

Government Response to the Report of the Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

International Human Rights law including provisions that "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture). Ministers, officials and others have spoken publicly on this matter on numerous occasions and will continue to do so.

However, there are limitations to the assistance which any government can provide its citizens abroad. Travellers should be well aware of the political, legal and security structures of the countries which they visit. Regularly updated travel reports will continue to advise Canadians of the risks associated with travel to potentially hazardous areas.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Canada should encourage the Government of Turkey to be a voice of democracy and moderation within the Muslim world and to continue to implement democratic and human rights reforms, including respecting the rights of its Kurdish minority, in compliance with Turkey's international obligations and aspirations to join the European Union.

In seeking membership in the European Union, Turkey continues to institute a massive program of political, economic, social and judicial reforms to align itself with European laws and practices including broadcasting and schooling in the mother tongue of its citizens of Kurdish origin. Canada continues to encourage Turkey in such reform efforts. Given its geostrategic location and historic links, major reforms being instituted in Turkey are having an impact beyond its borders, including in States in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East.

Canada-Turkey cooperation on good governance has focussed on community policing training, among other areas. Further to a Canada-Turkey Memorandum of Understanding on Police Cooperation signed in August 1999 and capitalising on Canadian federal, provincial, and municipal expertise, the Government successfully organised training sessions in both Canada and Turkey for more than 300 Turkish police instructors between 1999-2004. This training emphasised respect of individual and basic human rights. As a result, Turkish police have adopted many Canadian practices in such areas as basic recruit training, forensic interviewing, hostage negotiation, cyber crime, and crime scene management and are now offering Turkish police training to neighbouring states.