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# DEMOCRACY OR DEVELOPMENT— WHICH COMES FIRST?

**O**n February 23, 2007, the uOttawa student chapter of Canadian Lawyers Abroad—Avocats canadiens à l'étranger (CLA-ACE) hosted its third annual conference on Democracy and Development to discuss democracy, development, and Canada's ongoing mission in Afghanistan. The conference's keynote speakers were Robert Greenhill, President of Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie, Chief of the Land Staff for the Canadian Forces. Other panelists included officials from National Defence, CIDA, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, academia and civil society practitioners.

In his opening remarks, Robert Greenhill stressed the importance of democratic governance for long-term sustainable development. "Local people design and own projects with CIDA assistance—a developmental investment that stimulates economic growth at local levels," said Mr. Greenhill. CIDA recently established the

Office of Democratic Governance, which aims for effective programming in the areas of human rights, accountability, and the rule of law and democracy.

In his keynote address, Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie shared his experiences in Afghanistan and discussed the critical role of Canadian forces in the NATO-led peacekeeping mission in Kandahar. "We are there because you sent us—the military does not decide but follows orders," said Lt. General Leslie. He emphasized that Afghanistan is a complex, historic, and rough operation yet the military personnel are making a world of difference in bringing peace in an unfortunate part of the world.

CLA-ACE is a charitable organization committed to serving the legal needs of developing countries by harnessing the experience and skills of Canadian lawyers and law students in the areas of good governance, the rule of law, and human rights. The Student Program is focused on helping Canadian law students become

the next generation of Canadian citizens and leaders committed to using their legal skills to improve the lives of others. CLA also offers summer internship opportunities to students all over the world. ❖

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