

Mr. Chairman,

The Sub-Commission was created as a body to prepare studies on the prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities. Over the years, pursuant to various decision of the Commission and of ECOSOC, it has evolved into an organ whose functions touch upon United Nations legislative and implementation processes across the spectrum of the Human Rights field. Many Sub-Commission proposals in the standard-setting sphere have borne fruit in the Declarations of the Commission and the General Assembly. The Sub-Commission confidential and public proceedings play a significant role in bringing situations of serious human rights violations to the Commission's attention. The Sub-Commission has assumed a particularly important role in affording non-governmental organizations an opportunity to participate in the development and promotion of human rights standards.

The success of any institution has a way of generating expectations for more and greater achievements; and with these comes the need for adaptation to new demands and changing times. The experience of the Sub-Commission has been no exception. Resolution 1988/43, adopted last year following our deliberations on the work of the Sub-Commission, should be viewed in this context. As a co-sponsor of that resolution, Canada naturally shares the objectives and concerns which it reflected regarding the effective functioning of the Sub-Commission. A critical element of the Resolution was the request that the Chairman of the Sub-Commission present a report to our present session on the implementation of the guidelines and suggestions of the Commission. As we have yet to receive that report, I will reserve the possibility of returning to the question of working methods once we have seen or heard the report from Mr. Bhandare.