

HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the end of World War II, we have been a consistently strong voice in the world's councils for the protection of human rights and the defense of democratic values. From the drafting of the UN Declaration on Human Rights fifty years ago, through specific actions taken in a vast range of forums and circumstances, Canada has always been there.

"I am deeply moved by the warmth and courage of the Canadian people which I felt so strongly during my recent visit to your country. Your support of the struggle against apartheid restored me in my journey home and reassured me that many people around the world are with us."

Desmond Tutu

SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHBISHOP, 1986



We have never been the "world's policeman" in the area of human rights, but we hope that our record demonstrates that we are a country for which foreign policy is motivated as much by conscience and principle as by interest. Canada does not expect other governments to respect standards which it does not apply to itself. As a signatory of all the principal UN treaties on international human rights, Canada regularly submits its human rights record to review by UN monitoring bodies.

By working through the Canadian International Development Agency, Canada continues to help societies build human rights capacity, through strengthening elections, the system for the administration of justice, legislatures and independent media. Projects funded have included peace and reconciliation initiatives, human rights education and activities to strengthen legislatures and judicial system.

Canada's efforts to advance the human rights of women internationally complement the work in this area at home. The priority we give and the progress made within Canada on issues of concern to women has contributed significantly to the active role we have played in international efforts to promote the human rights of women.