

an agency outside government. Departmental officials at these consultations can provide you with more information on the roster, including how to apply. You can also refer to the new human rights page on the departmental website.

I would also like to announce at this time that, in co-operation with the members of the NGO-led Peace-building Contact Group, we will be holding this Friday the first of the consultations on peace-building that I announced last October.

The Canadian International Information Strategy is another new tool with great potential in terms of human rights. In an era of globalized economies, international communications networks and shifting issue-based "coalitions of the willing," we must recognize that the mouse, if not mightier than, is at least as mighty as the missile. The Strategy will be a concerted effort of government and the private sector to make more effective use of modern communications technologies to achieve Canada's international objectives.

In this context, we are developing a strategy to use information technology to:

- present Canada, and Canadian values such as respect for human rights, to the outside world; and
- achieve foreign policy goals, including human rights goals, in new ways.

The Strategy is still in the early stages of development, but I see great potential. We are already considering ways of using information technology to counter hate propaganda, train journalists and promote free media, and provide human rights education. New technologies also play a key role in giving dissident groups and human rights advocates access to information and dramatically improved capacity to communicate. The use of the Internet by opposition groups in Serbia is one of the clearest examples of how new technologies are being put to the service of democracy.

Looking Toward the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration

In the coming year, I am committed to maintaining Canadian activism on human rights and our focus on key areas such as outreach to Canadians, the rights of the child and Aboriginal rights. We will be developing innovative ways to promote and protect human rights within the peace-building initiative and the Canadian International Information Strategy. And we will be preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998.

The Universal Declaration has been a shaping force in our world for almost 50 years. Celebration of this important anniversary