Message from the Executive Director

It is late in the year as we work to finish this edition of FOCAL Point. Normally we'd be engaged in telling you what we've been up to and what successes – real and imagined – we've achieved. Truth be told, these are not normal times. Between June and now many things have happened. Certain events such as the September terrorist attacks in the United States have had an immense impact. Other events such as peaceful elections in Peru, Nicaragua and Honduras are less global in nature but are – in their own way – no less important as milestones. The oft-maligned OAS sacrificed swiftness for an improved product when agreement was finally reached on a Democracy Charter. The “North American Community” fully emerged as a public policy issue – thank you President Fox – that needs addressing sooner rather than later. And we lost David Pollock.

David carried a number of titles during his various careers, and he was a man who truly packed more than one career into a lifetime. Here at FOCAL we knew David Pollock as one of those few key individuals who were instrumental in our establishment. David was a problem solver and an educator and in his vision of FOCAL he saw that the two could very well go hand in hand. He understood the need in Canada for an entity focused on Latin America and the Caribbean that would be dedicated to the sharing of knowledge and the widening of understanding. He graciously gave his time and energy in many different capacities, not least of which was long

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standing service on FOCAL’s Board of Directors. In his many high level appointments he collected numerous honours and tributes – all fully deserved. In May of 1999 he allowed us to name our small but important library after him. The David Pollock Library will be a constant reminder of his frequent visits, of his numerous suggestions, of his cogent advice and, most importantly, his friendship.

This half-year saw many milestones. The death of David Pollock was one and it is to his memory that we dedicate this issue of FOCAL Point.

Donald R. Mackay

Spotlight on FOCAL Events

“Colombia: The International Drug Trade and Other Challenges” December 6, 2001
FOCAL and the Canadian Institute for International Affairs (CIIA), National Capital Branch, co-hosted a Speaker Series event featuring H.E. Fanny Kertzman, Ambassador of Colombia on “Colombia: The International Drug Trade and Other Challenges”.

FOCAL and Rights and Democracy Organized a One Day Conference on “Strategic Issues for Democratic Development: Participation, Democratic Culture and the Post September 11 Context”, November 1, 2001
The conference, held in Ottawa, brought speakers from Africa, Asia and Latin America together to examine a number of critical issues. FOCAL’s Executive Director, Don Mackay, chaired the panel discussion on “Women and Political Participation” which examined various philosophical foundations and current practices. Total attendance at the conference was about 50 people drawn from government, academic institutions and a range of civil society organizations.

FOCAL’s Executive Director, Don Mackay, Joined a Group of Experts for Web Discussion with Young Canadians Who Will Participate in a Competition on Trade-related Issues, October 26, 2001
This forms part of the Go Global: Youth Trade Challenge initiative launched by the Export Development

Corporation (EDC) which, in turn, is part of its Education and Youth Employment (EYE) Strategy. The objective of the Challenge is to support Canadian youth to gain a better understanding of global trade issues and provide a venue for them to express their views and share their ideas with some of Canada’s top trade experts. For more information on this initiative visit: http://www.epals.com/goglobal/essay_contest/index.tpl

Speaker Series Event with the Honourable Mr. Angelino Garzón, Colombian Minister of Labour, October 19, 2001
FOCAL and the Embassy of the Republic of Colombia co-hosted this event. Minister Garzón addressed the subject of the protection for Colombian labour activists that have been threatened by illegal groups. The Minister spoke openly and freely to officials from Citizenship & Immigration Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Human Resources Development Canada, the Immigration & Refugee Board, the Canadian Labour Congress and members of human rights organizations, such as Rights and Democracy and Amnesty International.

Newsmaker Breakfast with Dr. Compton Bourne, President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), October 16, 2001
With the collaboration of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), FOCAL hosted a Newsmaker Breakfast with the President of the
Caribbean Development Bank, Dr. Compton Bourne, at the National Press Club in Ottawa. Entitled: “The future of the Caribbean and the role of the Caribbean Development Bank”, Dr. Bourne’s presentation was followed by questions from the audience. He presented his views on the Caribbean’s current crisis in tourism, how the CDB could help and what actions are to be taken. He made particular reference to reforming tax and fiscal structures and the modernization of the tourism industry in member countries. For more information on the CDB’s activities, please visit http://www.caribank.org/

Workshop on “Implementing Trade Agreements: The Canadian Model and its Implications for Central American States”, October 10, 2001
FOCAL and the Canadian Centre for Trade Policy and Law (CTPL) co-hosted this event which was designed to inform diplomatic personnel from the Ottawa-based Central American embassies about how Canada negotiates and implements international trade agreements. Canada has agreed to formally negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with the four Central American republics of: El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras. The course was taught by Bill Dymond, Executive Director of CTPL and by Don Mackay, Executive Director of FOCAL. Funding for this program was received from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

FOCAL Hosted Executive Director of CELAG (Centro Latinoamericano de la Globalidad), October 9, 2001
Martha Elena Barcena is the recently appointed Executive Director of CELAG – a Mexican think tank that is currently pursuing five major themes: the Latin American / European Dialogue; the Integration of Civil Society into Multilateral Organizations; the Integration of Civil Society into the FTAA Negotiations; the Plan Puebla Panama (Mexico’s ideas for development in its own southern region and reaching, geographically, down to Panama); and, International Financial Transactions. As a result of this roundtable, FOCAL and the Centro agreed to expand cooperative activities with particular emphasis on Civil Society and free trade issues.

Forum on Strengthening Canada - Mercosur Relations at the International Development Research Centre in Ottawa, September 10 and 11, 2001
In collaboration with the Canadian Council for the Americas, York University, and Red Mercosur, FOCAL held a Forum on Strengthening Canada – Mercosur Relations. The objective of the Forum was twofold: to create an ongoing space for policy dialogue around Canada-Mercosur relations, and to broaden domestic support for the deepening of relations. The 46 participants and observers who attended the forum included researchers and government advisors from the Red-Mercosur; Canadian government officials; heads of key academic, research and policy centres; Canadian delegates to regional institutions; and private sector representatives from Canada and the Mercosur countries.

A full Report on this event can be obtained from the FOCAL website.

Professor Ed Dosman (right) of York University speaks to Mr. Fernando González Guter (left), General Coordinator of Red Mercosur, at FOCAL’s Forum on Canada-Mercosur Relations.

At the Forum on Canada-Mercosur Relations (l. to r.) His Excellency Gastón Lasarte, Ambassador of Paraguay to Canada; and James K. Hill, Deputy Director, International Business Development, South American Division, DFAIT.

FOCAL’s Executive Director, Don Mackay delivered a training session to senior officials from the Central American embassies represented in Ottawa in the area of trade policy and Canadian trade negotiation approaches. Canada has agreed to enter into Free Trade Agreement negotiations with the four republics of Central America (Canada has already concluded an agreement with Costa Rica) and the training session was intended to assist local embassy staff in their supportive responsibilities for their respective national negotiating teams. This training session is part of FOCAL’s ongoing efforts to support Central American integration and economic development efforts.

FOCAL Meets PROhumana and Chilean Government Officials in Ottawa, June 27, 2001

FOCAL hosted a visit by Soledad Teixido, Executive Director of PROhumana and Jorge Navarrete Poblete, in charge of civil society liaison in the Presidential Secretariat for the government of Chile. PROhumana is a Chilean civil society organization dedicated to promoting social responsibility in Chile. Ms. Teixido and Mr. Navarrete visited Ottawa to gain a better understanding of the operation of Canadian civil society organizations and particularly how such organizations interact with each other and with government. The visitors were particularly interested in the mechanisms for civil society participation that had been built into the Summit of the Americas process.

Second Forum of Hemispheric Experts Meets in Ottawa, June 8, 2001

FOCAL’s advisory group of leading thinkers and experts on hemispheric issues, known as the “Forum of Hemispheric Experts”, met for the second time. The objective of this year’s meeting was to take stock of Canada’s foreign and development policies towards the Americas after the Quebec City Summit of the Americas, with the purpose of helping to sustain and promote Canada’s engagement with the region. The distinguished group of participants came from Canada, the United States and several Latin American countries, and included academics, representatives of non-governmental organizations, the private sector and international financial institutions, and Canadian government officials, as well as FOCAL’s Board of Directors and staff.

The meeting focused on issues considered particularly relevant to Canada’s multilateral involvement in the hemisphere as well as its bilateral relations with key partners. Participants also looked at ways in which civil society could contribute to implementing and monitoring key Summit commitments. The first session centred on the proposed OAS Inter-American Democratic Charter and the strengthening of democratic institutions with the second session dedicated to the inter-relation between economic and social policies.

FOCAL was very pleased to have two Canadian ministers with key responsibilities for the Americas address our group. Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation, addressed participants during lunch on Canada’s development priorities for the Americas; and having just returned from the OAS General Assembly in Costa Rica, John Manley, Minister of Foreign Affairs, spoke at the closing reception about Canada’s foreign policy objectives in the region.

A full Report on this event can be obtained from the FOCAL website.
FOCAL’s Research Forum on Cuba (RFC) is a program that fosters informed discussion on the immediate and long-term issues facing Cuba and Canadian policy towards the island. More information on this program and its activities, as well as annotated links to useful websites on Cuba and its international relations, are found on the Research Forum on Cuba’s website (www.cubasource.org). Recent RFC activities include:

Cuba Forum Meeting on Comparative Foreign Policies Towards Cuba, July 15, 2001
FOCAL held its second Forum meeting on Cuba in Ottawa. The event, which was attended by Canadian government and NGO representatives and academics with a working interest in Cuba, examined the different foreign policy approaches towards Cuba of Canada, the United States, the European Union / Spain, and Mexico, with a focus on recent experience and likely future directions. The speakers included: Jorge Domínguez, Director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University; Gillian Gunn Clissold, Director of the Cuba Project, Georgetown University; Alberto Míguez, Spanish journalist formerly with ABC de Madrid and La Vanguardia de Barcelona; Ana Covarrubias, Professor, Centro de Estudios Internacionales, El Colegio de México; Arch Ritter, Professor, Carleton University and José Miguel Vivanco, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch Americas.

Round-Table Discussion with Ambassador Michael Small, September 4, 2001
Canada’s Ambassador to Cuba, Michael Small, discussed Cuba’s current political context and the current state of relations between Canada and Cuba at a round-table discussion in Ottawa attended by a group of NGO representatives and academics with a working interest in Cuba.

Public Speaker Events:
Damián Fernández, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of International Relations at Florida International University (FIU), discussed the effects of emotions on political attitudes and actions throughout Cuba’s history at an event held on November 8, 2001. The central themes presented were based on his recently-released book, Cuba and the Politics of Passion (University of Texas Press).

Mayra Vilasis, the Coordinator of the Screenwriting Department of the Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión, a film director and writer with the Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográfica (ICAIC), and an associate of the Women’s Studies Department of the University of Havana, discussed gender and culture in contemporary Cuba at an event held on October 24, 2001.

Alberto Alvarez of the Department of Political Science, Université de Montréal and Gerardo González Núñez of the Department of Economics at the Universidad Interamericana in Puerto Rico analyzed the complex and often turbulent relationship between social scientists and the Cuban state since the Revolution at an event held on July 4, 2001. Both speakers were researchers at the Centro de Estudios sobre América (CEA), the Havana-based research centre, until the mid-1990s. The presentations were based on the recently-released book ¿Intelectuales vs. Revolución? El Caso del Centro de Estudios sobre América (CEA), co-authored by the speakers.

Public Conference on “Best Business Practices in Cuba”, Montreal, June 1, 2001
In partnership with the National Policy Association (NPA), a Washington D.C.-based think-tank, FOCAL co-hosted
this public conference. Following a meeting which took place in Mexico City last year, the Montreal event marked the second international conference of the NPA's Cuba Working Group, comprised of representatives of business, labour, academic and other non-governmental organizations from Mexico, Canada, Europe and the United States. With the objective of looking at the issue of corporate social responsibility within the Cuban context, this meeting sought to identify opportunities and share strategies for responsible private sector investment in Cuba.

Where Else Has FOCAL Been?

The following are highlights of some of the events in which FOCAL participated between June and December 2001. Full reports on all activities can be found on our website, www.focal.ca.

Dinner for Mr. Jan Egeland, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General on International Assistance to Colombia, October 30, 2001

Hosted by the Honourable Bill Graham, Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT), the dinner was attended by FOCAL's Executive Director, Don Mackay. Mr. Egeland, former State Secretary of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, described his more than 25 years of involvement with Colombia and his most recent assignment as Kofi Annan's special representative.


Organized by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA), this event brought together participants from such organisations as the Commission for the Environment and Sustainable Development, the Sierra Club of Canada, Global Change Strategies International, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy, the International Institute for Sustainable Development along with a number of representatives from the academic community. Attended by José Zaragoza, the sessions examined the problems and the performance of Canada's environment policy.

The Best of Calgary: Policy Discussion and Knowledge Gaps, Follow-up to Calgary Conference on North American Linkages, October 18, 2001

Industry Canada hosted a roundtable to discuss the key research findings of the papers presented at the Calgary conference, to explore their policy implications, and to identify important knowledge gaps. Panel discussions focused on the general theme of Canada-United States relations post-September 11, and an overview of challenges to North American integration. Policy Analyst Stacey Wilson-Forsberg represented FOCAL at the event.

XII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour (IACML), Ottawa, October 17-19, 2001

Canadian Labour Minister Claudette Bradshaw acted as Chair of the event. All 34 members of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted the Ottawa Declaration and its Plan of Action unanimously. In the latter document, Labour ministers agreed to share information on labour issues; to develop and strengthen the capacity of labour ministries; to adopt and promote the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; and, to address the issues related to labour in a context of globalization. The OAS has been forward looking by its invitation to Civil Society representatives to make their views known during policy dialogues in the inter-American system. José Zaragoza, represented FOCAL at this conference.

Latin American Studies Association XXIII International Congress, Washington D.C., September 6-8, 2001

FOCAL Policy Analysts Cristina Warren, José Zaragoza, and Judy Meltzer participated in the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) XXIII Annual International Congress held in Washington D.C. LASA is the largest professional association of individuals and institutions studying Latin America. The congress provided an excellent opportunity to find out about current and emerging areas of research, and exchange ideas with academics and practitioners from Canada, the U.S., and Latin America.

Andean Development Corporation Fifth Annual Conference in Washington, September 6, 2001

FOCAL Policy Analyst Judy Meltzer attended the Fifth Annual Andean Development Corporation Conference “Trade and Investment in the Americas,” co-hosted by the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Dialogue, at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C. Enrique García,
CAF President; and César Gaviria, Secretary General of the OAS, provided an initial overview of developments in the region. Key themes addressed by the various panels included political and economic prospects in the Andean countries, evolving U.S. policy towards the region, progress towards the FTAA, as well as energy policy from Venezuelan and Bolivian perspectives.

Co-organized by the Civil Society Task Force of the Esquel Group Foundation and the World Bank, the session featured David de Ferranti, the World Bank’s Regional Vice President for Latin America / Caribbean. The primary purpose of the event was the discussion of the recently published North South Center paper: “Protest and Collaboration: Transnational Civil Society Networks and the Politics of Summity and Free Trade in the Americas”. FOCAL’s Executive Director, Don Mackay, presented a Canadian-based perspective.

John Graham, Chair of FOCAL’s Board of Directors, and Policy Analysts Stacey Wilson-Forsberg, and José Zaragoza attended an information session on the development of the Inter-American Democratic Charter at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Some 20 representatives from Canadian non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and academic centres participated in the session.

FOCAL commented that the Charter should place more emphasis on previous OAS instruments for the protection of democracy (which in many instances have superior wording).

FOCAL Policy Analyst, Florencia Jubany, attended an information exchange and dialogue session on WTO-related trade and development issues, hosted by the Honourable Pierre Pettigrew. The session dealt with the results of the “WTO Symposium on Issues Confronting the World Trade System”, which took place on July 6-7, 2001 in Geneva. The event, the first of its kind, was open to civil society organizations, governments, journalists, academics and the private sector. Representatives from two Canadian NGOs presented to participants their report. The session also provided an opportunity to examine with the Minister some of the implications for Canadians of a WTO Ministerial Meeting that may have “development” as one of its defining themes and objectives.

CIDA’s International Cooperation Days, Ottawa Congress Centre, June 18-20, 2001
FOCAL policy staff had the opportunity to attend a variety of the panels and seminars that took place during CIDA’s International Cooperation Days. FOCAL’s information booth allowed staff to share ideas and approaches with numerous other individuals and organizations with an interest in development issues. The panels and presentations, which ranged from global governance to issues of poverty, gender, and connectivity, confirmed the importance of many of the issues currently being worked on by FOCAL.

FOCAL at the 31st Regular Session of the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly, San José Costa Rica, 3-5 June, 2001
John Graham, Chair of FOCAL’s Board of Directors, and Stacey Wilson-Forsberg, Policy Analyst, attended the Costa Rica OAS General Assembly as non-governmental observers. Observer Status was given to some 60 civil society organizations from the hemisphere working on key OAS issues.

While resolutions on a variety of relevant issues were passed at the General Assembly, discussions amongst the Heads of Delegation focused on three key themes: the elaboration of an Inter-American Democratic Charter, reform of the Inter-American Human Rights System, and the modernization of the OAS in the context of the Summit of the Americas process.

At the General Assembly, FOCAL participated in a meeting between civil society representatives, Canadian Foreign Minister John Manley, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Roberto Rojas, and the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, Luigi Einaudi. The format of the meeting allowed several human rights organizations to issue statements on the state of human rights in the hemisphere. FOCAL commented on the importance of strengthening the proposed Inter-American Democratic Charter by clearly defining what is meant by an “unconstitutional alteration or interruption of the democratic order”. In its intervention, FOCAL commended the OAS on simplifying the guidelines for the participation of civil society in the activities of the Organization, and encouraged the OAS to carefully prioritize the long list of mandates in the Quebec City Summit Plan of Action.
FOCAL’s Youth International Internship Program

This is the third year of FOCAL’s Youth International Internship Program, which is financed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) through the Youth Employment Strategy (YES) Program.

On September 5 and 6, 2001, FOCAL hosted a two-day briefing session for its Junior Professional Trainees (JPTs) prior to their departure for Washington, D.C. and Montevideo, Uruguay to work for 6 months. This year 12 JPTs were selected and distributed among four Inter-American organizations, namely the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Further information about the program and how to apply can be found on FOCAL’s web site, www.focal.ca, or contact our Internships Coordinator, Eric Verreault.

The 2001 interns during their briefing sessions at FOCAL. Also present is the Chair of FOCAL’s Board of Directors, Mr. John Graham (far left); Donald Mackay, FOCAL Executive Director, (front); and Claudia Paguaga, former FOCAL’s Internships Coordinator, (seated).
The Political Database of the Americas

The Political Database of the Americas is a joint internet-based project of the Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University and the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy of the Organization of American States. The Database project also includes a network of institutional partnerships for work on comparative and country-specific analysis. Partnerships include the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), Fundação Getúlio Vargas, the Association of Caribbean Electoral Organizations and the University of Suriname.

FOCAL's role has been to contribute Canadian data to the project, translate materials into French, and provide guidance in the development of new thematic areas. FOCAL also supplied Canadian electoral results dating back to 1867, revised cabinet information, new civil society materials, and resources for other initiatives and the data archive. For more information on the project visit: http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba/

Have You Read?

FOCAL regularly produces policy papers and information backgrounders dealing with hemispheric issues. All FOCAL publications are available on our web site: www.focal.ca.

FOCAL recent publications since June 2001:

**The Enduring Colombia Conflict: A Canadian Perspective**
*Author: Judy Meltzer*
FPP-01-12 ISBN: 1-896301-70-3

**Judicial Reform in the Americas**
*Author: James Buchanan*

**Overcoming Obstacles on the Road to North American Integration: A View from Canada**
*Author: Stacey Wilson-Forsberg*

**Annual Report 2000**

**Haiti After the 2000 Elections: Searching for Solutions to a Political Crisis**
*Author: José Zaragoza*

*Addressing Poverty and Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Social Primer*
*Author: Stacey Wilson-Forsberg*

**Forthcoming Publications**

In the coming months, look for FOCAL Policy Papers on labour standards in the Americas, economic future for the Caribbean, and a background briefing paper on Cuba’s economic reform process. Other plans for future publications include the following issues: Canada/Brazil relations, Chavez and Venezuela, the FTAA, hemispheric security, and Nicaragua.
Board of Directors’ Meeting, June 2001

In June 2001, the Board of Directors of FOCAL held its biannual meeting in Ottawa. Directors welcomed the Canadian Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, Ambassador Paul Durand, as an Ex-Oficio Member; and Anthony Tattersfield was confirmed as the Treasurer. Elected as officers of the Board were John Graham, Chair; and Maureen Appel-Molot, Professor and Director of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University as Vice-Chair.

The Board expressed its special appreciation to the outgoing Chair, Meriel Bradford, for her dedication of time and effort during a particularly active period for FOCAL and inter-American affairs. FOCAL Staff, and particularly its Executive Director, Nobina Robinson, relied heavily on Ms. Bradford’s advice and counsel during this time. During her tenure, Meriel Bradford also oversaw a heightened involvement by the Board in the governance of FOCAL.

Retiring from the Board are Joseph Lloyd-Jones, Ronald Bourque, John Wilson and Anthony Cooper. The Board assessed FOCAL’s activities between December 2000 and June 2001 with special recognition given to FOCAL’s contribution to the Summit process and its vital role in ensuring coherence and relevance in Canada’s foreign policy for the Americas. FOCAL’s energies in the year to come will be devoted towards constructing a community of the Americas where trade integration along with poverty reduction and development will require a continued commitment.

A summary of the main outcomes of the Board meeting in December 2001 will be available on our website shortly.

FOCAL Board of Directors 2001-2002

Executive

John W. Graham
Chair
Consultant

Maureen Appel-Molot
Vice-Chair
Director, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University

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Elizabeth Spehar
Organization of American States

Brian Stevenson
University of Alberta

H.E. Paul Durand (ex-officio member)
Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Canada to the OAS

Directors

Meriel V.M. Bradford
Canada Lands Company

Winston Cox
Commonwealth Secretariat
Comings and Goings

FOCAL was pleased to welcome Donald R. Mackay as Executive Director in June 2001. Former Executive Director, Nobina Robinson, has been on maternity leave since June 2001 and will be relocating to Washington D.C. early next year.

Mrs. Robinson’s contributions at the helm of FOCAL are widely recognized and appreciated. In the 18 months in which Canada hosted almost every high level hemispheric event, including the Summit of the Americas, she was the public face of FOCAL and its efforts to ensure strong linkages between Canada and the countries of the Americas. Her association with FOCAL will continue after she relocates to Washington as she will be our Manager, International Program Development. Thus the institution will continue to benefit from her considerable dedication and expertise.

Florence Jubany, Senior Analyst, has been on maternity leave since September. Policy Analyst Judy Meltzer has been on temporary leave and we expect her back by spring 2002. Eric Verrault joined FOCAL as Internships Coordinator in October 2001. FOCAL has heightened its program on Cuba with the arrival of Ana Julia Faya as Researcher in August. FOCAL also welcomes Dana Emily Vaughan as Receptionist and Accounts Clerk who joined us in November 2001.

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The Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) is an independent policy centre based in Ottawa that works to develop greater understanding of important issues in the Americas, and promotes hemispheric cooperation and integration.

We focus our policy analysis on five issue areas that are of concern to decision makers and opinion leaders throughout Canada and the Western Hemisphere: Poverty and Inequality; Economic Development and Trade Integration; Governance and Democratic Development; Inter-American Relations, and Civil Society.

Founded in 1990, FOCAL is a not-for-profit organization and a registered charity. We receive funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and other public and private sector organizations, including the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Ford Foundation, and the Organization of American States (OAS).