

Response

The government recognizes that there may well be interest in Third World countries in seeking advice from countries like Canada in building institutions that guarantee human rights and would be prepared in such cases to offer support. Canada will, for example, respond favourably to Haiti's request for developing procedures for democratic elections. CIDA's bilateral and non-governmental organizations' programs provide funding for initiatives in specific countries. Nevertheless, further development of programs requires detailed study because of the difficulty of establishing the proper criteria for extending support. The government would also want to minimize the possibility of appearing to interfere in the domestic affairs of another country, a problem identified in the committee's report itself.

Conclusion/Recommendation

87. We recommend that the government consider establishing an International Institute of Human Rights and Democratic Development with carefully prepared guidelines for supporting activities by non-governmental organizations. To ensure that the Institute is sensitive to the varying national perspectives on democratic development, particularly in the Third World, we recommend that its board of directors include international representation, on the model of the International Development Research Centre. Funding for the Institute should be provided as a small fraction of official development assistance funds. (page 105)

Response

The government welcomes and accepts the recommendation for an institute which would have as its aim the development and strengthening of democratic institutions and human rights in developing countries. Design and establishment of the institute will require care to ensure that it is effective. The government therefore intends to establish a consultative mechanism to provide advice on how to proceed. Funding will be available from official development assistance allocations to support the institute which would focus on the Third World in its activities.

Assisting Refugees

Conclusion/Recommendation

88. We think it particularly important that Canada remain generous in providing sanctuary to Central American refugees that are the victims of repression and violence. We strongly support the government's decision to extend an oral hearing on questions of merit to all claimants. (page 107)

Response

Canada is widely known for its generous provision of sanctuary to refugees and oppressed persons from Central America and intends to maintain this policy. (The government itself sponsored 3,000 refugees in 1986.) The new refugee status determination system that will shortly come into effect provides for an oral interview for applicants.

Conclusion/Recommendation

89. The government should press for Canadians to be appointed as senior officials of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. With adequate representation, Canada should