

Part of that tradition is a willingness to involve ourselves on behalf of individuals in other countries whose regimes abuse or ignore human rights which we regard as fundamental. There is a narrow view that argues that the practices of the Soviet Union, or of South Africa, or El Salvador or Nicaragua are internal to those countries, and no business of ours. Canada rejects that view. We signed and support the International Declaration of Human Rights, the Helsinki Accord, and other Agreements which assert the primacy of human rights.

As a democracy, tracing our traditions from the Magna Carta, we are particularly offended by the denial of basic rights in countries that claim to practice democracy, and to share our traditions, as South Africa claims.

Indeed, we accept the scrutiny and judgment of other countries regarding our own performance, and one of the early actions of the Mulroney Government was to change a provision of our Indian Act which contravened that part of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights relating to sexual discrimination against women.