



COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

ITEM 10 - QUESTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL PERSONS
SUBJECTED TO ANY FORM OF DETENTION OR IMPRISONMENT

STATEMENT OF THE OBSERVER DELEGATION OF CANADA
DELIVERED BY MR. THOMAS C. HAMMOND
FEBRUARY 22, 1988

Mr. Chairman,

Under this item the Commission addresses some of the most critical human rights issues on the international agenda. In this, the year in which we celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we should collectively rededicate ourselves to preserving and advancing cooperative measures to eliminate the scourges of torture and disappearances.

With respect to the sub-item relating to torture, we commend the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Kooijmans, for outlining in his report "a picture of the occurrence and the extent of the practice of torture in the world". We would make two points with respect to the work of the Special Rapporteur. First, we agree that his work in no way duplicates that of the newly-created Committee Against Torture, and there is therefore no foundation for the view that states parties to the Convention on Torture have, through ratification of the Convention, abrogated all of their responsibilities with respect to the Special Rapporteur. Second, we must once again emphasize the importance of cooperation with the Special Rapporteur. We note from his report that a number of states have yet to respond to his direct enquiries, despite reminders. We would urge those states to extend cooperation by replying to his questions. Only through complete cooperation will his work be effective.

I might add in this connection, Mr. Chairman, that my delegation has on previous occasions expressed the view that the Commission should not shrink from facing head-on the obstacles created by uncooperative governments in all areas of its work. Appropriate action might, for instance, include the insertion in relevant resolutions of specific references to chronically uncooperative governments.