



---

# news release

---

Date **March 4, 1994**

No. 36

For release

## CANADA WELCOMES ESTABLISHMENT OF UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet welcomes today's decision by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

"The appointment of a Special Rapporteur represents a strong commitment by United Nations member countries to work toward eliminating violence against women, one of the most serious and widespread forms of human rights violations. I am particularly pleased with Canada's leading role in the initiative that led to this decision," said Mr. Ouellet.

The Minister also noted that progress on women's rights, including the right to be free from violence, is central to overall progress on human rights, and that the decision comes just days before the celebration of International Women's Day on March 8.

The creation of the important position of Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women was a key element of a Canadian-initiated resolution calling for greater integration of the rights of women into UN human rights mechanisms. It also follows closely on another Canadian initiative that led to the December 1993 adoption by the General Assembly of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

The Special Rapporteur will recommend measures at both the domestic and international levels to eliminate violence against women. These recommendations will be based on information the Special Rapporteur will gather from governments, UN specialized agencies, and inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations including women's groups. The Special Rapporteur will report annually to the Commission on Human Rights, beginning in 1995.

- 30 -

For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade  
(613) 995-1874