

through the greater use of its bureau, from an annual ritual meeting to a more effective and ongoing instrument in defence of human rights. Why should the role of our bureau be a key consideration? For the same reasons, I would suggest, that the Working Group on Disappearances is considered the single most effective implementation body in the entire UN human rights system. It brings together all regional groups. It focuses on concrete problem-solving. It has the ability, because of size, ease of communication and informality, to act quickly in the event of emergencies. It works in a low-key manner, reporting to the Commission but rarely attracting the type of publicity which alienates governments and complicates already difficult human rights situations.

In the view of my delegation a balance of the three elements discussed above -- international pressure, constructive cooperation and effective problem-solving through discreet diplomacy -- is a realistic and desirable objective for our future work. Clearly this Commission will keep on responding to dramatic events. The conflicting pressures for action and inaction, which I mentioned at the outset of my statement, are constant features of corridor discussion, and will continue to affect us. But in the months ahead, as countries grapple with human rights questions, as states like Canada approach human rights issues bilaterally and multilaterally, we must begin to think of how our procedures and working methods relate to our fundamental objectives. We pledged ourselves in the Charter to work for greater international cooperation in the area of human rights. We agreed in the Universal Declaration and in the Covenants on fundamental principles and standards. Forty years later, it is time to turn to the challenge of putting those principles into practice.