

a system to protect already existing investments in seabed mining for the period during which the Convention has not yet entered into force. Particularly noteworthy in this regard have been the ongoing efforts of interested states to develop a satisfactory method to resolve conflicts of overlapping claims for deep seabed mining sites in one particularly promising area of the Pacific. Canada has maintained the position that the resolution of this problem should be achieved on a comprehensive basis involving all "pioneer investors," as defined by Resolution II, including companies in private consortiums which may at a later stage register sites under the Convention.

Human rights and social affairs

The promotion and protection of human rights worldwide remains one of the central elements of Canadian foreign policy. Canada's international human rights objectives are pursued multilaterally through our continuing participation and active representation in the proceedings of various UN bodies — the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), ECOSOC and the Third Committee of the General Assembly. A Canadian, Justice Jules Deschênes, is also a member of the SubCommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities. These bodies continue to establish international standards, legal norms, and increasingly, implementation of these standards.

After consultations with the provinces, Canada signed the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on August 23, 1985. Consultations with the provinces (necessary prior to ratification) have been initiated.

An example of continued efforts to implement standards was exemplified by a Draft Declaration on the Right to Development presented to UNGA 40 by the Yugoslav delegation. As there was no agreement, the draft was referred back to the CHR for further work.

The annual report of the Human Rights Committee presented to UNGA 40 in 1985, contains the results of three cases brought by individuals against Canada under the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. All three cases were declared inadmissible.

The standard-setting work of the CHR continued at the forty-second session. The negotiation of a draft convention on the rights of the child is making good progress, with most of the substantive articles adopted on a first reading. A working group of the CHR drafting a declaration on the right of persons belonging to minorities considered a study on the question of definition of minorities, prepared by the Canadian member of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Human rights violations in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Afghanistan and Iran were reviewed at the CHR. For the first time, a strong but balanced resolution condemning the human rights situation in Chile was adopted by consensus. The Commission, also for the first time, approved a resolution calling for the establishment of a Special Rapporteur to report on non-compliance with the Declaration on Religious Intolerance. Canada continued to participate actively in the review of types of violations such as enforced or involuntary disappearances, states of siege, and summary or arbitrary executions.

At this year's session of the CHR, the Canadian delegation was privileged to witness the fruition of one of its initiatives: the launching of a new open-ended working group to draft a Declaration on the Right to Promote Human Rights (or Human Rights Defenders) chaired by Australia. This Working Group will meet again for one week immediately before the forty-third session of the CHR.

For the second year, Canada sent an observer delegation to the CHR. Led by Mr. Gordon Fairweather, Chief Commissioner, Canadian Human Rights Commission, and composed of officials from the federal and provincial governments, it participated in many of the debates and co-sponsored more than twenty resolutions.

Canada also announced its intention to seek election to the CHR at the ECOSOC elections held in the spring of 1986.

At the Spring Session of ECOSOC in May 1985, Canada actively supported changes to enable that body to carry out its obligations to oversee the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The existing working group of government experts was changed to a committee of 18 independent experts.

During the past year the International Organizations Bureau was reorganized. A new division called Human Rights and Social Affairs was created, establishing the structure for better co-ordination and integration of human rights factors in the overall foreign policy of the Department.

The new division has sought to increase consultative links with the large body of non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights issues. Prior to the forty-second session of the CHR, a two-day session of consultations was held at the Department. Representatives of major non-governmental human rights organizations presented briefs and participated in extensive discussions.

In the bilateral expression of Canadian policy on human rights, Canadian missions abroad continued to report on the human rights developments in their countries of accreditation and to make representations to host governments on particular situations or cases of interest to Canada. Visits by Canadian ministers and senior officials to the countries concerned, and visits to Canada by their counterparts from these states, also provided additional opportunities for the private but forceful expression of Canadian views on human rights issues.

Commission on the Status of Women

The 32-member Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the central body within the United Nations considering matters related to the advancement and integration of women. It meets biennially in Vienna to formulate recommendations on the concerns of women within the UN system for review by ECOSOC and subsequently by the UN General Assembly.

At the February 1986 meeting, Canada successfully proposed that CSW meet in a special 1987 session to discuss the very important revisions to the Medium-Term Plan and the System-Wide Medium-Term Plan for Women and Development. These UN budgetary revisions are needed to plan for the next fiscal period (1988-89 and 1990-95) to allow for the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.