



# communiqué

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## UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF CANADA AGAINST TORTURE

The Honourable Charles Lapointe, Minister of State (External Relations), announces today that following the wish expressed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 32/64, the Government of Canada has decided to make a unilateral declaration of its continued compliance with the "Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment".

The unilateral declaration, conveyed in a note addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations, confirms solemnly the intention of the Canadian authorities to continue to act in conformity with the Declaration. This moral commitment entails no change in present Canadian law or practice which continue to be consistent with the principles contained in the Declaration of the United Nations.

The UN Declaration against torture, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1975, does not include legally binding obligations for States. To date, over thirty governments, including the Canadian Government, have declared unilaterally that the competent authorities within their respective territories intend to act in conformity with the provisions contained in the Declaration.

The Government of Canada intends, in addition, to continue to work within the UN Commission on Human Rights for the early completion of the drafting of an "international convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" that has been under consideration in Geneva since 1978. Canada believes it is important that the international community provide itself with the legal instruments necessary for the effective suppression of the practice of torture in the world.