

freedom to assemble and to petition the government to redress grievances, but also the freedom to move freely within and to and from one's own country. Civil and political rights also must include the liberty to seek to participate in government (if one accepts Jefferson's declaration that the only just powers of a government are those derived from the consent of the governed). By exercising this freedom, citizens may insist that their government protect and promote their individual rights.

Fourthly, there is a basic human right to freedom from discrimination because of race, religion, colour, gender and - Canadians would add - sexual preference, or age.

All these rights are recognized in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that Canada helped fashion and that draws heavily on the Magna Carta, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the American Bill of Rights, but does not benefit from the teachings of Islam, Buddha, or Confucius on the role and obligations of the individual within society.

Bernard Wood of the Canadian Institute of International Peace and Security pointed out at the Victoria colloquium that "...since 1945 the world has codified a wide range of human rights, and even countries that show little respect for human rights now feel a need to pay lip service to them". Codes alone have not been enough; it also has been necessary to develop international institutions to implement them.

In 1945, the United Nations Charter was adopted, enshrining human rights both as a basic objective of the organization and as a universal obligation. Article 55 of the Charter states that the United Nations shall promote "human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion". Article 56 obliges member countries "to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the (United Nations)" to achieve these purposes.

In 1946, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was established, followed in 1948 by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a basic - though non-binding - declaration of principles of human rights and freedoms. This was followed by the Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and the preparation of two separate human rights covenants - one on political and civil rights and the other covering economic, social, and cultural rights (both adopted by the United Nations in 1966).

All this to say that there is sound international (and, important for a North Pacific audience, pre-CSCE) precedent for discussing human rights in a multilateralist framework. (More recently this has been a subject for discussion in the Commonwealth, the OAS, and la Francophonie.) The key would be initially limiting discussion to those areas which all North Pacific countries agree, avoiding the nebulous area of, as one scholar at Victoria termed it, "cultural infringement", in favour of "people-to-people" contacts and exchanges and cultural interaction.