



Dear participants,

I take great pleasure in welcoming you to the 1992 consultations on human rights issues in preparation for the 48th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The past year has been an important one for Canada. In May, 1991, Canada was re-elected to the Commission, receiving the highest number of votes of the five countries running in our electoral category. On December 11, Canada ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, following extensive consultations with the provinces and territories, as well as with concerned groups.

In addition to our efforts at the United Nations, we are actively promoting human rights in other international organizations: the CSCE, the OAS, the Commonwealth and La Francophonie. With the Prime Minister's leadership, this issue has been placed firmly on the table and a powerful signal has been sent to our partners in the developing world.

Non-governmental organizations play a significant role in the development of Canadian policy, and I attach great importance to these annual consultations. Officers of External Affairs and International Trade Canada benefit from the January meetings, which provide the basis for ongoing cooperation and dialogue throughout the year.

I look forward to your participation.

Yours sincerely,

*Barbara McDougall*

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