

**World Summits and their Relevance to Canadian
Domestic Social Policies**

**Round Table
International Institute on Social Policy
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Report

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	iii
Introduction	1
• The Round Table	1
• This Report	2
The World Summits and the Round Table	2
• Background. Some of the Major Conferences	3
The Round Table Discussions	5
• Setting the Stage	6
• Linking Global and Domestic Concerns	9
• The Canadian Experience	11
• The International Perspective. What are the Lessons Learned?	16
Conclusions	20
Acronyms	22
Annex 1. Agenda	23

Executive Summary

In a world of expanding economic, political, technological, and cultural globalization, national public policy boundaries are more permeable to the influence of international frameworks setting development targets to be met by national governments. The U.N., international organizations, development assistance agencies, governments, and civil society organizations have come together in a number of international events broadly identified as “Summits”. Most have concluded with commitments to meet development goals over set periods. Almost without exception, meeting these goals is likely to impact on public policy areas, particularly in the domestic social policy domain of the countries involved.

The nature, overall reach and impact of these processes are still unclear. From a social policy perspective, their number, diversity, interests, the sensitivity of the issues addressed, and the difficulties in assessing the impact of the recommendation have created a new and complex dimension in the analysis of social policy from an international and global perspective. Thus, it is increasingly important to examine whether Canadian participation in these events contributes to a stronger international social policy system, and more specifically, whether Canadian domestic policies fall in line with the directions established by these Summits.

On May 28, 2001, a selected group came together in Ottawa to exchange experiences on these issues. The purpose of the round table was to examine the extent to which Summits and their commitments have an impact on Canadian domestic social policy. The workshop explored questions such as: Are these events and the international agendas resulting from them relevant to Canada? If so, how? What are the social and human development areas in Canada most likely to be affected by their recommendations? Are the approaches adopted by these Summits appropriate? Do their follow-up and reporting mechanisms offer a “fair” and accurate view of the problems? What are the legal implications of these conventions and commitments?

Acknowledging the complexity of the issues, there was consensus that understanding the impact of these events requires focussing attention on them as “processes” rather than specific happenings. Their value emerges from the preparatory and follow-up steps they involve, in addition to their substantive focus. Summits provide governments and the civil society a different sighting of key development issues relevant both domestically and internationally. They contribute to bringing back to the table development concerns left behind at times by single-issue international agendas dealing with economic growth and development. To domestic social policy, they bring the added worth of an international comparative perspective at a time of increasing interdependence among nations. Internationally, they offer a stage to compare experiences, learn from each other’s practices, and agree on frameworks, standards, and benchmarks in the pursuit of shared development goals.

The discussion at the round table led participants to highlight a number of lessons that merit further consideration:

- Canada's involvement in the Summits has contributed to bridging existing gaps within the government itself, through inter-departmental collaboration, as well as between the government and diverse sectors of the civil society and the NGO community.
- The "machinery" of Summits, the involvement in setting international agendas and follow-up mechanisms to assess progress, have contributed to advancing into the international arena Canadian values and concerns, and to focussing domestic attention on key social policy issues which otherwise would have been left behind in the national debate.
- The Summits processes contribute to keeping cross cutting issues such as poverty, gender and environment present in the national public policy debate thus opening an opportunity to allocating and better targeting resources both domestically and internationally over the longer-term. The Canadian government in particular must continue promoting and facilitating the involvement of civil society, as much domestically as abroad, and provide the required resources to make this possible.
- There is also a need to take steps at various levels of Canadian society to maintain the momentum created by the Summit processes. This implies strengthening avenues for monitoring, accountability and continuous feedback as well as promoting public awareness and disseminating relevant information about progress on specific social policy issues emanating from the Summit commitments.
- The complexity of the issues the Summits address and the scope, and at times ambitious nature, of their agendas, commitments and declarations require ensuring consistency and coherence across areas of concern and between domestic policies and international goals. Setting in place domestic mechanisms for continued debate and monitoring, and assisting the NGO community to continue playing a proactive role in this regard are issues that require ongoing attention.

Overall, the one-day round table was successful in meeting its intended purpose. The participants explored a broad range of questions and identified the relevance of the Summit events and their international agendas to Canada.

Introduction

Over the past decade the U.N., international organizations, development assistance agencies, governments, and civil society organizations have come together in a number of international events broadly identified as “Summits”. The purpose has been to discuss the current state and the future of key human and social development areas. Most of these events have concluded with a series of commitments, some signed by Heads of government, to meet specific development goals over set periods of time. Almost without exception, meeting these goals is likely to have a direct impact on a range of public policy areas, particularly in the social policy domain of the countries involved.

Canada has been an active participant and a signatory in many of these events. In aggregate, the Summits represent concerted efforts to reach international consensus around development priorities, standards and indicators of progress, and means of accountability related to development concerns relevant to social policy. In some instances, follow-up events (after five or ten years) have been organized to report on the state of national progress. Canada has also participated in these events.

The nature, overall reach and impact of these processes are still unclear. From a social policy perspective, their number and diversity, the variety of interest represented, the sensitivity of the issues addressed, and the difficulties in assessing the impact of their recommendations have created a new and complex dimension in the analysis of social policy from an international and global perspective.

In this light, a number of questions become relevant. Are the goals set by these events realistic? Are they likely to shift the direction of international development actions? Will they influence national domestic policy directions? If they are successful in building, for example, the momentum for setting international social development standards, are they laying the foundations for establishing supra national regulatory frameworks in the social policy arena? If they are not successful, are they diverting attention and resources away from more pressing national priorities?

These and other similar questions are important in the current context of more globalize human, social and economic development priorities. It seemed thus appropriate to examine them and assess whether Canadian participation in these Summits contributes to a stronger international social policy system, and more specifically, whether Canadian domestic policies are falling in line with the directions established internationally by these events.

The Round Table

To open a debate about the implications of international Summits for Canada, the Queen’s University International Institute on Social Policy, “*Canada in International Perspective*” sponsored a round table on “*The World Summits and their Relevance to Canadian Domestic*

Social Policy” in collaboration with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), in May 28, 2001.

A selected group of participants came together to exchange ideas and experiences around this topic. The purpose of the one-day round table was to examine the extent to which Summits and the commitments agreed upon have an impact on Canadian domestic social policy. The workshop explored questions such as: Are these events and the international agendas resulting from them relevant to Canada? If so, how? and what are the social and human development areas in Canada most likely to be affected by the recommendations resulting from these events?

The round table included a Keynote Address that contributed to outlining the issues under discussion, and three sessions of Panel Presentations, each followed by a Plenary Discussion. The round table was successful in identifying areas and issues of concern which are potentially relevant to the role of Canadian government departments, Canadian organizations working in areas related to social policy, and in general to Non-governmental and civil society groups involved in key social policy sectors.

This Report

This report offers a synthesis of the presentations and discussions and highlights some of the main points that emerged from the deliberations. It is not intended as a transcription of the various presentations but rather reflects the crosscutting issues, questions and concerns raised by the presenters and participants. Based on the discussions, the purpose is to present an overview of the complexity of the issues and identify areas that merit further examination.

The report is organized in three general sections. These include a brief overview of the nature and understanding of the type of international events that the round table identified generically as World Summits. This was an issue raised by the participants early in the discussions. The second part of the report reflects the various contributions which although responding to specific experiences related to social policy in Canada, shared common considerations about the implications and potential impact of the Summit events on Canadian domestic social policy. The third part of the report identifies some general conclusions and lessons learned.

The World Summits and the Round Table

In a world of expanding economic, political, technological, and cultural globalization, national public policy boundaries are becoming more permeable to the influence of international frameworks setting development targets to be met by national governments. These frameworks attempt to reflect consensus in a broad range of areas, from trade, to environment, to social development and the rights and well-being of specific population sectors. Almost without exception, they have profound implications on national social policy decisions. At best, they contribute to shaping the direction, focus, and scope of social sector policies and the reforms of existing welfare systems. At worst, without sufficient resources to make international commitments a reality on the ground, they add complexity to government efforts in meeting their societies’ social development needs.

The notion of World Summit itself is open to controversy. This adds to long standing concerns about other issues related to these events such as representation and participation; input into and control over their agendas; follow-up, enforcement, monitoring; and resources.

The round table adopted a broad understanding of the notion of Summit to refer to a wide spectrum of international events involving national governments or their representatives, international organizations, official development aid and donor agencies, non-governmental organization and various sectors of civil society. The intent was to offer a flexible forum to discuss the implications of these type of events on domestic social policies in Canada.

In addition to a number of international events which directly involve Heads of Governments (i.e. G7 meetings, Summit of the Americas, etc.), the notion of Summit often applies to a broad range of international events. In several cases these relate to initiatives led by the United Nations. These include, for example, the World Summit for Children (New York, 1990); the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990); the Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992); the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995); the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements - Habitat II (Istanbul, 1996); and various follow-up meetings. Other relevant events include high level meetings of Heads of government such as the Summits of the Americas (1994, 1998, 2001).

Background. Some of the Major Conferences

During the 1990s, twelve major conferences were organized by the international community to attract the attention of and commit governments to address pressing development problems facing countries across the world. These events have involved complex processes of consensus building in their preparation, realization and follow-up.

Since the beginning, one of the immediate results of these initiatives was to set in motion the international community and revitalize the development debate. At the time, serious questions were being raised about both the sustainability of development initiatives and the effectiveness of aid and international cooperation. These concerns were compounded by the realization that despite considerable progress, the gap between rich and poor has widened, the number of people in poverty had increased, and access to basic social services and economic resources continued to elude the poorer sector of the society the world over.

Over a relatively short period, the public attention brought on these problems led to coordinated efforts to identify a number of at times ambitious priorities for new development agendas. The attention focussed on areas as diverse as child welfare, environmental protection, human rights, the advancement of women, productive employment, reproductive health and urban development, and the links of these to peace, development and human security.

Internationally, these events have contributed to mobilizing and bringing together diverse participants around shared goals. The expectation is that the countries involved take ownership of and follow-up on the commitments agree upon at the Summit by translating them into positive changes in national policy areas and programs, and that they report back periodically on their progress.

Although the public opinion attention has often focussed on the events themselves, individually, each initiative involves extended preparations. These often include extensive assessment of the state of progress in a given area, national and international reports, complex consultations and negotiations among governments, and between them and their non-governmental and civil society organizations; and the production of Action Plans which serve as a base for monitoring and follow-up by governments, aid agencies, and international organizations.

Except for periodic reports on progress (in some instances five years after the main event) and efforts from civil society and international organizations to monitor and follow-up, still little is known about how effective these events are in shaping public policy among developed and developing countries. There are on-going debates about the feasibility and realism of meeting high level political commitments such as those proposed by the Summits; about the capacity of participant countries to implement and monitor change, particularly the poorest and less stable countries; and about the resources, mechanisms, and institutions available to governments for their allocation.

One of the results to date of these events is the growing call from the international community to develop common development frameworks and to establish mechanisms, both at the international and national level, for integrated follow-up. Steps in this direction include linking the themes and Action Plans to each other in a deliberate way; identifying concerns that cut across specific problem areas; emphasizing issues such as social and economic well-being, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms; and avoiding top-down approaches by increasing civil society representation and creating opportunities for community input into the policy-making process. Although not without contention the efforts made in this regard represent important steps in changing the international development debate around common goals.

Examples of crosscutting principles reflecting the concerns upon which these events attempt to focus the attention of the international community are:

- **Integrated and Comprehensive.** There is a new emphasis on looking at development actions in a more integrated and comprehensive way. This implies both looking at the inter-relationships among development sectors as well as seeking a stronger integration of development action plans into international and national policies and programs.
- **Human Centred.** There is growing call to place human well-being at the centre of development concerns. This implies seeking a more balanced approach to identifying and

following-up on social and economic priorities as mutually reinforcing.

- **Multi-dimensional.** The complexity of development problems themselves, and the diversity in the conditions affecting the most vulnerable sectors of the population bring about the need to adopt multifaceted and multi-dimensional strategies, policies, and national, regional and international actions.
- **Poverty Focus.** Almost without exception, these events place poverty reduction as a guiding and central objective. This principle calls for renewed attention to the satisfaction of basic needs and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as “the right to development.” Promoting equal economic opportunities to avoid exclusion and overcome disparities while respecting diversity are perceived as a necessary part of building an enabling environment for social and human development.
- **Targeted Efforts.** A common emphasis of the agendas emerging from these events is the need to identify clear targets in terms of beneficiaries, time, and resources that would allow governments to concentrate and measure development efforts over time.
- **Emphasis on Social Development.** Investments in health, education and training are identified as critical to the development of human resources. Social development is best pursued if governments actively promote empowerment and participation in a democratic environment. Central to these aims is improving the status of and empowering women.
- **Growth Guided by Social Priorities.** Economic growth is essential for expanding the resource base for development and hence for economic, technical and social transformation in a sustainable manner. It is also essential to the eradication of poverty. However, economic growth, and the investment and distribution of resources should be guided by social priorities.

The Round Table Discussions

The round table opened with welcoming remarks by representatives from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Queen’s International Institute on Social Policy, a program of the School of Policy Studies, the sponsors of the event. Both highlighted the relevance of the topic of the round table for Canada’s domestic policies.

Two broad sets of issues were raised in the opening remarks. First, the importance of the on-going international social policy debate and the relevance of international mechanisms such as the Summits for developed and developing countries. These events contribute to strengthening international development systems by enhancing developing countries’ roles in influencing the declarations and commitments reached by the participant countries. In the context of the round table, the Summits offer an opportunity to assess the extent to which these fora affect the way Canada approaches its own domestic social policy processes, and in doing so, how it compares to

other countries.

Second, it was acknowledged that addressing a topic such as the one at hand represents challenges as well as opportunities. Challenges are the broad scope and complexity of the topic and the variety of experiences that could be categorized under the concept of “world summits”. A number of questions were identified as particularly relevant to the round table. Are the goals set by these events realistic? Are they likely to shift the direction of international development actions? Will they influence national domestic policy directions? If they are successful in building momentum for setting international social development standards, are they laying the foundations for establishing supra national regulatory frameworks in the social policy arena? If they are not successful, are they simply diverting attention and resources from governments that could be used to meet more pressing national priorities? These and other questions offered an opportunity to open a dialogue around the implications of Summits on Canada’s own domestic social policy make-up.

The wealth of views among the participants at the round table was also highlighted as an opportunity to enrich the debate. Acknowledging that there were no easy answers, participants were encouraged to address the main topic for discussion from the perspective of their own experiences.

Setting the Stage

The keynote presentation by Geoffrey Pearson, National President, United Nations association in Canada (UNAC), contributed to setting the stage for the discussions that followed during the day. Following-up on the opening remarks, several issues were highlighted as a means to set the topic in context.

The notion of Summit itself, raises some questions, as it is often used to identify a wide range of different events. In its most strict sense, Summits are international events involving the direct participation of heads of state (i.e. the Summit for Children, the Summits of the Americas). Most so called Summits, however, do not meet this strict definition. In this light, an issue to be addressed by the discussion was the need to generally agree on “what is a Summit?”

Interventions during the plenary discussion reinforced this point calling for greater precision in defining the scope of the topic at hand. For some there was a need to differentiate between aspects such as the type and size of these gatherings, their different intended impact and audience, and their reach as these factors often influence the impact Summits have in shaping official and public opinion.

This complexity, however, is not limited to the concept. The issues on which most of these events and other related initiatives focus (i.e. the UN Human Development Report) are also complex, covering a range of social, economic and human development issues. The discussion suggested that the chosen focus on social policy helps to narrow down and focus the debate.

From this perspective it helps to look at the extent to which Summits are suitable avenues by which to address complex development issues, and if they have any measurable impact on Canadian domestic social policy.

Another issue to be kept in mind was the character of the recommendations emerging from these events and the extent to which they are being met. A prime example is the focus on poverty present in several of these international events. Although in many cases what is agreed translates into concrete recommendations and important resolutions signed by the participant countries (i.e. debt relief, loosening of import barriers, or more generous development aid), the agreements are not being met.

A consideration in this regard is the nature of the recommendations themselves. The ambitious goals of many of the resolutions on areas such as poverty reduction, the environment, and the use of natural resources, in many cases with specific target dates for objectives to be met, may contribute to the difficulties in fulfilling these agreements. This raised other related issues that need further attention. On the one hand, there is a need to deal with issues of accountability, i.e. “why these agree upon resolutions are not being met?” On the other hand, there is a need for the international community to press for further precision in defining and setting such targets. In many instances the agree upon commitments reflect the right sentiments, but they are often of a high level of generality and open to interpretation about their meaning and implications.

An example offered in this regard was the Summit for Children (1990) where 192 countries ratified the convention on the rights of the child. Although one of the leading agencies, Unicef, regularly reports on progress, there is a diversity of opinions about the extent to which the goals agree upon have been met. Canada is not an exception. A report on the topic for the special session of the UN General Assembly indicates that in Canada “progress has been mixed”. This view has been reinforced by civil society organizations, including the churches, reporting on the state of child poverty in the country.

Findings such as these raise additional questions. For some, the perceived contradictions between reports raised doubts about the meaning and interpretation of the findings and about the reporting mechanisms themselves, considering for example that Canada ranks number one in the Human Development Index (HDI). For others, these apparent contradictions reinforced the need to look at the issues in context and in an integrated manner. This last view suggested the need to keep in mind a comparative dimension to assess the magnitude of the reported problems. Thus, if one looks at the realities of specific countries, for example, Canada may not do as well as expected in terms of child poverty or gender despite its position in the HDI. This brings to light the need to assess how these individual sets of indicators relate to the overall ranking of Canada, and how each compares internationally. Similar examples are also found in terms of the commitments on the environment, foreign aid, and reduction of CO₂ emissions.

There is little doubt that even if one looks at single examples, the complexity of the issues addressed by the Summits poses many questions that merit further discussion. Are the

approaches adopted by these Summits appropriate? Do their follow-up and reporting mechanisms offer a “fair” and accurate view of the problems? Do they have a tangible effect in Canada? What are the legal implications of these conventions and commitments?

The round table discussion offered an array of views. Acknowledging the complexity, there was general agreement that Summits offer a suitable avenue to raise the profile of key development issues which may not be receiving the attention they deserve. The value of these fora is both national and international. At the national level, they offer an opportunity to discuss domestic issues with the benefit of an added international perspective, not often found when the deliberations are limited to the realm of national ministries and departments. At the international level, they offer the opportunity to set goals and standards, although there is still a long way to go in putting in place the appropriate “machinery” that could allow countries to meet these goals and assess progress.

The value of Summits was also associated with the need for mechanisms to build policy consensus. Using the Summit of the Americas as an example, it was argued that this type of event often involves “large bureaucratic exercises” particularly during the preparation stages which allow different government departments with diverse interests to develop new forms of inter-departmental cooperation. This view was complemented by the opinion that more than bureaucratic events, their importance resides in the opportunities they offer in terms of national and international consultations and dialogue between different groups. In this light, it was suggested that the value of the Summits is not in the events themselves or exclusively in terms of the substantive issues they address but in the “process” they set in motion.

Instrumentally, these types of events play a useful role on several fronts. They contribute to organizing consensus around specific concerns. They focus interests by setting goals; help to set a common language allowing groups with different interests to communicate; lead to the development of standards and indicators to assess impact and measure results; introduce a variety of issues into the domestic political agendas; and force governments to focus resources.

An added value of these processes is the opportunity they offer to bring into the international development debate issues and values of interest to Canada. These take a concrete form through the setting of the agenda of commitments that ultimately offer a “road map” for actions at the national level both to governments and to civil society. Examples were mentioned where Canada has added value to the international debate by introducing a human rights dimension.

Participants saw these processes as an avenue to introduce a civil society dimension in areas related to national policy coherence and domestic accountability. References were made to the important role of civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Their participation makes these events less bureaucratic and more inclusive in setting agendas and deciding on benchmarks and follow-up.

Civil society participation also adds important human and social dimensions to the process

reflecting concerns from the bottom up, thus bringing coherence into the decision making process. To some, civil society involvement in these processes was an expression of democracy and citizenship at work, contributing to balanced agendas (i.e. bridging the social and economic divide) and bringing around the table sectors of society which otherwise would remain excluded.

Recognizing the value of these events, other participants introduced a word of caution. Summits are relatively new in the overall development stage and their impact still is not well known. It seems clear that despite the value of Summits, they cannot be seen as the answer to the long-standing debate about the predominance of economic concerns in international agendas. At the same time, they are not intended to have a direct impact on social policy. This suggests the need for a different type of institutional setting to discuss social policy from a global perspective. Others argued that as a result of the often highly political nature of these events, limitations are added both in terms of follow-up as “politicians are often not interested in the follow-up”, and in terms of standards to be met as political interference may result in standards being set to the lowest lower common denominator.

Keeping these issues in mind, it was suggested that it is important not to raise undue expectations about the potential relevance and impact of these events. It was also pointed out that some additional questions are worth considering: recognizing the importance of Summits as consensus building processes, is the time frame within which they work conducive to achieving the expected impact and carrying out the expected follow-up? Do Summits show that there is still a lack of appropriate instrumentation to operate both at the global and local level? So the means exist to integrate the machinery of government and domestic departments to work in tandem in the context of the international partnerships emerging from the Summits?

Linking Global and Domestic Concerns

The panel presentations moderated by Andrew Jackson, Director of Research of the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) furthered the discussion of the opening session. The presenters included Kate White, President of the Canadian Commission for UNIFEM, and Brian Barton, Associate Professor of the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivieres and Member of the Board of the Canadian Consortium for International Social Development (CCISD).

“Do world Summits represent the failure of domestic social policy?” was a stimulating question which added another dimension to the debate. Overall, most Summits seem to reflect concerns already present in the Canadian domestic policy debate. The value of giving these issues an international profile is the opportunity to build links between domestic and international interests thus reinforcing priorities relevant to the broader Canadian society. It is in this light, that these events represent an avenue for citizen engagement around issues germane to the Canadian government and to civil society. The importance of these events also rests on the opportunity for Canada to emphasize social-related priorities and forward alternative models and approaches that may contribute to balancing the influence that wealthier countries have in the agendas and the follow-up actions of these events.

Citizen participation in Summit processes and the influence this has on the identification of areas in need of concerted national attention are one contribution Summits make to shape national agendas, including domestic social policy. At the same time, the opportunity for citizen engagement raises critical issues. Some relate to the expectations raised by participation in itself. Others pertain to the most effective timing for such involvement. “How to engage in these processes and at what point? How to move forward domestic and international policy concerns? What levers are available to citizens to follow-up and who is engaged in the dialogue?” are issues in need of consideration.

In the view of some participants, there is also a risk in the increasing civil society involvement in international agendas. Involvement at this level may jeopardize efforts to focus on domestic issues or be perceived as a “substitute for lack of domestic success” in addressing social policies. To avoid this risk, there is a need for new fora, institutional settings, and mechanisms that could systematically lead to improvement in the coordination between international and domestic levels. There is also a need for identifying more formal and structured means available to civil society to communicate with others and reflect the great diversity that it represents, as it is important to keep in mind that civil society is not homogenous.

It was suggested that some guidance to assist in the quest for answer could be found in the evolution of the democratic process in countries like Canada. A value brought about by the Summits is to serve as an stimulus to raise civil society awareness and to create opportunities for dialogue among different sectors of the population. This, however, also raises other issues. When and how can civil society involvement be most useful? How can it be most effective given that often civil society does not work in a structured manner? Moreover, does civil society have the capacity and resources to ensure that policy recommendations from these events have a domestic impact?

Directly relevant to addressing the relationships between international commitments and domestic social policy is the critical issue of resources. Availability of resources is key to an effective follow-up and to the capacity of society to ensure government accountability. In this respect, identifying alternative resources is an area in need of attention to making civil society involvement in these processes more effective at the domestic level.

In a similar vein, these events may help to bring attention to other domestic aspects such as the role expected from Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the role play by considerations such as trade. Some argued that there is an apparent contradiction in the expectation that ODA will play a role in addressing social concerns when in practice it is linked to Canadian economic interests.

Further examples were presented by references to one of these international events, the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD). The Canadian involvement in this event helped in understanding the relationships between international and domestic social policy. It showed that the assessment of their relevance to Canadian domestic policy must be placed in the context of

the globalization debate. It also showed that Canadian domestic concerns are internationally shared.

Summits can be also seen as a “political momentum”. As such, they offer opportunities to pressure governments on key social and human development issues as well as opportunities to influence the media and public opinion. In this regard, the role of civil society is critical. At another level, events such as the WSSD help to elucidate perceived conflicts between expectations about growth reflected across international and government declarations. They help to address the “false dichotomy” between economic and social concerns directing attention to the root of the problems, examining social and economic development issues in an integrated fashion. This last point was highlighted as particularly relevant in the context of the discussion about the relationships of these events to domestic social and welfare policies.

Some of the interventions also focussed on the perception that, in part as a result of this type of international event, traditional assumptions about social policy in Canada are shifting. This is reflected in a shift in emphasis from social policies as “passive protection” mechanisms to social policy “as a force for change”. Concerns about monitoring, indicators, and measurement are becoming central to better carrying out the implementation of commitments on social development. There are also growing concerns about the need for Canada to find the “right avenue” for intervening in the international debate based on more distinct “terms of reference”. These must be independent from those set by the major powers driving the agendas (i.e the U.S.A.) and supported by research and information produced in the South. It was suggested that alternatives such as the “social public goods” approach may represent an option to consider. Others suggested that there are important lessons to be drawn from these events about the alternative role of Canadian and international NGOs and organized labour in terms of their capacity to look across policy issues.

The Canadian Experience

Bringing the debate into further focus, the following session provided an opportunity for participants to discuss some of these issues in the context of examples based on Canadian experiences. The session was moderated by Laura Chapman, Executive Director of the Policy Research Secretariat. Presentations were made by Janet Hatcher-Roberts, Executive Director of the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH); Andre Vinette, Director General of the International Affairs Branch, Strategic Policy, of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC); and by Sharon Chisholm, Executive Director, Canada Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA).

A dimension of particular importance in the Canadian involvement in the Summits is found in the role of NGOs. A distinctive feature found in Canada is that independently of the sector of primary concern, the government support the existence of civil society and this is reflected in the role of NGOs. This contributes to the creation of a unique environment where creative tensions allow NGOs to advocate on specific issues and constructively criticize the government and

“insist on playing a role in decision making and policy development.” In the international arena, this translates into an emphasis of Canadian ODA to strengthening civil society through NGOs and ultimately contribute to the growth and maintenance of democracy, which often results in the adoption of Canadian models by other countries.

The role of NGOs in promoting health and development is an example worth examining. The need for new frameworks for sustainable health and human development that consider the contribution of health and social programs to economic development allow one to face new and emerging challenges. Globalization, environmental degradation, population growth, health reforms and decentralization require a new type of health systems. These must recognize the importance of NGOs in promoting local action and the development of “interconnected webs constituting new relationships and partners”. Ensuring public participation in decisions about health planning and resource allocation are areas where NGOs play key roles. Increased awareness and community sensitivity put pressure on government to legislate and regulate, strengthen accountability, and eventually lead to increase public investment in the health sector.

The Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH) plays such a role. It promotes international health and development, mobilizes Canadian resources to advocate and facilitate research, education and services in international health, and promotes progressive health policies and programming. The Society is the technical representative for the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

In its strategic focus, the CSIH builds capacity for equity based health reform, increases awareness of health and development, and carries out advocacy. Building capacity leads to transferring and adapting models that promote a fair distribution of access and availability of health services as well as universal coverage and a better understanding of the impact of health determinants. In such a context, negotiations like those that are part of the Summit processes lead to specific actions in regard to social policy issues, including the production of proactive position papers and resolutions addressed to key government departments; lobbying and forming key alliances with like minded NGOs; seeking accreditation at UN meetings; and making extensive use of expert networks (i.e. population, health, and nutrition) for dissemination.

Three issues are considered priority areas for action: population and reproductive health in collaboration with Action Canada for Population and Development (ACPD); HIV/AIDS in collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and other health NGOs; and globalization and trade liberalization and health in collaboration with the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC). A future summit issue in the agenda is Child Health in preparation for the Summit for Children in September 2001.

Another dimension of Canadian experience in relation to the Summits was presented from the perspective of a government department. Reference to three broad issues provided the focus. A characteristic of these events is their complexity as reflected by the make-up of participants representing a range of interest groups, and by the agendas and their outcomes. A second issue is

their relation to the domestic agenda as this relates to the importance of sharing lessons learned and placing issues of interest to Canada in international agendas (i.e. child poverty, ageing population, environment). A third issue relates to the importance of coherence across Summits around specific issues (i.e. wording of communiqués, of plans of action) as a means to build on what has been gained.

It was argued that the process set in motion by these events is as important as the discussions themselves. Although some advocacy groups may hold a different view, the purpose of these processes is not to develop domestic policies. However, at the domestic level, the Summit processes often translate into actions at many levels. They contribute to better informing the Canadian position, broadening the spectrum of views, assessing results, identifying benchmarks and indicators, and allowing different sectors to work together in a two-way exchange and dialogue.

Summits often bring together many interests, groups and cultures. The expectation is that the outcomes of these events will reflect the interests of participants and their national strategies. This provides Canada with a view of what is being done by other countries, groups and communities; and the opportunity to compare notes and identify lessons learned. Poverty issues are an example. Developing countries have different benchmarks and criteria compared to developed countries in which poverty affects particular target groups and/or geographic areas. In this regard, UN Summits in particular take a more progressive social focus, as they are more “open” involving participants representing not only governments but also interest groups. In many instances, these issues are further pursued through bilateral discussions and informal groups outside the Summits (i.e. Belmont Conferences).

Domestically, social policy development encompasses equally complex processes as it involves different levels of government, different interest and target groups, and a wide range of stakeholders. The relevance of Summits in this respect is the exchange that takes place across the board. In Canada this occurs between departments and agencies, levels of governments, and with civil society through consultations. It allows Canadian positions to be better developed, to reflect a broader spectrum of views and experiences, and to engage in consultations for policy development on specific matters (i.e. the National Children Agenda, Employment Insurance, Disability).

Canada is recognized around the world as a leader in supporting advocacy groups and bringing them along in the preparation process for international Summits. (i.e. Prep-Com in New-York; full membership on Canadian Delegations to WSSD+5, and other international meetings). An added value for Canada is the building of accountability in its social policies and the growing involvement of stakeholders. A lesson from these experiences is the need “to better channel the resources and energy to work together in policy development and remain open throughout the process to enhance the policies being developed and avoid confrontation.”

A third dimension of the Canadian experience emerges from the involvement of NGOs with a

more domestic and advocacy focus that participate in international events related to their specific field of action. The Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) is an example in this regard.

Although the experience of NGOs like this may be more sporadic in terms of involvement in international Summits, it translates into various forms of participation. It may include participation as a member of the Canadian delegation in the preparatory conferences (i.e. Summit in Istanbul and in the five year review of the Habitat Agenda) or involvement as an accredited NGO in other events, which provides more liberty to take positions and speak to the press, as it is not part of an official delegation.

Using the example of the Habitat Summit, it was argued that for those more focussed on the domestic agenda, questions emerge about the value of the time spent drafting international agendas when in Canada there is little awareness let alone any sense of how these might be used. The housing situation in Canada, for example, has worsened since the signing of the Habitat Agenda. Cases such as this raise doubts about the extent to which these international declarations produce tangible benefits at home. “What kind of progress has occurred as a result of these Summits? What kind of longer term, more intangible results can be seen? What positive outcomes can we expect from the five-year review of the Habitat Agenda? How has globalization changed the environment for social policy development?”

The experience shows that international Summits can be demanding. Reaching consensus from member states on an international declaration may result in weak documents that do little to advance the social agenda in all but the most regressive states. Contrary to expectations of influencing world and domestic policies, the Summit process can create a sense of disempowerment, legitimating what governments are already doing. Thus, the *Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium*, which is to be the outcome statement of the five-year review of the Istanbul Summit, back tracks from earlier commitments and language on the right to adequate housing and the involvement of the voluntary sector in the consultation and drafting process.

Despite this type of result, it is important that advocates for social policy in Canada keep an increasing amount of their resources focussed on international level activities. Covenants and summits provide one more vehicle for social justice advocacy. Some provide more useful opportunities than others do and one must choose carefully. Canada is often very progressive in advocating language that protects the rights of the poor. However, there has to be a connection between language and actions if Canada is to keep alive the enthusiasm of civil society and domestic NGOs that want progress at home.

The well reported presence of the National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO) at the United Nations Committee on Social and Economic Rights in 1998 offers another example. NAPO saw this UN meeting as an opportunity to make the kind of progress that they could not achieve in Canada. A view among NGOs in Canada is that representatives at these meetings can be more

receptive to their expertise than government officials in Canada.

The committee was critical of Canada's failure to meet its commitments and mentioned various examples. These included claims brought by people living in poverty (usually women and children) against government policies which denied any protection of Covenant rights and left the complainants without the basic necessities of life and without any legal remedy; the replacement of the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) by the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) which entails a range of adverse consequences for the enjoyment of Covenant rights by disadvantaged; and cuts in social assistance rates for single people introduced in some provinces and having a significantly adverse impact on vulnerable groups.

Overall, however, from NAPO's perspective, the meetings were useful organizing and teaching tools. Attendance at the meetings crystallized poverty concerns among their members and clearly illustrated economic rights and what these rights could mean for poverty rights in Canada. NAPO senses that their involvement will show additional benefits over the longer term.

The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodations (CERA) which centres their international efforts on treaty monitoring bodies, focuses on the rights framework and benefits from accessible legislation that allows them to test existing rights and find remedies. In their view, documents produced by World Summits often do not have the same weight in law as the treaty documents.

Increasingly, success in social policy reform in Canada is linked to success in changing the international social policy environment. The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is currently reviewing the housing policies of a number of countries partly in response to criticism that Canada is the only industrialized nation without a housing policy. Such a review means that Canada is increasingly looking at itself in comparison to other countries as it is becoming more difficult to address social issues in isolation of what other countries are doing. Homelessness in Canada is an illustration. If Canada is to have a progressive policy to eliminate homelessness, it will need a tax to support significant government intervention in this area. However, if the US continues to support a low tax policy and low minimum wages, a higher tax regime will be more difficult to sustain in Canada as it will likely result in reduced investment and less economic activity. Because social policy in Canada is linked to those of trade and production competitors, international dialogue and exchange provide us with other standards that may better suit the Canadian notion of citizenship.

Examples such as these show that this type of involvement can help in mobilizing the advocacy networks at home by adding clarity to the notion of rights. It also results in an increased international dialogue, which informs the domestic debate by providing comparisons, both positive and negative, to use in advocating policy change. Stepping up international dialogue and building international consensus on social policy issues is essential. The view of youth in social advocacy, for example, is so non-traditional that they can jump over the barriers of fighting for social programs that existed in Canada's past, and genuinely consider new and radically different ways of addressing social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges.

Participants at the round table noted that it is not enough to participate in the international fora, there is a need to form international partnerships for continual dialogue to influence and inform the research and policy agenda in Canada. There is also a need for a strong international regulatory and monitoring system for social rights. Whether this means strengthening the UN or creating new institutions is a question others will have to address. Canadian social policy will be influenced, more than in the past, by the social policy international environment. It is clear that the civil society and the non-governmental sector brings an essential voice to international summits.

The International Perspective. What Are the Lessons Learned?

The final session of the round table was intended to identify lessons learned that contribute to enhancing Canada's involvement in Summit events. The panel was moderated by Terrance Hunsley, Director of the Queen's International Institute on Social Policy, a program of the Queen's School of Policy Studies and President of the Advocate Institute. Nobina Robinson, Executive Director of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), and Alison Van Rooy, Deputy Director, Governance and Social Policies, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) were the presenters.

A dimension of Canadian organizations' involvement in the Summits is the domestic impact of their participation on Canadian policies, strategies, and actions in the field of international cooperation. Relevant in this regard has been the Canadian involvement in the Summits of the Americas.

The participation of organizations such as the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) in the processes related to the Summits of the Americas has been an opportunity to assess and report back to Canada about the policy environment in the Americas and its likely impact on future agendas for hemispheric cooperation. Although the direct impact of these Summits on domestic social policy has been relatively low, their relevance is most immediately related to Canadian hemispheric policy (i.e. foreign policy, trade policy, and development policy) and is reflected in Canada's increasing leadership role in the Americas. It was argued that the Summits of the Americas processes are not so much about improving Canadian social policy as they are about "exporting Canadian experiences abroad" and signalling opportunities to formulate international projects which are relevant to the region's priorities.

Domestically, the processes associated with these Summits galvanize cooperation between government departments, help capture public and civic society attention (i.e. anti-trade protest movement), provide opportunities for input into emerging social policies in the region, and contribute to mainstream key issues relevant to Canada. These opportunities are further enhanced when Canada hosts or chairs a Summit meeting, as was the case in Quebec City. This offered Canada a chance to influence the inter-American agenda by introducing new methods of crafting the preparatory documents, mainstreaming key notions, and promoting civil society

consultation.

There is a number of lessons to be drawn from the most recent experience with the Summit of the Americas. Some of them reflect the complexity of the processes accompanying these events.

In the area of civil society participation, for example, Canada made considerable efforts to get other countries to open their consultation process leading to the Summit. Ironically, however, the pre-Summit consultations in Canada were poor. In the social arena, some of the most important items were included in the agenda, but many did not get enough media attention. Most of these items related to concerns voiced by protesters in Canada, and properly reflected the social challenges in the Americas across a wide range of areas, including process issues (i.e. democracy, civil society participation, transparency, connectivity) and substantive issues (i.e. health, environment, children, human rights, prevention of violence, gender equality, indigenous, youth, drugs, labour and employment, migration, labour mobility, education, cultural diversity).

Various aspects resulting from the experience of this most recent Summit were identified as requiring further attention. The process was characterized by wide misinformation. There were problems of poor management in several areas, including the management of the government communication strategy overall and in regard to specific issues (i.e. trade); the timing of the event following a trade Ministers meeting; and the location. Participants cautioned, however, that there are important differences to keep in mind between the Summit of the Americas and the UN Summits, as the latter have been more open to civil society participation. Overall, however, there is identifiable progress in the evolution of the agenda of these Summits since the first of such meetings in Miami.

Understanding the domestic social policy relevance of these Summits requires understanding more fully the nature of these events. These Summits are not a single-issue event. They are cross sectoral in their focus. The dominant concerns are not simply social policy, but also trade. “Some would argue that the primary concern is trade and a little social policy as window dressing.” Over the years since 1994, however, there has been “remarkable progress”. In this regard, some participants pointed out that the issue of civil society participation and the emphasis on trade need to be examined in a broader context and not only as a “public relations error”.

The Miami Summit was hardly known in Canada even though there were key social items on the agenda (i.e. sustainable development, education). The Santiago Summit (1998) saw the early rise of the People’s Summit concept and a greater focus on education. However, the government and the media focussed only on the launch of trade negotiations, and not on education and eradication of poverty. In the follow-up to these Summits, there has been noticeable improvement. At one level, there has been government inter-departmental and inter-agency cooperation leading to various policy setting meetings. At another level, “several trends collide: growth in civil society demands for inclusion, growth in anti-trade, anti-capitalist distrust of international governance.”

Overall, Summit processes hold great potential. They often lead to better inter-agency cooperation and offer an opportunity to building the institutional architecture that could be more responsive to new challenges of governance. They also help to confirm and codify emerging consensus, principles and norms, and to catalyze collective actions in light of shared goals as a way to draw a “road map”. They force national bureaucracies and senior aides of leaders to focus on critical long-term issues, build personal relationships among leaders and networks among bureaucracies. They foster public-private sector partnerships and increase awareness among civil society groups.

These processes also face limitations. Given the diversity of interest and at times conflicting expectations, they risk handicapping effective multilateralism by settling for a watered down, lowest common denominator in setting goals and commitments. Added rivalry among regional powers or neighbouring states can also stifle cooperation. At the country level, Summits cannot manufacture national political will where none exists; the lack of resources and funding for implementation is a serious obstacle; and tensions between national and international demands risk diverting priorities. One of the most serious obstacles, however, is the fact that in many instances, concerns which most directly affect peoples’ daily lives remain within the jurisdiction of domestic policy.

Improving these processes poses many challenges. There is a need to build bridges to civil society as the bifurcation that began with the Santiago People’s Summit persists and deepens. There is a need to build public awareness about the non-trade agenda through better communication. There is a need for evaluation and greater accountability, monitoring, measurement of outcomes, and follow-up as a means to avoid “Summit scepticism”. And governments must periodically show progress. Canada shares some of these challenges. In addition, Canada needs to maintain momentum and interest at home about the importance of its own role in the Americas. It needs to be selective and focussed given the limited resources available, and to continue demanding high standards in terms of the achievements and openness of future Summit processes. Observations made by participants in this regard, suggested the need for the creation of similar types of spaces in Canada to discuss domestic issues; the need to find common ground between the diverse interests of NGOs, and for raising public awareness as a means to stimulate political will.

A similar wealth of experience was shared from the perspective of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Involvement in these events has had a highly positive effect on the agency’s thinking, organization, and some of its spending. This has not been, however, without challenges. Canada has been able to have impact on the Summits themselves, sometimes through CIDA, however, the challenge lies in maintaining momentum and beating fatigue in a “fashion-conscious” policy environment, and in making international statements stick by attaching dollars, policies, and practices to them.

A number of areas of positive impact were highlighted. Summits have contributed to turning “distant ‘development’ issues into both global and domestic ones” popularizing development

thinking and bringing corresponding changes into the government machinery. Several examples illustrate this point. Istanbul (1996) and Istanbul + 5, contributed to a galvanized federal inter-departmental effort across the country around domestic issues such as urban poverty, homelessness, gender equality and issues such as the possibility of a world charter on local self-government. Although this does not necessarily result in inter-departmental agreements, these events raise the visibility of the relationship between international stances and those of the Canadian government; and contribute to bringing together interests of Canadian provinces, territories, and cities leading to a better integration of international concerns into the national discourse.

Another example is the Rio Summit (1992). It helped to focus federal and provincial political attention on environment and sustainability issues, and to introduce them into other areas of debate. This Summit provided an impetus for a number of jurisdictions to change practices and to do new environmental policy work, such as changes in natural resource management (i.e. forestry in BC and Quebec); development of the State of the Environment reporting programs; and the development of provincial and national multi-sectoral advisory groups on environment and the economy.

A second area of impact is the opportunity they have created to move ahead concerns specific to Canada. The Summits have “provided an important stage for CIDA to push many of its international goals among other countries -- something that middle powers are rarely able to do.”

Examples in this regard are the “*Shaping the 21st Century*” targets and the International Development Targets. The conferences in Beijing, Cairo, and Vienna, increased the space available for international and bilateral dialogue on politically sensitive issues important to CIDA such as reproductive rights versus population control. The World Summit for Children raised awareness about the Convention on the Rights of the Child and was a key factor leading to its near universal ratification. These conferences were also cumulative policy levers from one venue to another. Canada and other countries ratchet forward policy positions by fighting rollback (i.e. gender issues).

A third area of impact is the Summits’ contribution to increased grassroots activism. Starting with Rio, they have offered a venue for non-governmental actors to engage in the inter-governmental world, with real outcomes for CIDA policy and practice. Examples are the national and regional mobilization generated around cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and human rights. In many cases (i.e. Beijing), the conferences encouraged, and some governments such as Canada also supported, non-governmental processes of participation. The Federation des femmes Quebecois’s, for example, has coalesced around Beijing and continues its work. These NGO efforts push governments to clear inconsistencies in their domestic and international policies by effective monitoring leading to improved quality of policies.

In some respects, however, these gains are over-shadowed by persistent frustrations. Resources and funding are often not as readily available or as well targeted as is required. CIDA's spending

on summit priorities, for example, “is not particularly related to the timing of conferences themselves -- in many cases, the increase comes (if at all) many years later.” The increase in environmental spending, for example, came only after a real decline following Rio. It has also been difficult to maintain the domestic momentum, or even the momentum within international agencies, after the events are over. “Once the fervour is over, and especially when it is hard to track concrete actions and dollars that follow in the wake of the summits, it has been very easy to lament them as mere talk shops.”

Beyond the issue of resources, however, Rio set the stage for the establishment of an environmental assessment unit at CIDA, and to take steps toward both agency and government-wide National Strategies for Sustainable Development. The rising international consensus around human rights as a development issue, marked by the Vienna conference, gave rise to the existence of another unit within CIDA. Beijing not only affected CIDA, whose gender equality policy was recently updated to reflect the Beijing and Beijing+5 consensus, but also the government of Canada *Federal Plan for Gender Equity*. These examples show that small changes within organizations do matter as well as the setting of standards and universality criteria to the extent that they provide ‘accountability targets’ at home and new international tools for improving domestic democracy.

Conclusion

The round table covered a rich spectrum of issues relevant to Canadian domestic social policy that emerge from examining diverse experiences of involvement in the World Summits. The one-day event was intended as a first attempt to address the topic at hand, rather than to provide definitive answers. The wealth of experiences brought about by the participants was instrumental in identifying some key areas of concern as well as in recognizing lessons learned.

Acknowledging the complexity of the issue and the difficulties in encompassing a number of different events under the term Summit, there was consensus that understanding the potential impact of these events requires focussing attention on them as “processes” rather than specific happenings. It was pointed out that their value emerges from the series of preparatory and follow-up steps they involve, in addition to their express substantive focus.

In this light, Summits offer opportunities on various fronts. They provide governments and the civil society a different sighting of key development issues relevant both domestically and internationally. Summits have contributed to bringing back to the table development concerns at times left behind by single-issue international agendas focussed on economic growth and development.

To domestic social development and social policy concerns, they bring the added worth of an international comparative perspective at a time of increasing global interdependence among nations. Internationally, they offer a stage to compare experiences, learn from each others’

practices, and agree on frameworks, standards, and benchmarks in the pursuit of shared development goals and values.

The diversity of experiences show that, although not without obstacles and shortcomings, Canada's involvement in the Summits has contributed to bridging existing gaps within the government itself, through inter-departmental collaboration, as well as between the government and diverse sectors of the civil society and the NGO community. The "machinery" of Summits, the involvement in setting international agendas and follow-up mechanisms to assess progress, have contributed to advancing into the international arena Canadian values and concerns, and to focussing domestic attention on key social policy issues which otherwise would have been left behind in the national debate.

Lessons learned have assisted in strengthening cooperation among different sectors and interest groups; in keeping cross cutting issues such as poverty, gender and environment present in the national public policy debate; and in allocating and better targeting resources. The experiences also indicate that there are considerable challenges to address if involvement in these events is to be more effective and have a greater impact both domestically and internationally over the longer-term.

There is a need to strengthening and broadening participation throughout these processes. The Canadian government in particular must continue promoting and facilitating the involvement of civil society, as much domestically as abroad, and provide the required resources to make this possible. There is also a need to take steps at various levels of Canadian society to maintain the momentum created by the Summit processes. This implies strengthening avenues for monitoring, accountability and continuous feedback as well as promoting public awareness and disseminating relevant information about progress on specific social policy issues emanating from the Summit commitments.

The complexity of the issues the Summits address and the scope, and at times ambitious nature, of their agendas, commitments and declarations require ensuring consistency and coherence across areas of concern and between domestic policies and international goals. Setting in place domestic mechanisms for continued debate and monitoring, and assisting the NGO community to continue playing a proactive role in this regard are issues that require ongoing attention.

The issue of resources available to enhance participation and ensure proper follow-up and implementation of the commitments was a point highlighted as being of particular importance. This applies both to actions that can be carried out domestically as well as to the role that Canada plays in the area of international cooperation. Assisting Canadian NGOs to play a role internationally in their own fields of expertise has the potential to strengthen Canada's leadership.

This one-day round table was successful in meeting its intended purpose of examining the extent to which these Summits events and the commitments agreed upon have an impact on Canadian

domestic social policy. The participants explored a broad range of questions and identified the relevance of the Summit events and their international agendas to Canada.

Acronyms

ACPD	Action Canada for Population and Development
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AQOCI	Association québécoise d'organismes de coopération internationale
BHRC	Biotechnology Human Resources Council
CALACS	Canadian Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
CAP	Canada Assistance Plan
CCISD	Canadian Consortium for International Social Development
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Cooperation
CCSD	Canadian Council on Social Development
CHST	Canada Health and Social Transfer
CHRA	Canada Housing and Renewal Association
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMHC	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
CSIH	Canadian Society for International Health
CERA	Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodations
FOCAL	Canadian Foundation for the Americas
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HDI	Human Development Index
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
ILO	International Labour Office
NAPO	National Anti-Poverty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
U.N.	United Nations
U.N.AC.	United Nations Association in Canada
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFAM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development

Annex I

Agenda

Queen's International Institute On Social Policy
A Program of Queen's School of Policy Studies, Presents:
Round Table
The World Summits and their Relevance to Canadian Domestic Social Policies.

Monday May 28, 2001

8:30-5:00

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

250 Albert Street, Main Board Room

8:30 – 9:00 Reception area Registration (Coffee, Tea, Juice)

9:00 – 9:30 Welcome and Introductory Remarks - ***Rohinton Medhora*** Program Area Director for Social and Economic Equity, IDRC. ***Terrance Hunsley***, Director, International Institute on Social Policy; President, The Advocate Institute

9:30 – 10:00 Opening Session - Keynote Address - **Geoffrey Pearson**, National President, United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada)

10:00 – 10:30 Plenary Discussion

10:30 – 11:00 Break

11:00 - 11:15 Introduction of First Panel - Moderator, **Andrew Jackson**, Director of Research Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD)

11:15 – 11:40 Panel Discussion: – *Reactions to the Keynote Address*

Kate White, President, Canadian Commission for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Brian Barton, Associate Professor, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivieres, Member of the Board, Canadian Consortium for International Social Development (CCISD)

11:40 – 12:15 Plenary Discussion

12:15 – 13:15 Lunch break (Lunch provided)

13:15 - 13:30 Introduction of Second Panel - Moderator **Laura Chapman** Executive Director, Policy Research Secretariat

13:30 – 14:10 Panel Discussion: Topic: *The Canadian Experience*

Janet Hatcher-Roberts, Executive Director, Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH)

Andre Vinette, Director General, International Affairs Branch, Strategic Policy, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)

Sharon Chisholm, Executive Director, Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA)

14:10 – 14:40 Plenary Discussion

14:40 – 15:00 Break

15:00 – 15:15 Introduction of the Third Panel – Moderator, **Terrance Hunsley**, Director, International Institute on Social Policy; President, The Advocate Institute

15:15 - 15:45 Panel Discussion: Looking Towards the Future - Lessons Learned

Nobina Robinson, Executive Director, Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL).

Alison Van Rooy, Deputy Director, Governance and Social Policies, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

15:45 - 16:15 Discussion

16:15 – 16:30 Concluding Remarks and Adjournment - **Terrance Hunsley**

Queen's International Institute on Social Policy would like to extend thanks and recognition to the International Development Research Centre, for their support of the Queen's Summer Institute and the use of their facilities for this Round Table.