

ervation, and cyclical factors, such as the slowdown in the world economy.

Canada and its economic partners continued their co-operation towards common objectives – to ensure a secure future for energy and to promote conservation, increased efficiency and oil substitution. The decline in demand for oil during 1982 forced the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to reduce its market price for oil early in 1983. Consumer countries welcomed the economic stimulus provided by lower oil prices; however, the lower prices raised concerns over the stability of international financial institutions because of the huge indebtedness of several oil-producing countries, notably Mexico and Venezuela.

In pursuit of its energy objectives, Canada took part in many international meetings, particularly at the International Energy Association (IEA), such as the UN Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy in Rome.

Against the background of multilateral relationships developing in the energy sector, Canada undertook extensive bilateral discussions with a number of countries. With the U.S., for instance, the Energy Consultative Mechanism was revived as a vehicle for official discussion on energy matters such as the trade in natural gas, and met in both Ottawa and Washington. Canada had political consultations with important oil exporters such as Nigeria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Norway, and renewed the oil supply contracts with Mexico. Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation completed its first year of operation, spending \$25 million on energy development projects in Barbados, Jamaica, Tanzania and Senegal, and making plans to include Asia in its 1983 operations.

The international energy situation continued to influence the domestic one: it necessitated a review of federal-provincial pricing agreements and further delayed oil sands and heavy oil mega-projects. Decreased domestic demand for oil led to the authorization of short-term light oil exports to reduce the substantial problem of shut-in oil production. The National Energy Board authorized new gas exports to the U.S., and for the first time, to Japan. Net exports of electricity declined slightly while the value of coal exports increased.

Human rights

The promotion and protection of human rights is one of the main principles of Canadian foreign policy. It reflects a heritage which has emphasized the primacy of rights and freedoms and compassion for the disadvantaged and threatened, but it recognizes the constraints imposed by the current international environment of distrust, disillusionment and insecurity.

Political problems often complicate solutions to human rights issues. In Central America, the Middle East, southern Africa and southeast Asia, it is difficult to isolate human rights from political confrontation. Human rights have become an

increasingly divisive issue in East-West relations as some East European states claim that the basic standards set by the Helsinki Final Act are matters for only internal concern. The use of human rights as tactical weapons in wars of ideology of economic interest seriously compromise the ability of the international community to respond quickly and fairly to humanitarian tragedies.

Canada has not hesitated to speak out on human rights violations, especially in Poland, El Salvador, Guatemala, South Africa and Afghanistan. Our aid policy takes account of human rights considerations in determining eligibility for Canadian aid by excluding countries where government excesses have resulted in massive social breakdown. During bilateral meetings with leaders of countries with poor human rights records, the Prime Minister has expressed concern, and has often made commitments for improved relations and development assistance should that country's record improve.

At the UN General Assembly and in the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Canada has taken two main approaches: first, action on generic or thematic violations, and second, a search for opportunities to develop new machinery for monitoring violations.

In January, 1982, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women came into force. Canada was one of the principal drafters and supporters of this convention and a Canadian was elected to the committee that will monitor its implementation. Canada is also a member of the working group on a draft convention against torture and has pressed hard to ensure that the convention will include a provision on universal jurisdiction. Such a provision would allow the prosecution of a torturer in any state, regardless of nationality, the nationality of the victim or the place where the torture occurred.

The UN Working Group on Disappeared Persons was a Canadian initiative which since 1980 has reported on more than 2,100 missing persons in 22 countries. It has also established an emergency procedure, the first of its kind within the UN, which authorizes the chairman to respond to urgent reports of disappearances by an immediate direct approach to the government concerned.

Canada was also responsible for the preparation of a report on sudden mass migrations that analyzes their root causes and explores ways of preventing both the exodus and the related human rights violations.

Canada has tried to make full use of the opportunities offered by the Madrid meetings of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Canada took a stand there on human rights, especially on implementation of the Final Act's provisions for freedom of movement, and demanded that progress in military security be matched with comparable progress in humanitarian matters. The Canadian delegation has proposed a meeting of experts to discuss human rights in the follow-up to the Madrid meeting.