

in reuniting a number of Canadian citizens and permanent residents with family members from whom they had been separated, some for prolonged periods of time. However, the imposition of martial law in Poland and other developments in Eastern Europe resulted in new appeals for representations on family reunification and family visits.

Human rights

Canada, which continued its activities in the promotion of human rights at the United Nations and elsewhere in 1981, was re-elected to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for a third consecutive term. At the thirty-seventh session of the Commission, the Canadian delegation took a number of initiatives. These led, inter alia, to the appointment of a special rapporteur on the question of the link between human rights violations and mass exodus of refugees; to a resolution reaffirming the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organizations to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms while deploring the treatment of all persons who had been punished and imprisoned for promoting these basic rights; and to a resolution calling for a special envoy of the Commission to make a thorough study of the human rights situation in Bolivia. The Canadian delegation helped to ensure the adoption of resolutions reaffirming the right of the peoples of Kampuchea and Afghanistan to self-determination and condemning foreign occupation. Canada also participated actively in a working group of the Commission which is attempting to draft a convention against torture.

Pursuant to the 1966 Optional protocol to the international covenant on civil and political rights, Canada continued to respond to complaints by individuals within Canada alleging violations of their rights as provided for by the provisions of the covenant. In 1981, the United Nations Human Rights Committee, a group of 18 individuals serving in their personal capacity, held inadmissible a number of communications brought by individuals alleging violations by Canada of their rights under the covenant. However, there were two cases concerning Canada that were accepted. In the case of Sandra Lovelace, the committee found a breach of Article 27 of the covenant. In the case of Larry Pinkney, the committee found a breach of the rights of an individual to be tried without undue delay. The government of Canada is currently discussing with Indian bands the appropriate measures to be adopted in light of the committee's decision in the Lovelace case.

At their 1981 Melbourne meeting, Commonwealth heads of government considered the report of the Commonwealth Working Party on Human Rights that had been appointed by the Commonwealth Secretary-General in 1980 to make recommendations on a human rights role for the Commonwealth. The working party, chaired by Canada's Ambassador to the Vatican and representative on the UN Commission on Human Rights, met in 1980 and 1981. At Melbourne, Commonwealth heads of government reaffirmed the importance which all Commonwealth governments attach to the observance of human rights. They endorsed, in principle, the recommendations of the working party concerning the establishment of a special unit in the secretariat for the promotion of