

CANADIAN POSITION:

Canada is concerned about the continued decline in human rights in Cuba and we deplore the treatment of activists. Canada cannot accept the notion that individual rights should be subjugated to those of the party or state. Canadian representatives have taken every opportunity to raise human rights issues at the very highest levels, both bilaterally and in multilateral forums. For example, human rights was discussed by Louise Fréchette, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Latin America and the Caribbean, during her visit to Cuba in April, 1990. It was also an important element during the meetings held with Ramon Sanchez Parodi, the Cuban Vice Minister of External Affairs who visited Ottawa in November, 1990.

Canada was not a co-sponsor of the 1990 CHR resolution but did vote for it. Canada's decision on any resolution at 1991 CHR depends on events in Cuba. Canada has encouraged Cuba to cooperate with the UN, as requested in the 1990 resolution.

Canada believes that Cubans wishing to leave their country should be allowed to do so. The Canadian Government is pleased that the Cuban authorities, after refusing to do so for up to ten years, have recently taken steps to allow the dependents of three Canadian citizens to leave Cuba and join their sponsoring relatives in Canada. We hope Cuba continues to take a positive approach to the family reunification issue, and that the one remaining Canadian case, as well as any future cases, will be resolved without delay.