

# HUMAN RIGHTS LINKAGES INITIATIVE: FALL STRATEGIC CONSULTATION

## FINAL REPORT

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**Name of the Organization:** Human Rights Internet

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**Project title:** Human Rights Linkage Initiative: Fall Strategic Consultation

**Project Commencement Date:** November 26, 1999

**Project Termination Date:** November 27, 1999

**Total Project Expenditures:** \$22,000

### REPORT

#### Purpose of the project

A group of NGO representatives and academics committed to the promotion of international human rights domestically initially came together to discuss the effective implementation of international human rights in Canada. They focussed on the need to develop mechanisms that would permit better linkages amongst civil society groups, on the one hand, and between civil society and government on the other.

A number of recent domestic and international events and processes made this initiative timely.

- On April 8, 1999, Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice) announced the review of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and of the policies and practices of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had recommended in its last two periodic reviews of Canada (1993 and 1998) that social and economic rights be included in the Canadian Human Rights Act.
- There is a broad consensus among civil society groups in Canada that there is a pressing need to improve domestic mechanisms for the protection, enforcement and monitoring of international human rights law, particularly in the area of social and economic rights.
- At the conclusions of the recent reviews of Canada's Reports on the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and on the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, both UN Committees expressed concern at the Canadian federal government's inability to enforce implementation of international human rights instruments at the provincial and federal government levels.