming relationships with African counterparts.

#### **1. Symposium 2004: "Building an Agenda for Canadian Foreign Policy for Africa"**

The 2004 Symposium was held on October 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, and gathered about 40 participants. Members discussed and prepared policy recommendations in advance of the public process for the International Policy Review and submission to Minister Goodale for the upcoming G8 focus on Africa. ACF policy proposals addressed the strengthening of spaces for African policy makers and civil society to pursue their own development alternative for Africa. The Forum puts its emphasis in three areas: economic justice for Africa in the context of Canadian trade, debt and international investment policies; renewed aid partnerships with Africa; and supporting peace processes in Africa. Molly Kane, a co-chair of the Forum, also

participated in a G8 civil society platforms (e.g. BOND, Interaction etc.) meeting in Paris to develop joint plans leading to the G8 meeting in July 2005.

## 2. Brief to Minister Goodale

In December 2004, ACF submitted a brief to Minister Ralph Goodale in the context of the Commission for Africa consultations. The ACF brief to Minister Goodale reflects the October 2004 Symposium discussions, and previous work of members and collaborators on specific aspects. The ACF Coordinating Committee chose to focus on economic issues, which were the primary area of focus for the Minister on the Commission.

## 3. Working Group on Extractive Resources

At the beginning of January, the three CCIC regional working groups (ACF, APG, APWG) and invited experts gathered to discuss militarized commerce. The goal of this meeting was to identify key elements for a common position on corporate social responsibility in conflict zones or where there are grave human rights violations. The three working groups have initiated a discussion on a strategy to develop proposals to assure consistency for the Canadian government between Canadian foreign investment in zones of conflict and Canada's commitments on human rights and the right to development. This joint initiative on militarized commerce will allow ACF members to pursue the work on Canadian extractive resource industries in Africa from another angle.

## 4. Monitoring the Commission for Africa and the G8

ACF worked with Halifax Initiative in January and February to monitor the question of debt relief/cancellation with Minister Goodale's office. A joint letter was sent in January 28<sup>th</sup> stating the position of both coalitions on debt cancellation for poor countries. This letter reiterated the importance, in our view, of complete debt cancellation to be able to meet the Millennium Development Goals. A copy of this letter and subsequent press releases on Canada's new debt proposal are available at [www.halifaxinitiative.org](http://www.halifaxinitiative.org). Members of Halifax Initiative and the ACF, including Molly Kane, ACF co-chair, Brian Tomlinson and Sylvie Perras, participated in a meeting with Department of Finance staff to discuss the G7 February meeting and orientations for the G8 Summit, planned for July in Gleneagles in Scotland. The same group also attended a debriefing session on the 2005 federal budget, which is coherent with many of the recommendations of the Commission's report. The ACF was fortunate to host an intern from the Université du Québec en Outaouais, Marie-Eve Nadon, who did research on progress made to date with the Canada Fund for Africa. The analysis stemming out of this research has been incorporated in ACF work leading up to the G8 meeting in July.

## 5. Workshop for Fundraisers on Images of Africa

The Forum organized with CCIC's Organizational Development Team a second workshop for fundraisers on the projection of images of Africa, April 11-12, 2005 in Toronto. Participants reviewed the ethical framework elaborated at the first workshop in March 2004, and then were guided in an exploration of concrete actions to deconstruct images and develop guidelines for the review of publications. Another edition of this workshop is planned for in early September 2005 in French, in Montreal.

## 6. ACF General Membership Meeting: Towards the G8 Summit: Canadian Responses to the Commission for Africa.

Following the launch of the report of the Commission for Africa in March 2005, the ACF Coordinator prepared a review of the Commission's report, charting the key elements of the report, quotes and comments. This document was used to generate debate and discussion in small meetings with ACF members in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto prior to the ACF General Membership Meeting. The ACF General Meeting was held on April 18 and 19, 2005 and gathered some 45 participants. The meeting was meant to provide a space for a dialogue with government officials in the context of the Gleneagles Summit. However, the launch of the long-expected IPS the same day made it more difficult for government officials to attend or to speak openly, and for some NGOs representatives to be as present as usual. Members were presented with some African perspectives on the Commission for Africa in the context of the reality experienced every day by Africans. Presentations on International Trade and Agriculture, European Perspectives on the Commission and the G8 Summit, and the Right to Health stimulated the discussions and prompted some strategizing about how to raise awareness about the issues and to mobilize around them. .

#### 7. A Media Kit on Key Issues Facing Africa:

In June 2005, the ACF produced a media kit that includes two-page backgrounders on some of the main issues raised in the Report from the Commission for Africa and its recommendations. The information and analysis provided on debt, international aid, agriculture and trade, security and peace, health and education was distributed as a tool for the media as well as ACF members and collaborators for the G8 Summit and beyond, taking into account other international discussions and negotiations to come, in particular the UN General Assembly in September and the WTO Ministerial Meeting in December.

The media kit has been sent to a range of Canadian journalists and media outlets before a special ACF/Halifax Initiatives/KAIROS conference, *The Challenges of Debt and Poverty Eradication in Africa: the Gleneagles G8 Summit*, in the lead-up to the G8 Summit. The kit was also distributed widely on ACF, Halifax Initiative and Kairos member e-lists, and at the conference and the meeting in Toronto. The kit is now accessible online at [www.ccic.ca](http://www.ccic.ca). CCIC and its members attending the G8 meeting in Scotland have been using the kit as background information for journalists present. Similarly we expect to distribute the kit widely in the lead-up to the Millennium plus five Summit at the UN in September.

#### 8. Special Conference: The Challenges of Debt and Poverty Eradication in Africa: the Gleneagles G8 Summit

ACF organized with Halifax Initiative and Kairos the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference, which attracted some 40 participants, including representatives from the NGO community, research organizations and political staff from MPs and senators offices. The presentations were very helpful to understand the details of the recent G8 proposal on debt cancellation that came out of the G7 Finance Ministers earlier in June. African guests brought African perspectives on the issues, illustrating with concrete examples the reality of Africans struggling for economic justice. The Conference addressed issues of debt cancellation and poverty eradication in the broader context of important world events happening in 2005, namely the G8 Summit, the UN Millennium Plus Five Special Session in September and the WTO Ministerial meeting in December in Hong Kong. For Canadian civil society representatives and the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, the dialogue was also taking place in the midst of the international Make Poverty History campaign.

### 9. Planning the ACF Symposium, October 2005: “Women’s Rights, Women’s Roles: How do we listen? How do we act?”

Women’s rights will be at the centre of the Forum’ debates at its 2005 Fall Symposium. This theme builds on previous ACF work on human rights and the 2004 Betty Plewes Award, and is anchored in the ongoing process of reflecting on our organizational practices and our advocacy work. Specific attention will be given to the situation of women’s rights in Africa, violence against women, and the roles and contributions women play in economic, trade and agriculture policies, thus taking into account the upcoming December Ministerial WTO meeting. African women participating in the exchange project on Violence Against Women – Strengthening Solidarity and Capacity for Policy Development will attend the Symposium and share their experience and knowledge, thus enriching our discussions. With this project the ACF will be acknowledging the organizations that were nominated for the Betty Plewes 2004 Award. The goal of our deliberations at the Symposium will be to identify advocacy issues for the coming months and develop a strategy for the ACF around women’s rights.

### 10. ACF Governance

The Co-ordinating Committee ensures the governance of the Forum. Its membership is currently composed of 8 persons; Lina Holguin, Oxfam-Québec and Molly Kane, Inter Pares, ACF co-chairs, Brian Tomlinson, CCIC, Denis Tougas, Entraide missionnaire, Jim Davis, Kairos, Anne Gardner, Canadian Crossroad International, Denise Byrnes, Développement et Paix , Caroline Boudreau, Inter Pares, and Susan Learoyd, CUSO. The Forum currently has 38 members. ACF documents can be found at <http://ccic.ca/e/003/acf.shtml>.

## **3.2 Americas Policy Group (APG)**

### **Summary Objective**

1.. To provide a space for collective reflection and the articulation of coordinated policy positions on issues relating to the Americas region, as well as dialogue with the Canadian government, other governments and other decision making bodies.

During the period under review from November 2004, the Americas Policy Group (APG) continued to focus its work on three priority areas: (1) the impacts of economic integration in Mexico and Central America; (2) human rights in Mexico; and, (3) Colombia and the militarization of the Andean region. In addition, the APG prepared a joint statement for the International Policy Review, continued to monitor the human rights situation in Guatemala, and contributed to the Common Frontiers coalition “ No FTAA” campaign. The APG meets regularly with government officials, including staff at embassies abroad when possible, especially at present during staffing turn-over.

The group also continues to participate in the annual Foreign Affairs consultations in preparation for the UN Commission for Human Rights and communicates with UN officials.

Recently, in an attempt increase joint work between members traditionally working on country-specific issues, the APG has merged the Central America and Mexico sub-working groups. This will facilitate working on thematic issues such as good governance, democracy, and human rights.

## 1. Central America

Over the year, the APG's economic integration work focused on the negotiations of the Canada-Central America Four Free Trade Agreement (CA4FTA). Drawing on the APG's statement of policy recommendations on the CA4FTA, the group undertook extensive dialogue with Canadian government officials, meeting with negotiators and parliamentarians, calling for higher standards of transparency and accountability in the negotiations of the CA4FTA. Effort was directed at heightening public awareness of the agreement, in the Canadian media and among the constituents of APG member organizations.

Following an extended period of delay in the CA4FTA negotiations, the APG decided to narrow its policy focus vis-à-vis the Agreement on the investor-state clause in the CA4FTA. This has resulted in a briefing note on the investor-state clause for use with government officials and the media. The APG has been working in collaboration with Common Frontiers to discuss concerns on NAFTA's investor-state clause (Chapter 11) with Parliamentarians. The APG was represented at a committee hearing that successfully called for a review of Chapters 11 and 19 of NAFTA.

APG members collaborated in dialogue with the Canadian government on the outcomes of the 2003 elections in Guatemala. The group met with officials from DFAIT and CIDA regarding the situation in Guatemala and Canada's participation in the OAS mission. Following, APG members continued to dialogue with government on various human rights issues in Guatemala.

The coalition, along with a wide network of Canadian NGOs across the country, has been monitoring and drawing attention to the case of Canadian mining company, Glamis Gold, whose operations have generated violence and conflict in the indigenous highlands of Guatemala. The coalition has written several letters addressed to government officials on the matter, raising concern in particular to the role the Canadian Embassy has played in facilitating the controversial operations of Glamis, and drawing attention to the imbalance of Canada's commercial priorities over those of human rights. The APG coordinator has become more active in facilitating press coverage on Guatemala, through conversations with journalists and publication of an op-ed piece.

## 2. Colombia

Dialogue with the Canadian government on human rights in Colombia has been particularly active during the period under review. The APG has continued to write to the Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs, urging Canada to use its Embassy in Bogotá to play an active role in pushing for the implementation of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights' Recommendations for Colombia. The group has also had a series of information-sharing meetings with an informal Government Colombia Working Group, made up of officials from DFAIT, CIDA and IDRC.

The APG continues to strengthen ties with international coalitions working on Colombia, including La Alianza in Colombia, ODHACO in Europe, and the US Office on Colombia in the United States. The relationships forged have resulted in coordination of actions and joint messaging on issues of shared concern towards our governments and the UN.

The APG has been very active in trying to influence Canada's participation as chair of the Group of 24 (G24) donor countries to Colombia working together on an international

cooperation strategy for Colombia. The APG was particularly engaged in the lead-up and duration of the February 2005 International Donor's meeting in Cartagena, Colombia. Members produced a short briefing note on the meeting as well as a backgrounder to the Donor's Process, which were used in meetings with members of the Canadian delegation, and in a series of meetings with Parliamentarians from all political parties. Informed relationships with MPs were further fostered in the course of parliamentary hearings on Colombia, where the APG coordinated a group presentation to the Sub-Committee on Human Rights and International Development, calling for examination of Canada's role as diplomat, donor, and investor, in Colombia.

Work is also underway on Canadian investments in Colombia, and the relationship of these investments to the human rights agenda promoted by Canada. The APG has produced some preliminary research on the issues, and plans to conduct more, which will contribute to the work of a joint policy research and advocacy project on investment and conflict carried out in collaboration with other CCIC working groups.

### 3. Investment and Conflict

The APG Co-ordinator and members have been contributing to the joint work of other CCIC regional working groups on issues of Canadian investments in conflict zones. In its region-specific meetings with government, the APG has been able to raise the joint agenda of addressing the often problematic issues related to investments in areas of conflict by drawing on cases the coalition is monitoring.

### 4. International Policy Review

Finally, the APG produced a submission to the International Policy Review, and APG co-chairs met with several government officials to discuss the proposals presented in the APG submission. The APG produced an internal analysis of the International Policy Statement, in order to better position the coalition to make a presentation at upcoming parliamentary committee hearings.

Documents can be found on the APG page of CCIC's web site:

<http://www.ccic.ca/e/003/apg.shtml>.

## 3.3 Asia Pacific Working Group (APWG)

### **Summary Objective**

1.. To provide a space for collective reflection and the articulation of coordinated policy positions for CCIC members on issues relating to the Asia/Pacific region, as well as dialogue with the Canadian government, other governments and other decision making bodies.

The Asia Pacific Working Group (APWG) is a network of Canadian civil society organizations (CSOs) involved in human rights, democracy and development in the region. It brings together more than 20 international development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights groups, labour unions, church and solidarity groups, mostly members of the CCIC. The APWG works to consolidate a Canadian NGO voice on the Asia Pacific Region by sharing information, engaging in international co-operation and foreign policies, and coordinating dialogue with government departments.

In September 2004, the Board of Directors of CCIC formally approved the formation of the APWG as a CCIC Regional Working Group. The APWG is financially supported by its member organizations, CCIC, and is seeking support from the Canadian Partnership Program of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The coalition is managed by an elected steering committee of eight member organizations, including two co-chairs.

The APWG held a Forum for its members in December 2004, focusing on peace and security issues in the Asia Pacific region and on developing a shared policy agenda and action plan. Following the December Forum the group began drafting a series of policy papers on three priority areas identified by the working group members: Peacebuilding, Conflict and Investment, and Aid Flows in the Asia Pacific region, all from a Canadian policy perspective. The CCIC Secretariat contributed a background overview of current CIDA aid priorities for the region. These policy papers, which will form the policy agenda of the working group and will help guide the group's future work, were finalized at the APWG Forum in June 2005.

The APWG also carried out fundraising and member outreach, and in February 2005 a staff person was hired to coordinate the activities of the APWG.

In the spring, the APWG facilitated a dialogue between members and CIDA officials on the development of country development program frameworks (e.g. Indonesia). The Secretariat and members of the APWG also closely monitored the engagement of Canadian CSOs and government responses to the tsunami in 2005. Two presentations, based on members' experiences in Indonesia, were made to the March meeting of the CCIC Board of Directors.

In April, the APWG produced a brief analysis of the government's long-awaited International Policy Statement, outlining some of the changes in Canadian foreign policy that will affect the Asia Pacific region, and members and partners of the APWG.

In June 2005, the APWG held its semi-annual Forum in North Gower, Ontario. The Forum's theme, "From Policy to Action," reflected the will of the group to dialogue systematically with government on issues of concern. The three policy foci that were previously identified in the APWG policy paper – Peacebuilding, Conflict and Investment, and Aid Flows in the Asia Pacific Region – were explored in depth, and the APWG's mandate and strategic plan for the upcoming year were developed.