

Although it has shown some signs of openness towards the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), for example by allowing an ICTY office to open in Belgrade, the FRY Government continues to harbour persons indicted for war crimes and refuses to extradite them to the Hague, in violation of its obligations under international law. The FRY has repeatedly blocked access for ICTY Chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour to Kosovo, despite several Security Council resolutions obliging them to cooperate fully with the Tribunal. In addition, the Government shows no inclination to prosecute those responsible for severe human rights violations on FRY territory in the past several years, including the murder, abduction and ethnic cleansing of Sandjak Muslims.

Minorities in FRY continue to lead a difficult existence. Despite a tradition of broad social tolerance of minorities in Serbia, minorities currently face significant education and employment discrimination, and there is a tendency towards the marginalization of minorities in all spheres. Ethnic Albanians, a majority in Kosovo, faced systematic political, economic and cultural persecution by Serb authorities even before the current crisis. The Muslims of Sandjak are also seriously threatened, as they face generalized economic, political and cultural discrimination by Serb authorities, but have few resources to counter this pressure. The situation for Hungarians, Croats and other minorities in Vojvodina is better, but they too encounter obstacles, particularly in employment and schooling. Proactive measures in support of the rights of women and children are undeveloped, largely as this is a patriarchal society. Homosexuality and disability remain taboo subjects.

The human rights situation in FRY is addressed in the omnibus resolutions on Former Yugoslavia adopted at both the Commission on Human Rights and the UN General Assembly 3rd Committee, which Canada traditionally co-sponsors. At the 54th session of the Commission on Human Rights, this was adopted by 41 votes to none, with 12 abstentions. The resolution renewed the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Former Yugoslavia. At UNGA53, the section of the resolution on FRY made several demands on the Government of FRY to respect the human rights of its citizens.

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada supports the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement by all the signatories, including the FRY. The Embassy maintains close contacts with human rights groups, journalists, representatives of refugees and members of national minorities, and travels regularly to areas of concern, notably Kosovo. The Embassy supports small scale projects in the areas of human rights/civic society, national minorities, refugees, and free media, through the Canada Fund. The FRY government is reminded that Canada will continue to strictly apply its policy of making bilateral relations conditional upon the pace and scope of progress made by the FRY on human rights, democratic development, the peaceful resolution of the Kosovo issue, and implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

Canada is actively engaged in supporting the work of the Kosovo Verification Mission, including through the provision of 32 verifiers. We have also contributed almost \$3.2 million in humanitarian aid for Kosovo. We are actively engaged in efforts, through the OSCE, NATO, and the UN Security Council to support the negotiation of a political solution to the crisis which will ensure full respect for the human rights of all people in Kosovo.