

THE AFRICA SOCIETY

PROFILE OF

MR. H. JOHN HARKER

Canadian Foreign Policy Advisor on Africa

Mr. John Harker operates at a senior foreign policy level on African issues, and in October 1999 he was appointed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to head Canada's Assessment Mission to Sudan. He presented his report on Sudan to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on January 26, 2000.

In February, 1999, Mr. Harker chaired a major conference funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) on Regional Security and the Great Lakes, attended by key figures from government, civil society, and rebel groups, drawn from many African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Africa.

In 1997, he was the Special Advisor in the Office of the Deputy President of South Africa (Thabo Mbeki), servicing the cabinet committee established to create a National Development Agency.

He has advised Canadian Prime Ministers on African liberation movements, and in 1985 initiated the proposal for a Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group for South Africa. He has been called on to advise Canadian ministers on Nigeria and Sierra Leone, and contracted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to initiate a "peacebuilding support" programme for the Great Lakes and Congo region.

Early in his career, he chaired the Africa Committee of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, focused on human and trade union rights across Africa.

- He has served as an advisor to Canadian delegations to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Decolonization and Human Rights.

α When the Senate established a Special Committee to look into the "Somalia Affair," he served as Special Advisor to the Committee Chairman.

In 1987, Mr. Harker was appointed Representative in Canada of the International Labour Organization (ILO), a UN specialized agency dealing with human rights and labour standards, including those in the oil industry. He represented the ILO in talks with the UN Council for Namibia, and advised the ILO Programme on the Economic and Social Consequences of Disarmament.

αFrom 1987 to 1994, he was a Trustee of the Southern Africa Education Trust Fund (SAETF). In 1991, he became SAETF Chairman, and in 1993, resigned from the ILO to serve as CEO of SAETF during its final year.

- In 1990-91, he chaired the Commonwealth Expert Group on Human Resource Development for a post-apartheid South Africa, which reported to the Harare Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

α From 1991 to 1994, he served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Centre for Global Security, initiating the Centre's ties with African counterparts.

Mr. Harker facilitated the first dialogue between the defence industry and civil society in South Africa, and addressed the Ford Foundation's Conference on Demobilization in Africa. He has advised the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) on the uses of ICTs in Peacebuilding in sub-Saharan Africa and on its involvement with the Landmines issue in Angola and Mozambique.

Mr. Harker is also a Research Associate with the Centre for Defence Studies of the University of Zimbabwe.

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