

provide support of up to \$500 000 to the Centre for Human Rights to enable a women's rights expert to assist in the all-important task of integrating the rights of women throughout the UN human rights system.

Rights of Persons in Vulnerable Groups

Madam President, if fundamental human rights are to be enjoyed equally by all people without distinction, the international community must devote more attention to those whose rights have been traditionally neglected.

The rights of children must be a priority concern for all nations. We must redouble our efforts to implement the Plan of Action adopted by the 1990 World Summit for Children, which Canada was proud to co-chair. And on this, the Day of the African Child, it is fitting to rededicate ourselves to the survival, protection and development of children.

Persons with disabilities experience continuing marginalization in society. If their potential is to be fully appreciated, our outdated attitudes must be challenged and changed.

It is also unacceptable that anyone, because of sexual orientation or HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] infection, be denied fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Indigenous Rights

Madam President, this conference will be commemorating the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. We must ensure that the world's Indigenous people can fulfil their legitimate aspirations to be fullfledged partners in the broader societies in which they live.

Canada looks forward to the completion of a draft Declaration on Indigenous Rights by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. We support the full participation of Indigenous representatives in the review of the draft declaration by member states. Our experience in Canada has demonstrated that the involvement of Indigenous people is essential to the development of solutions that are appropriate to their needs.

That is why Canada also supports the extension of the Working Group mandate to review developments and advise on the concerns of Indigenous people.

We shall all be coming together in the Commission on Human Rights to give consideration to the draft declaration. Let us do this under one agenda item to ensure that all facets of the situation of Indigenous people receive due attention. Because, Madam President, they have waited long enough.