

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

The Government welcomes recent progress in these areas, particularly under the leadership of the new Malaysian administration which has pursued an ambitious agenda aimed at improved governance and national institutions. The Government is encouraged by the recent release of the former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister who had been incarcerated for some seven years. His release signals renewed confidence in judicial independence and respect for human rights in Malaysia.

In September 2003, Malaysian delegates participated in the "Canada and Islam in Asia" conference at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. This initiative provided an opportunity for Canada to demonstrate commitment to promoting issues of pluralism and governance and to create networks of academics, policy analysts and youth in the region. In December 2004, Malaysia participated in a plurilateral symposium on human rights, co-hosted by Canada, China and Norway and held in Vietnam. As one of the co-hosts of this forum, Canada takes an active role and promotes key human rights issues and best practices regarding areas such as women's rights, freedom of expression, pluralism, and civil society participation, amongst others.