

Human-rights considerations do enter into the question of Canadian arms sales. We do not export arms, either to countries where there is an immediate threat of hostilities or to regimes considered wholly repugnant to Canadian values. This is especially true where the equipment in question could be used against civilians.

Last December, the Government announced that we were phasing-out our Government-supported commercial activities, withdrawing trade commissioners from South Africa and instituting visa requirements for South Africans. We were, furthermore, in consultation with Canadian corporations, drawing up a code of conduct to govern the activities of Canadian interests operating in South Africa. It was an exceptional decision and one taken after many years of consideration. South Africa is a case unique in the present-day world. It is the single country in which racial discrimination has been institutionalized as a basis for the entire social, political and economic system. For more than 30 years, the UN has been attempting to persuade the recalcitrant Government of South Africa to accord to its citizens rights, privileges and responsibilities without distinction on the basis of race. The international community, as a whole, has come to conclude that both multilateral and unilateral measures against South Africa are indeed desirable. The intent is to increase pressure on South Africa for fundamental change in its policies. Such change is essential if further deterioration towards racial conflagration in that country, and in the whole Southern African region, is to be avoided.

#### Conclusion

I have described an international human-rights situation that at present is difficult and trying. I have, I hope, clearly indicated that the Canadian Government is very much concerned about this situation and is using its best efforts, both multilaterally and bilaterally, to alleviate difficult situations wherever they occur. While the international situation may appear bleak, it is not without hope. The rights of individuals throughout the world will be increasingly respected only as generations of future leaders are educated to know and respect the standards that have been established internationally. Progress of this nature is slow — but there is, nonetheless, progress. Slavery was abolished internationally little more than 100 years ago. Colonial empires have been dissolved only over the course of the past 30 years. The UN role in assisting their rapid dissolution has, I might add, been important. There is no reason to expect, therefore, that, given the political will, the major human-rights problems of this century cannot equally be dealt with, over time, by the international community. It is the task of decades — indeed of generations — and I assure you that Canada will continue to support practical and pragmatic actions to promote that end.

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