

India's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), established in 1993, has demonstrated a willingness to take up controversial cases and has focused on critical human rights issues. Max Yalden, then Chairman of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, met with the NHRC and other NGOs during his second visit to India in February 1996.

CANADIAN POSITION

Bilaterally, Canada maintains a dialogue on human rights with the Indian government, both at the national and state levels. For example, Foreign Affairs Minister Axworthy discussed human rights issues with Indian External Affairs Minister Gujral during his visit to Canada in September 1996.

Canada is working with the Indian government, other governments, the private sector, NGOs and international institutions to improve the human right situation in India. Through the Governance Support Fund, Canada provides funding to Indian NGOs to assist their efforts in the human rights field. Furthermore, Canada's contributions to India's sustainable development and growth help to address the poverty which hinders the development of a human rights culture.

Multilaterally, Canada made a contribution in 1996 of \$700 000 to the ILO's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour. Canada is also working with the UN Commission on Human Rights on the development of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which would require countries to criminalize the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and to extend their jurisdiction extra-territorially.