

HUMAN RIGHTS

A total of 57 instruments are listed in the UN Document "Human Rights: a Compilation of International Instruments" produced in 1983. With the adoption of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in December 1984, of the Declaration on the human rights of individuals who are not nationals of the country in which they live and the Convention against Apartheid in Sports, both in December 1985, there are now 60 instruments. Of these 60, 32 are treaties (this term includes covenants, conventions and protocols). The remainder are declarations, codes and standard minimum rules.

Canada is party to 20 of these 32 treaties. More importantly, we are party to five of the six major human rights instruments i.e. the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The one major human rights convention to which Canada is not party is the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

On August 23, 1985 Canada signed the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Discussions are continuing with the provinces and territories with a view to considering legislative changes that may be necessary to enable Canada to fully implement the Convention and subsequently to ratify it.

CANADIAN REPORTS UNDER THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS

Canada's first report on articles 13 - 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was considered by the Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the ICESCR in April, 1986 (the report of the Sessional Working Group is contained in document E/1986/49 of 7 May, 1986). In May, 1986 elections were held to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which shall replace the Sessional Working Group as of 1 January, 1987. Our eighth report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was submitted to the United Nations in February, 1986 and is expected to be considered by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, along with our seventh report, in March, 1987 (the most recent report of this Committee is contained in document A/40/18).