

# **Policy Position Paper**

## **Topic: FAILED AND FRAGILE STATES**

**University of Windsor**

**Course: (45-354) Political Problems and Economic Development**

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### **Summary of Class Discussion:**

#### ***Issues Identified:***

In our current global situation, many countries face economic and political uncertainty which, in turn, may lead to failed and fragile states. Canada has acknowledged that we have a responsibility to help address these concerns.

- Canada has made a commitment to help reach the Millennium goals for eradicating poverty; however, efforts are constrained by limited resources.
- Efforts should be concentrated in order to increase the quality and scope of the aid in the selected regions.
- Criteria for selection of the specified countries should focus on areas where our distinctive competencies may be used most efficiently. If a country has specific issues that we are unable to address proficiently, we should encourage other countries more suited to the task to provide aid.
- Our criteria for helping a country should not be determined by whether or not they have a democratic government, but rather we should aim to help provide stability.

#### **Areas of Consensus/Disagreement:**

As a group we feel strongly that Canada has a responsibility to both our own citizens and to the world to aid countries that exist fragile and failing states.

- We believe that democracy should not be the starting point in this endeavor, but will naturally flow from development.
- To what extent Canada should aid countries that currently follow undemocratic modes of rule was an area of contention. Some members believe that economic

development must be the first priority at any cost, whereas others feel that a more middle of the road approach is in order, with economic and political development as mutually reinforcing factors.

### **Your Response to e-Discussion Questions**

The questions posed by the eDiscussion can not be simply answered; however we believe the following to be true.

#### **Short vs. Long Term Commitment:**

It is Canada's intention to reduce the number of countries receiving aid and focus our assistance on a select amount of countries. This will enable countries receiving Canada's aid to develop to a greater efficiency since more aid will be concentrated in the area.

#### **Response Criteria:**

When we are unable to offer the specialists needed, we should encourage other countries to help, who are perhaps better suited to solve a certain problem. Hopefully, by focusing on a limited number of areas, we will be able to provide more meaningful aid to the countries in need.

#### **Stability vs. Democracy:**

We believe that democracy naturally stems from economic prosperity and stability. Canada should not condone human rights abuses, or encourage authoritarian regimes, but must acknowledge that not all nations are currently in position to promote political rights over the basic survival and security of their people.

#### **Failed and Fragile Cities?:**

With the number of urban dwellers every increasing, new methods must be devised to promote development in these at risk areas. As the demographics of the world change, so must the policies of the developed nations, in regards to aid.

## **Policy Recommendations**

Canada must form a clear policy regarding failed and fragile states. As a nation we have a responsibility to our own citizens as well as the world community, and therefore must form a clear policy regarding failing and fragile states.

- The decision on whether or not to aid a country should not necessarily be determined by the type of political system the country in question currently maintains. Democracy is not vital when deciding if aid will be given. As long as the government is taking steps towards development then it is in the best interests of Canadians to support this country.
- Overlap of aid efforts must be our main concern, giving that there is so much work still to be accomplished, with limited resources. Canada should take a leadership role in assembling countries who are willing help meet the Millennium Development Goals, in order to help form a response team that can ensure that countries are collaborating efficiently.
- Once Canada has acknowledged which types of aid we are most suited to deliver, we should play a leading role in helping to organize countries that provide aid, in order to eliminate overlap.
- Canada should propose the commission of an international committee to study the problems of and make recommendation for the development of fragile urban areas. This venture may best be served by being created under the auspice of the United Nations.