

certain ideas or principles but we will not walk away from the table. Our objectives will not be achieved by doing so. Instead, we will talk frankly and openly about human rights and we will continue to denounce gross violations when they occur.

Let me say that the rule of law and the development of open political systems go hand in hand with respect for human rights. In this context the question of Hong Kong is relevant. When I go to Asia, I will underline Canada's support for a clear and unequivocal commitment that the future government of Hong Kong will respect the rule of law and will be responsive to the needs of the people who live there. Over 40 000 Canadians resident in Hong Kong and major economic interests there give Canada an important stake in Hong Kong's future. We will continue to make it clear that we want to see a smooth transition of power in 1997 that preserves Hong Kong's prosperity, stability and autonomy. Here again we must ensure that the lines of communication with China remain open.

New programs are currently being developed within my department and CIDA designed to engage the Chinese in a constructive dialogue on human rights. We are planning for a high-level delegation to visit Canada to discuss such specific issues as good government, the rule of law and democratic participation. This delegation will be exposed to the functioning of Canada's democratic system. The Government will also be funding a joint research project between the University of Ottawa's Human Rights Centre and Beijing University.

Conclusion

In 1970 the Liberal government of which I was a part took the bold and imaginative step of recognizing the People's Republic of China. I am proud of that achievement. We showed foresight and vision then, and I believe that act, which inspired other countries to take similar steps, helped to create the conditions for China to embark on a process of economic reform and opening to the outside world.

Canadians believe in healthy, balanced trading relationships. This is what we are developing with China. Canadians believe in sustainable development. We are helping China attain such development. Canadians believe in peace and security. We are seeking China's support on these issues. Canadians believe in human rights and the rule of law. We address this question at every opportunity with China's leadership and are developing a constructive dialogue with them.

As you can see, our relationship with China goes far beyond the trade versus human rights argument. It is a complex, evolving and serious relationship based on co-operation, dialogue and exchange. It is deeply rooted in the four foreign policy