

A basic principle of Canada's foreign policy is the promotion and protection of human rights. At both the bilateral and multilateral levels, Canada has been active in promoting the acceptance of international standards of human rights, and the Government is firmly committed to integrating human rights fully into the broad sweep of Canada's external relations. But the problems of promoting human rights are deceptively difficult. Many barriers to international understanding, including cultural differences, remain before some of these problems can be tackled effectively.

As a starting point in Canada's development assistance policies, assessments of human rights policies and practices will be made concrete factors in decision-making on aid determination. While the Government intends to ensure that Canadian development assistance does not lend legitimacy to repressive regimes, it must also ensure that victims of human rights violations are not doubly penalized by being deprived of needed help in addition to being deprived of their fundamental rights. A constructive approach to human rights rather than a punitive one must recognize that development assistance, appropriately targeted, can contribute substantially to the cause of both development and human rights.

### Canada's Position

- In times of extreme hardship, such as massive famine, epidemics or civil war, the people of *all* developing countries will be eligible for emergency humanitarian aid including, with ministerial permission, those countries that have oppressive governments and are not eligible for other forms of aid from Canada.
- *Cabinet* will annually consider information on *human rights* situations as part of the process of *determining which channels* of Canadian assistance may be used, and what level of bilateral assistance to apply to each potential recipient.

In countries where violations of human rights are systematic, gross and continuous, and where it cannot be ensured that Canadian assistance reaches the people for whom it is intended, government-to-government (bilateral) aid will be reduced or denied. Canadian assistance will be channeled through our development partners working at the grassroots level — such as non-governmental and multilateral organizations — who can ensure that the aid goes directly to the poor in areas where it is most needed.



CIDA photo: David Barbour

Canada is committed to ensuring that development assistance programs strengthen the cause of human dignity and

deepen international awareness of the principles of greater respect for human rights.