

destitute and without basic civic protections. The rights of unions are already severely circumscribed; as the economic situation continues to deteriorate, the rights of employees and unions could suffer further.

The Yugoslav government's poor record in terms of war crimes deserves mention. Although it has shown signs of openness towards the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), for example by allowing an ICTY office to open in Belgrade, it continues to harbour the three ex-Yugoslav army officers indicted for the massacre at Vukovar. Until these individuals are extradited to the Hague, the FRY record on this issue will justifiably be considered poor. In addition, the government shows no inclination to prosecute those responsible for human rights violations on FRY territory, including violations of the rights of Sandjak Muslims.

Minorities in the FRY continue to lead a difficult existence. Admittedly, there is a tradition of broad social tolerance of minorities in Serbia, and the government does permit linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity. However, minorities are reported to 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, face systematic political, economic and cultural persecution by Serb authorities. The Muslims of Sandjak face generalized economic, political and cultural discrimination and have few resources to counter this pressure. The situation for Hungarians, Croats and other minorities in the Vojvodina area is better, but they too encounter obstacles, particularly in employment and schooling. Pro-active measures in support of the rights of women and children are undeveloped in the FRY; and, homosexuality and disability remain taboo subjects.

At the 52nd session of the Commission on Human Rights, the human rights situation in FRY was addressed by an omnibus resolution, co-sponsored by Canada, which included Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although this was adopted by consensus, Russia brought several of the paragraphs on Kosovo to paragraph votes because it considered them imbalanced. At the 51st session UN General Assembly, an omnibus resolution was adopted by a vote of 131 for (Canada), 1 against (Russia) and 20 abstentions, and an additional resolution was passed on the situation in Kosovo by a vote of 102 for (Canada), 3 against, and 45 abstentions.

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada supports the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement by all the signatories, including the FRY. The Canadian Embassy in Belgrade maintains close and regular contacts with human rights groups, journalists, representatives of refugee groups, and members of national minorities. Embassy representatives travel regularly to areas of concern, notably Kosovo. Through the Canada Fund, the Canadian Embassy is able to support small scale projects in the FRY in the areas of human rights/civic society, national minorities, refugees, and free media. Canada has also supported the operations of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, including the Special Rapporteur for the former Yugoslavia

Minister Axworthy has made Canada's human rights concerns clear to FRY authorities; in April 1996 he chaired a roundtable in Belgrade with NGO and independent media representatives. Minister Axworthy spoke on this issue during a meeting of the Bosnia