
V. PROJECTING CANADIAN VALUES AND CULTURE

Canadian values, and their projection abroad, are key to the achievement of prosperity within Canada and to the protection of global security.

Canadians hold deeply that we must pursue our values internationally. They want to promote them for their own sake, but they also understand that our values and rights will not be safeguarded if they are not enshrined throughout the international environment. Canada is not an island: if the rights of people abroad are not protected, Canadians will ultimately feel the effects at home. They understand that our economic and security interests are served by the widest possible respect for the environment, human rights, participatory government, free markets and the rule of law. Where these are observed, there is a greater prospect of stability and prosperity - where they are not, of uncertainty and poverty. Their observance, therefore, is both an end in itself and a means to achieving other priority objectives.

Universal respect for human rights is in Canada's interest.

- A priority field of international concern and action for Canadians has been and remains that of **human rights**. The Government regards respect for human rights not only as a fundamental value, but also as a crucial element in the development of stable, democratic and prosperous societies at peace with each other. From the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to that of the recently concluded Convention on the Rights of the Child, we have been in the vanguard of those fighting for international consensus to uphold human freedoms and dignity. We are rightly associated internationally with the promotion of the rights of women and children, and with attention to their role in the economy. Human rights will continue to be a priority for Canada's International Assistance programs. In this regard, the Government applauds the excellent work around the world of Canada's International Centre For Human Rights and Democratic Development.

Historically, closed societies have recorded the worst human rights abuses. In contrast, human rights tend to be best protected by those societies that are open - to trade, financial flows, population movements, information and ideas about freedom and human dignity. Fortunately, as borders become more porous, no society can isolate itself from intense scrutiny any longer. Conversely, no single partner can alone isolate any other.