

El Salvador the government of President Duarte rolled back significantly the level of violence and human rights violations from the early 1980s.... [T]he protection of human rights in El Salvador over the last year has weakened, and that number of human rights abuses has increased markedly.... In Guatemala, while human rights violations have diminished significantly since the beginning of the decade,...[t]he resurgence of death squads and disappearances is a matter of profound concern. The Esquipulas accord of last year, agreed to by all five Central American Presidents...sought not only peace but respect for human rights and democratic values.... [W]e urge them to honour this commitment.... The Canadian government is deeply concerned by the overall treatment by the Iraqi authorities of the Kurdish minority in Iraq, and particularly by the reports of the use of chemical weapons against civilians.... Of particular concern [in Iran] are reports of summary arrests, torture and large-scale arbitrary executions of political detainees.... National reconciliation was the essential theme of the recent plebiscite in Chile, conducted under conditions which were sufficiently fair and equitable to produce credible results.... By contrast,...the situation in the Israeli Occupied Territories presents serious human rights concerns.... We believe that respect for human rights is an essential component of the peace process.... We stress the concept of reconciliation in these situations because so many conflicts originate, directly or indirectly, in human rights problems, or because divisive political conflicts have potentially disastrous consequences for respect for human rights.²⁷

An investigator from the UN Commission on Human Rights arrived in Canada, in mid-July 1989, to prepare for the start of an inquiry into allegations that Canada has violated treaties with its aboriginal peoples.²⁸

Canada's ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment in June 1987 exempted Articles 21 and 22 "which recognize the right of the monitoring Committee [set up by the Convention] to accept and judge complaints against a country by another nation or by individuals." Of the thirty-eight countries that have thus far ratified the Convention, twenty-three, including Canada, the Soviet Union, Mexico and China, have not agreed to be judged by the monitoring Committee. However, on 19 January 1989, an External Affairs spokesperson stated that "Canada will accept the right of a United Nations Committee to hear complaints of torture and cruelty against the country" by June 1989 or sooner.²⁹ The delay has been officially attributed to the necessity of coordinating federal-provincial legislation pertaining to this matter.

²⁷ Her Excellency Ms. A. Raynell Andreychuk, Ambassador of Canada in the Third Committee of the 43rd Session of the United Nations, "[A] Statement [to] the Third Committee of the 43rd Session of the United Nations, New York, November 1988." Department of External Affairs, *Statements and Speeches* pp. 1-3.

²⁸ Geoffrey York, "UN Rights Agency Set to Start Probe into Canada's Treatment of Indians." *Globe and Mail*, 15 July 1989, p. 1.

²⁹ Charlotte Montgomery, "Canada Assailed for 'Opting Out' of UN Scrutiny on Torture Treaty." *Globe and Mail*, 18 January 1989, p. A9; and "Canada to Accept UN Committee." *Globe and Mail*, 20 January 1989, p. A8.