

## Progress and Challenges in Human Rights

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(Rapporteur's summary)

There has been a real opening up of the human rights system in recent years. While the concept of state sovereignty dominated in earlier years, there is now a movement to considering human security at the sub-state level. Linkages are being made between human rights and other international activities, such as trade. A global culture of human rights is emerging as universalism replaces relativism in discourse on human rights. That is, there is less of a tendency to see universalism as an attempt to impose Western values on other cultures.

A host of new issues are being discussed in the human rights context. Often Canada finds itself with other than its traditional partners in forwarding rights issues. One alliance on behalf of advancing human rights rejoiced in the acronym JUSCANZ, for Japan, United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The department often works in partnership with nongovernmental organizations on rights issues.

Human rights and trade are not an either-or issue. Trade opens doors to apply pressure on human rights questions. The department is also working with the private sector to develop codes of conduct on their operations abroad.

Development of codes of conduct is more effective with large companies than small (some of which have been known to say that fascism is good for business) and is still just scratching the surface of the problem.

Human rights initiatives are not a sufficient response to great economic swings: "The UN human rights system cannot turn the tide around."