

about sanctions are answered. This issue was not discussed in detail. Although it was noted that some Canadian mining companies now work in Burma, other Canadian companies with potential skills and interests are awaiting a significant change in internal conditions before pursuing that option. One representative of a major Canadian company of consulting engineers present, **Jennifer Simons** noted that her company (H.A. Simons) had discussed this and continues to discuss it, but is awaiting significant changes before acting on opportunities in the mining field. She said that the question of working in Burma induced a debate in her company, and there was a difference of opinion at different levels and in different departments, but that the company would hold back until changes occurred.

#### I WITH REFERENCE TO REFUGEES AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

Provide Canadians with better information about the informal actions already undertaken by Canadian government, agencies, and NGOs,

- Assist border people and refugees through CIDA-funded programs, to the extent permitted by bordering states,
- Offer support and assistance through non-official channels. Suggestions include the partnering of Thai and Canadian NGOs to assist refugees and people in the border areas. Churches and religious organizations (including Buddhist and Christian organizations, depending on the affiliation of the refugees themselves), as well as universities and research institutions may be useful in channeling assistance directly to the Burmese people.

Discussion focused on balancing the need for urgent and decisive action with an awareness of the potential retaliation by SLORC to such action. First and foremost, the risks associated with economic sanctions include the threat of exacerbating the already intolerable human rights situation being endured by the Burmese people. Also threatened would be the tenuous communication links between Canada and the Burmese at the borders as well as access to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. As already noted, this would be a calculated risk, since Suu Kyi, speaking for the vast majority of Burmese people, has expressed her desire for sanctions and the return of their elected government. A more problematic risk