

VIOLATIONS IN THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN OVER THE DISPUTED REGION OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH. WE ALSO NOTE WITH CONCERN ONGOING VIOLENCE AND THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE IN OTHER AREAS, INCLUDING SOUTH OSSETIA IN THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA AND THE CHECHEN-INGUSH AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC OF THE RSFSR.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

CANADIANS WELCOME THE MOVEMENT TOWARD POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PLURALISM WHICH IS EVIDENT IN MANY COUNTRIES IN AFRICA. THE RECENT PEACEFUL CONDUCT OF FREE AND FAIR MULTI-PARTY ELECTIONS IN ZAMBIA AND THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN BENIN, GABON, CAPE VERDE AND ELSEWHERE ARE SIGNIFICANT EXAMPLES.

IN MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES, WE ARE SEEING TRADE UNIONS GROW STRONGER, THE GROWTH OF A MORE INDEPENDENT PRESS, THE FORMATION OF NEW PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND A GROWING AWARENESS OF THE ROLE AND RIGHTS OF AFRICAN WOMEN, AT LEAST IN THE MAJOR URBAN CENTRES.

HOWEVER, SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING TORTURE AND THE IMPRISONMENT OF NUMEROUS PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE, ARE STILL PREVALENT IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES INCLUDING MAURITANIA, EQUATORIAL GUINEA AND CHAD. AND WHILE WE WELCOME THE RELEASE OF 87 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN MALAWI EARLIER THIS YEAR, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION, SPEECH AND THE PRESS ARE SEVERELY LIMITED, AND THAT AUTHORITIES MAKE USE OF DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE AND PHYSICAL ABUSE DURING INTERROGATION.

THE SITUATION IN ZAIRE SINCE SEPTEMBER 23 AND 24 HAS ALREADY RESULTED IN A LARGE NUMBER OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES. CANADA URGES THE PARTIES TO AGREE ON THE COMPOSITION OF A GOVERNMENT WHICH CAN RE-ESTABLISH ORDER AND SECURITY AND ENSURE GREATER RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT.

RECENT EVENTS IN KENYA HAVE SERVED TO DRAMATICALLY CRYSTALIZE THE ISSUES OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, FREE SPEECH AND DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND FULL RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED IF ALL CITIZENS CAN LAWFULLY AND PUBLICLY EXPRESS HOW THEY WISH TO BE GOVERNED. CANADA HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT IN URGING THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE SUCH FREEDOMS AND TO CEASE REPRESSION OF THOSE KENYANS WHO ADVOCATE THOSE CHANGES.

CANADA ALSO CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA. THE OVERTHROW OF THE MENGISTU REGIME IN ETHIOPIA REMOVED ONE OF THE WORST EXAMPLES OF STATE-SPONSORED ABUSE OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS. WHEN ETHIOPIA'S NEW CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IS FULLY IMPLEMENTED, IT WILL SERVE AS A