

sponsored by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Canada is also a proponent of a legally binding instrument on sustainable forest management.

In addition, Canada has been a key player in international ocean issues. Over the past three decades, Canada has provided approximately \$600 million worth of assistance to developing countries to help them sustainably develop their fisheries. Canada has supported the drafting of an Ocean Charter, which has now been endorsed by UNESCO, and was instrumental in securing the UN Agreement on Straddling Stocks and Highly Migratory Stocks. This agreement focusses on the conservation and sustainable utilization of fisheries resources.

Canada played an active role in the negotiations leading to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. Canada considers desertification to be both a developmental and environmental problem. It is providing \$800 million in bilateral desertification-related programs, aside from multi-lateral and partnership funding.

All of these measures are necessary if the international community and our international institutions are to keep pace with the changing nature of global environmental problems.

Human rights

Since the end of the Second World War, Canada has been a consistently strong voice in the world's councils for the protection of human rights and the defence of democratic values. From the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights over 50 years ago through actions taken in a vast range of forums and circumstances, Canada has always been there.

Canada is an active participant in the annual meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, and it regularly co-sponsors a number of resolutions. Sometimes these are on specific countries where the human rights situation is particularly serious. They may also be on issues Canada feels strongly about, such as violence against women, freedom of expression or impunity.

Other Canadian initiatives have included efforts to ensure consideration of human rights issues in all UN activities, leadership in establishing the position of UNHCHR, and support for the increasing number of human rights field operations of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including units attached to UN peacekeeping operations.

Canada also played a significant role in establishing the International Criminal Court. It actively took part in the preparatory discussions and chaired the June 1998 international negotiating conference. Canada's contribution helped bring about an international



CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne