

who were tied together, lined up, shot and dumped in holes. The evidence, confirmed by the credible testimony of local elders and international observers, indicates that the graves date to the period in 1988 when Siad Barre's troops summarily executed civilian opponents and members of the Somali National Movement (SNM). In the absence of an effective judicial system, evidence of past human rights violations are being preserved for use in the future.

Boys as young as 12 years old are still recruited by the militia. Women in Somalia continue to be subordinated by the overwhelmingly patriarchal culture, with an estimated 98 percent subject to female genital mutilation (FGM). UNICEF and the Administration of north-west Somalia have several small projects to promote women's rights and their participation in the peace process. The United Nations Population Fund, which Canada supports, also has projects aimed at focusing on the adverse effects of FGM on the health and well-being of women.

At the 54th session of the **Commission on Human Rights (CHR)**, a consensus resolution was adopted, co-sponsored by Canada. The resolution, *inter alia*, noted with concern that the breakdown of governmental authority has exacerbated the grave situation of human rights. It urged all parties to the conflict in Somalia to respect human rights and international humanitarian law pertaining to internal armed conflicts. It also recognized that human rights should be placed on the agenda of talks regarding the future of Somalia. Furthermore, the resolution called on regional and sub-regional organizations to continue and intensify coordinated efforts aimed at facilitating the national reconciliation process in Somalia. The resolution welcomed the decision of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to appoint a human rights officer within the framework of the Office of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia.

#### **CANADIAN POSITION**

The Canadian High Commission in Nairobi maintains informal contacts with faction leaders and has raised with them on several occasions human rights issues, including FGM and the use of child-soldiers in the various militias. Canada maintains a **Canada Fund** of \$150,000 per annum for local projects and humanitarian assistance to Somalia through multilateral channels.

Canada actively supports regional efforts through **Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)** to mediate a resolution to Somalia's continued civil war.