

several justice initiatives. We have already offered to provide human resources for the International Tribunal, have approved a contribution to the UN's Centre for Human Rights to dispatch observers, and have offered to contribute to a fund for the promotion of human rights. We are helping, as well, to restore the government's ability to function by absorbing the arrears of the ADB [African Development Bank] and the World Bank, and are contributing to social recovery through support for UNICEF [the United Nations Children's Fund] and reconciliation. A project to restore the electrical system is already under way. In addition, a CIDA mission is now in place examining the best method of co-ordinating our projects with local officials.

On my last trip to Central Africa, I took advantage of the opportunity to pass along certain messages to the highest authorities during bilateral visits. We delivered firm messages to Rwanda on having a government that is representative and on the need to expand its base in order to foster a climate of confidence that will encourage refugees to return. We also informed the government of our expectations regarding the rule of law and respect for human rights.

In Burundi, we expressed our hope that the radical elements in the political classes would rally behind the moderate forces. In a release dated February 3, Minister Ouellet urged the armed forces of Burundi to continue supporting the coalition government and called upon the militias of the opposing factions to lay down their arms and renounce violence. Canada supports UN and OAU preventive diplomacy initiatives towards avoiding a conflagration in Burundi similar to that in Rwanda. For this reason, Canada agreed to send three experts from its armed forces to train their Burundian counterparts in the respect for human rights and democratic development.

#### **The Situation Remains Disturbing**

The internal situation in Rwanda is still a source of concern. The most recent reports of UN observers continue to tell of arbitrary arrests based on denunciations without sufficient verification. Thousands of prisoners are crowded in jails under inhumane conditions, and there are numerous crimes against and obstacles facing owners trying to recover their possessions. During my stay in Rwanda, I received some assurances from government authorities in these regards. Unfortunately, however, the reports of uncontrolled abuse continue.

Although we understand the very difficult circumstances in Rwanda, our commitments cannot but be affected by these events.

The situation in Burundi is even more disturbing and difficult to contain. If not for the persistent efforts of Ambassador Abdallah, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Burundi might already have plunged into the abyss. The extremists did their best to prevent the holding of the Bujumbura Conference. They forced the