

Women's rights are insufficiently protected. Women are expected to defer to men, and to perform arduous home-making and farm labour. Polygamy and lack of access to property are both issues for rural women. Physical abuse is not condoned but is a problem. Genital mutilation is still practised illegally, the incidence and severity varying according to tribal custom. Women constitute 52% of voters, but only six women won seats in the 1992 election. In contrast to more progressive elements in relatively affluent and educated Nairobi, the countryside remains conservative. Conditions endured by Somali refugee women in camps near the Kenya-Somalia border are very poor, with many women and children falling victim to sexual violence.

The number of street children, many of whom are from broken or abusive homes, has grown considerably. Since the economy is not expected to create many new jobs, and these children are not in school, they face a grim future. Many Kenyans are aware of this growing issue; privately funded assistance efforts, such as UNDUGU, have seen some success.

Disabled persons' needs are discussed by the press, lobby groups and NGOs and sometimes by the government: in 1992, Kenya hosted a major international conference on rehabilitation. Kenya is a poor country, so the needs of the disabled are not adequately addressed.

CANADIAN POSITION

In November 1993, the Paris consultative group (CG) meeting of Kenya's major aid donors reviewed Kenya's efforts to reform its economic and political institutions. Canada participated in this meeting and, in concert with other donors, acknowledged progress in economic and political reforms while also expressing concerns for human rights abuses, ethnic conflict and the need for further democratic development to ensure an efficient, honest, corruption-free and transparent government. The CG subsequently announced an end to the two year freeze on new aid projects. Kenya will now gain access to roughly US \$680 million providing it continues its programme of economic and political reforms.

Canada is pleased by Kenya's progress in political reform, though we would like to emphasize the necessity of pressing on with this reform, and the centrality to democracy of meaningful press freedom. Canada is very concerned about the persistence of ethnic violence, and welcomes the GOK's recent definitive move to act impartially in restoring order.

We appreciate the great burden on Kenya of refugee populations from neighbouring countries. Canada has already contributed \$3 million through the World Food Programme, and will continue to respond to feasible requests for humanitarian assistance. Recently Canada made a substantial donation to a UNHCR effort to assist Somali victims of sexual violence in refugee camps in Kenya.

At CHR 49, the Chairman announced that the Commission had decided to discontinue consideration of the human rights situation of Kenya under the 1503 confidential procedure.

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