

the area of human rights. Good will, good faith, good intentions: These are all estimable commodities. But our final judgments must be based on more tangible evidence. In the cases of Afghanistan and Kampuchea, for example, factors as obvious as the withdrawal of foreign forces can easily be observed with objectivity. We therefore find it odd that the Commission should be assessing intentions and weighing the merits of good will, when virtually all of the legal systems of its member states place greatest emphasis on the examination of cold, hard facts. Our colleague from the delegation of Japan made this very point during his intervention.

A further preoccupation concerns the standards we use in framing judgments under these special procedures. In many cases international standards are rigorous and absolute. Our condemnation of Apartheid for example, a system by which racism has been written in law, has been vigorous and sustained. Most recently, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs chaired a Commonwealth Committee established to give impetus to further measures against Apartheid as agreed during a meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government in Vancouver, including how best to ensure that the truth of what is happening can be conveyed to the world in the face of South Africa's censorship and propaganda.

With respect to other standards entrenched in international law, there can be no justification for torture, summary execution, disappearances, exile and other assaults on the integrity of the human person. Many of these violations have been sadly documented by rapporteurs in reports before us on Chile, where there are new and disturbing reports of disappearances, and on Guatemala, Afghanistan, El Salvador and Iran.

Other accepted international standards assign clear responsibility to governments for the security of individuals and groups within their jurisdiction. The situation in the Israeli occupied territories is a case in point. We have witnessed in these territories grave violations of human rights as Israel refuses to abide by the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. In 1948, the founding of Israel was intended to be, as in Isaiah, a light to the world. Where human rights are concerned, the Palestinians may be forgiven for failing to see the beacon.

A common thread of a number of reports before us concerns the activities of private gangs or paramilitary