

strictly limited to prevent rehashing of old complaints and to promote concentration on areas of common interest.

A second meeting took place from 14-18 December, again in Cairns, with expanded and high level participation from the Bougainville Transitional Government (BTG) and the Bougainville Interim Government (BIG) and the BRA, as well as the four Bougainvillean MPs in the PNG Parliament. The meeting was also attended and co-chaired by representatives of the UN and Commonwealth Secretariats. During the talks the political future of Bougainville remained the major sticking point; however, the delegations agreed in a Joint Communique to continue the dialogue process leading up to reconvened talks on Bougainville itself, subject to the approval of the PNG Government.

The parties also hope to convene a small meeting to deal with administrative issues by the end of March 1996. It is hoped that the first full-scale meeting can be convened within the first six months of 1996. Two definite agenda items have already emerged, the withdrawal or garrisoning of PNGDF forces in Bougainville and the disarming of the BRA. The BRA have made it clear that they will not be in a position to disarm while PNGDF forces freely move about Bougainville nor until the terms and conditions of the "blanket amnesty" have been clarified in writing. In terms of human rights, the resolution of these two issues is imperative.

Although the hardline rebel leadership has generally stiffened its obstruction of peace efforts since July and the senior military officer on the island, Colonel Leo Nuia, has recently adopted increasingly aggressive tactics against the rebels, present indications are that progress toward reconciliation can be made. The Bougainville Transitional Government led by Theodore Miriung has widespread support for its policy of achieving normalcy while pursuing autonomy through negotiation.

The UN Commission on Human Rights, at its 51st session, considered it necessary to continue to keep the human rights situation in the Papua New Guinea island of Bougainville under review. The Commission has asked the Government of Papua New Guinea to invite its relevant thematic rapporteurs and working groups to monitor the peace process and to report on the situation of human rights in March 1996, at its 52nd session.

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada supports the territorial integrity of Papua New Guinea and the use of peaceful means to resolve the dispute. We welcome the establishment of a Human Rights Commission and a Police Complaints Bureau to investigate transgressions. We regret the abuse of human rights in Bougainville but are encouraged by the obvious desire of all parties to continue the peace process and to reach a political settlement in Bougainville through negotiation.