

HUMAN RIGHTS

Violations of human rights are not restricted to Southern Africa. All member states are under an obligation to look to their own records of achievement in protecting human rights. My Government supports the initiatives which have been taken in the United Nations in the formulation of the various international covenants and declarations in the field of human rights. Canadian legislation reflects this concern in various enactments prohibiting discrimination based on sex, race, colour, creed or national origin, in living practices, conditions of employment, public accommodation and trade union membership. Voluntary organizations have promoted amongst all Canadians an awareness of their basic rights. Several provinces have established human rights commissions or ombudsmen, and a bill of rights enumerating individual rights has been adopted by the federal Parliament. The Federal Government is proposing entrenchment of a code of human rights in our constitution.

In order to facilitate the implementation of such covenants and conventions, my Government recognizes the need for new approaches to the machinery of implementation. The proposal to create an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is, in this context, an important and welcome development, which I believe deserves the broadest possible support from member states.

PLIGHT OF CIVILIANS IN WAR

In the broader context of human rights, the review of the arrangements for co-ordination between the activities of international relief agencies in case of natural disasters should, we think, be extended to cases of hostilities, so that, in such cases also, assistance can be provided quickly and effectively to the innocent victims involved.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This organization is dedicated to the elimination of poverty, ignorance and disease. At the end of the First Development Decade, this goal is still far off. We can look back with satisfaction to some achievements --I think of the establishment of the United Nations Development Programme for example-- and we have learned some lessons. We have learned that economic development is a long-term process and that co-ordination of international programmes involves more than setting targets and adjusting priorities. We know better now that the terms and conditions under which aid is offered are of fundamental importance, as is the relation of trade to aid. We realize that the improvement of agricultural techniques is critical to the whole development process.

Nevertheless, there is no hiding the fact that the level of international assistance to developing countries is inadequate. The needs grow faster than the resources are made available, partly because population increases so rapidly. So far as Canada is concerned, our aid programme will continue to grow year by year to reach the goal of one per cent of the gross national product as quickly as possible. We are pursuing a set of economic policies which will free resources for high-priority purposes, and, notwithstanding the