

Canada submitted its first report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (the "Committee") in 1994, received Concluding Observations from the Committee in 1995 and is now in the process of finalizing its second report. Non-governmental organizations in Canada are also participating in the monitoring process of the CRC, developing reports and papers.

In its first 10 years, the CRC has made a significant contribution for the benefit of all children. However, despite the Convention's success of near universal ratification, the bigger challenge lies ahead in its full implementation. Canada continues to urge all states parties to promote the rights of children in their activities and programmes and to strive to implement all the commitments to children contained in the CRC.

The upcoming UN Special Session on Children (the "UNSSC") in September 2001 will review progress since the 1990 World Summit for Children and provide the opportunity to develop and agree on a "Global Agenda" for future work for child protection, welfare and rights. The Honourable Senator Landon Pearson has been appointed the Canadian Sherpa and, as such, will act as the personal representative of the Prime Minister to the session.

Canada also realizes that the success of the CRC has resulted in significant demands placed on the Committee in terms of its capacity to review states parties' reports efficiently and expeditiously. In order to address this issue, Canada hopes that there will be instruments of acceptance from other states parties to support the amendment to the CRC to increase the membership of the Committee from 10 to 18 members.

Finally, Canada considers it is important that children be effective and active participants in discussions leading up to the upcoming UNSSC that directly affect them. Canada will continue to work with the Committee, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, other member states and NGOs to fully realize this goal.

4. THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ON THE SALE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

A Working Group on the UN Commission on Human Rights was created in 1994 and has met five times since then to draft an *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*. The next and possibly final session of the Working Group will take place in January 2000.

The main objectives of this Optional Protocol are to obligate states parties to criminalize the sale of children, child pornography and child prostitution, and to put in place measures for the protection of child victims.

The scope of application of the Optional Protocol remains the most contentious issue, and the greatest obstacle to reaching a consensus. This issue is inextricably linked with the definition