

International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

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Organization's mandate/goals:

The International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, now known as Rights & Democracy, is a non-partisan organization with an international mandate. It officially opened its doors in October 1990 and works with individuals, organizations and governments in Canada and abroad to defend and promote human rights as defined in the International Bill of Human Rights. Rights & Democracy is a unique institution, bridging the gap between non-governmental organizations and governments, fostering dialogue between civil society and the State. It initiates and supports projects that advocate human rights and democratic development and strengthen the capacity of partners to do the same.

While its mandate is wide-ranging, Rights & Democracy focuses on four themes: democratic development, women's rights, the rights of indigenous peoples, and globalization and human rights. Funded by the government of Canada and other donors, Rights & Democracy provides financial, political, and technical support to its partners, which include human rights groups, indigenous peoples' organizations, women's rights groups, and democratic development. Rights & Democracy has initiated and supported 117 projects. Each project had an advocacy and/or capacity-building component and was related to one of the four themes.

Areas of expertise relevant to 2001 UN Conference on Small Arms:

Human and Social Development -- *Promote respect for human rights*

Rights & Democracy works in cooperation with Canadian and international partners to help advocate the principles of the International Bill of Human Rights and strengthen the capacity of local citizens to foster human rights and democratic institutions.

Working with Vulnerable Groups -- *Advocacy*

Through speeches, press releases, and conferences, Rights & Democracy raises the profile of international human rights issues in Canada, such as the restoration of democracy in Haiti, Peru and Burma, the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the ratification of the Rome Statute for an International Criminal Court, and the promotion of human rights in international trade agreements. The organization has been promoting the awareness of women's rights violations in armed conflict situations.