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NEWS RELEASE

Canada's Foreign Aid Strategy Must Link Security and Development

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To be effective, overseas development assistance programs require co-ordination between relevant security- and development-centred government departments.

Montreal – The Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP.org) today released a study by Ann M. Fitz-Gerald entitled “Addressing the Security-Development Nexus: Implications for Joined-up Government.”

Fitz-Gerald, a research fellow at the IRPP and director of the Centre for Managing Security in Transitional Societies at Cranfield University in the UK, argues that development assistance programs in postconflict or transitional societies such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Haiti must address security and development more comprehensively. Specifically, she calls for a joined-up government approach, namely the coordination of planning among all relevant security- and development-centred government departments.

Taking Haiti as a case in point, the author explains how the failure to implement the requisite security reforms (mainly in the justice sector) undermined any development-based initiatives. The situation in Haiti is a prime example of how “external intervention and overseas assistance in postconflict phases require a holistic, comprehensive strategy over a realistic timeframe,” says Fitz-Gerald.

The study demonstrates how interdepartmental cooperation and financial control is necessary to develop shared strategies for dealing with conflict and to make practical programs as effective as possible. Fitz-Gerald compares Canada's progress to that of the Dutch, UK and US governments. She concludes “the UK is farther ahead of the game strategically than are the Dutch and Canadians.” But, the situation in the US is much bleaker.

Although Fitz-Gerald applauds Canada's “3-D” foreign policy strategy (Defence, Development and Diplomacy) for encouraging joint discussion and analysis, there are still several impediments to effective development assistance.

- ◆ In practice, there is no joined-up pool of resources from which joined-up planning can be managed. Hence, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of International Trade can only exert minimal influence on CIDA, which holds the development-security purse strings.

- ◆ CIDA's strategic mantra precludes involvement in anything but secure and stable theatres of operation and poses frightening limitations on the use of the discretionary fund for the defence and diplomacy pillars of 3-D.
- ◆ Canada's membership in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee also inhibits interventions and assistance in many failed and postconflict states by mere virtue of its criteria, which allow the delivery of aid only in secure and safe environments.

Fitz-Gerald says it is now time to take the 3-D approach beyond the thinking stage. In its upcoming foreign policy review, Canada must address whether or not the 3-D structure is capable of operationalizing its foreign policy agenda and whether or not the current structure is actually joined-up enough.

Moving from the planning to the implementation stage requires a 3-D budget, explains Fitz-Gerald. Although 3-D is an excellent platform for conceptual development, in order to be successful it must have a more centralized pool of resources and ensure that security and development remain inseparable.

"Addressing the Security-Development Nexus: Implications for Joined-up Government" is the latest *Policy Matters* study to be released as part of the IRPP's Canada and the World series. It is now available on-line in Adobe (.pdf) format on the Institute's Web site (www.irpp.org). Please find the summary attached.

For more information or to request an interview, please contact the IRPP.

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