

us. Many Canadians have family ties in Eastern Europe. They expect that their relatives will be able to visit them, and that their ancestral countries will adhere to standards of human rights set out in international agreements such as the Helsinki Final Act. The government must continually consider how best to support their human rights. It is important to remember that what may be satisfying to say in public is not always effective in reducing the suffering or in relaxing officially-sanctioned repression. Canada has always used bilateral and multilateral meetings to advance human rights, including minority rights, and this will continue to be the case. I would like to note our pride that the first Human Rights Experts Meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe will be held in Ottawa this May. It is the only CSCE conference to take place in North America, and is being held at Canadian initiative. I hope it will provide an opportunity for an orderly and productive discussion of these problems.

Minority rights concerns are not of course limited to developed countries. Emerging from the crucible of colonialism, many developing countries have had to confront the challenge of reconciling the coexistence of minority groups during the early stages of nation-building. Most of these experiments in nation-building have proceeded as smoothly, if not more so, than in older, developed countries. Political harmony and respect for human rights, and the rights of communities, are at once prerequisites and components of the developing process.

As a partner in development, Canada has formed close relationships with many developing countries, and we must be dismayed when they experience difficulties which threaten their domestic peace and progress. Sri Lanka comes to mind as a classical current example of a country with minority problems, but there are others that one could mention. We have often expressed to other governments our concern about the trend of events in their countries, and now our government intends to address the more difficult question of whether our bilateral aid resources should be more related to the performance of recipient governments in such areas as human rights.

In South Africa we have a country where those in control are in fact a numerical minority and those suffering abuse an overwhelming majority. Canada over the years has been in the vanguard of initiatives which have sought to bring pressure on the South African government to treat all its