

these reports underline, in our view, the importance of concluding a peace which will help to establish an environment which encourages greater respect for human rights in Iraq.

In Iran, available information indicates that widespread human rights abuses continue. Of particular concern are reports of summary arrests, torture and large-scale arbitrary executions of political detainees. We have noted in recent months that the discriminatory campaign against members of the Baha'i faith appears to have subsided. We believe that this is a positive trend which merits continuation. While we are appreciative of efforts by the Special Rapporteur on Iran for his interim report, we believe that the Special Rapporteur must be allowed to visit Iran in order to judge firsthand the validity of various allegations, as well as to verify the official Iranian response regarding allegations of various human rights abuses.

The international community has also been heartened over the past year by developments relating to Afghanistan, which represent significant progress in the search for a resolution of the long-standing conflict. For the moment, however, the human rights situation remains grim. Although the number of political prisoners has fallen and prison conditions have improved, allegations of torture and ill-treatment of prisoners are still being received. We support the recommendation that the International Committee of the Red Cross be granted full access to prisons and prisoners. We have also noted the continuing problem of lethal mines and booby-trap bombs. Canada welcomes the efforts of the Office of the U.N. Coordinator for Afghanistan to develop a program to deal with this serious and widespread problem, which represents a significant obstacle to the return of Afghan refugees.

The hope of reconciliation was also evident in discussions between Turkey and Bulgaria, which resulted earlier this year in a protocol to resolve problems related to the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. It is hoped that this agreement will contribute to a resolution of the problem of religious and cultural discrimination by the Bulgarian authorities.

National reconciliation was the essential theme of the recent plebiscite in Chile, conducted under conditions which were sufficiently fair and equitable to produce credible results. The people of Chile have spoken in favour of the restoration of democracy. It is our hope that the progress of the past several months, which included a resolution of the problem of exiles, will continue, especially with respect to investigation of past cases of disappeared persons and the reported involvement of security authorities in cases of