



PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

FOR RELEASE IN A.M. EDITIONS
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1958

ON DECEMBER 10, 1948, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ADOPTED THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROCLAIMED IT "AS A COMMON STANDARD OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL PEOPLES AND ALL NATIONS, TO THE END THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL AND EVERY ORGAN OF SOCIETY...SHALL STRIVE...TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR THESE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AND...TO SECURE THEIR UNIVERSAL AND EFFECTIVE RECOGNITION AND OBSERVANCE..."

TODAY ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION, THE CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS WILL JOIN WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS IN OBSERVING THE OCCASION AT A SPECIAL SESSION HELD TO HONOUR THE PRINCIPLES OF DECLARATION AND THE IDEALS OF HUMAN FREEDOM AND DIGNITY WHICH IT ASSERTS.

DETERMINATION TO DEFEND HUMAN FREEDOM FOUND EXPRESSION IN THE ATLANTIC CHARTER AND THE DECLARATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1942 AND IN 1945 WAS REFLECTED IN THE DRAFTING OF THOSE ARTICLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER, ESPECIALLY ARTICLES 55 AND 56, WHICH PLACE AN OBLIGATION ON MEMBER STATES TO PROMOTE UNIVERSAL RESPECT FOR AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS.

DEFINITION AND FORMULATION OF THESE RIGHTS HAS BEEN THE TASK OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT ON JUNE 21, 1946. AT ITS SECOND SESSION IN DECEMBER, 1947, THE COMMISSION CONCLUDED THAT THE DRAFTING OF AN INTERNATIONAL BILL OF RIGHTS SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THREE PARTS: A "DECLARATION" (A STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES), A "CONVENANT" (THE BASIS FOR A SUBSEQUENT