

widely shared by numerous Canadians of all political affiliations, that gross violations have been occurring in Democratic Kampuchea. In voicing our concerns on these violations of human rights, we take no stand on any other aspect of Democratic Kampuchea's internal or external relations, nor do we deny the existence of serious human rights violations in other parts of the world.

In the past few months, the refugee outflow from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos has reached over 10,000 persons per month. These dramatic and tragic movements of human beings, which have international implications of the gravest nature, cannot be divorced from domestic conditions, including human rights and social development considerations, in the countries of exodus. The refugee situation now confronts the international community with a problem of great urgency, magnitude and conscience. If the international community is obliged to respond to these problems, we must surely also have the right to seek solutions to the root causes of these problems. Many countries of the region are being presented with virtually insoluble situations which are not of their own making but are rather the results of the internal actions or policies of some neighbouring countries of exodus. Receiving countries of the area, and other states such as Canada which have responded to the plight of refugees, have a right to urge, and indeed demand, that the fundamental rights of individuals be fully respected in states which are the source of exodus.

Far too many states ignore their Charter obligation to ensure respect for the human rights of all persons within their borders. The human rights standards set out by the Charter and other UN instruments are rigorous; but regardless of the economic and social policies which these governments are free to pursue, they cannot flout human rights standards which they are obligated as UN member states to uphold. Indeed it would seem that the international voices raised against gross and persistent human rights violations are beginning to have some positive effect. Increased publicity has highlighted the problems of dissident groups and individuals in a number of states, thus discouraging private reprisals by governments long accustomed to brutal and swift retaliation against those who speak out according to their consciences. The problem of political prisoners has been recognized as one of legitimate UN concern, and international attention has now been focused on one aspect of this problem, that of trade union political prisoners. We have also been pursuing efforts to eliminate torture, and to promote freedom of religion and belief. In many of these endeavours to publicize violations and to work towards more stringent standards, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) have been in the forefront. We therefore congratulate those NGO's involved, and are pleased that the value of such efforts will be recognized shortly by the award of a United Nations Human Rights Prize to Amnesty International, Union Nationale des Femmes de Tunisie, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Vicaria de la Solidaridad.

The Canadian Delegation is convinced that enhanced UN machinery will go far towards achieving compliance with accepted international standards on human rights. The efforts undertaken by this Organization in recent years bear witness to a renewed sense of solidarity among peoples in the fight to ensure decency and freedom for all. My delegation pledges its full and continuing support for UN action to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental human dignity for all persons.