

**Foreign Affairs Canada
Policy Research Division/POR**

**Geopolitics and Global Demographics eDiscussion Questions
eDiscussion open from Jan. 24th to March 31st, 2006**

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Demographics and Geopolitics

Demographic trends have long played an important role in shaping world history and relations among states. They will continue to do so in this century. According to the United Nations Population Division global population continues to increase and **virtually all population growth is occurring in the less developed regions**. Most industrialized countries will experience little growth and some may even face population decline. If current projections hold, in 2050 the world will bear the following characteristics:

- ▶ a **more populous Asia-Pacific region**;
- ▶ an **older and greying Europe**; and
- ▶ a **much larger and more Hispanic-influenced United States**

1. Shift in Balance of Power?

By the year 2050, the world's most populous countries will be India, China, United States, Pakistan, Indonesia, Nigeria and Bangladesh. Some countries in the industrialized world - Russia, Germany and Japan - will see their populations actually decline over the next decades. **What effect will this have on geopolitics and the global balance of power? What does this mean for Canada?**

2. Energy Shortages?

According to the UN, the world is going to grow in population size from 6.5 billion to 9.1 billion by 2050. This will significantly increase pressure on the world's resources, including to meet fast-rising energy needs. **Will we see more cooperation or conflict among states as they strive to meet their demand for energy and resources?**

3. Canada-US Relations

The 2000 U.S. census indicated that by 2050 nearly half of all Americans will be visible minorities, with a large proportion being Hispanic. **What impact will this changing demographic have on internal US politics and what would be the implications for Canada-US relations?**

4. New Face of Canada Foreign Policy?

In recent years, more than 50 percent of new immigrants to Canada have come from Asia, mostly from China and India making successful relations with Asia-Pacific will be key to Canada's foreign policy objectives. **What impact will Canada's demographic changes have on Canadian foreign policy in the long term?**