

Madam Chairman,

Violations of human rights do not occur in a vacuum. They occur in specific countries -- all too many countries, unhappily. Our commitment to human rights means nothing if we cannot address these country situations. We may meet objections if we do so. But we certainly fail in our obligations as Member States if we do not.

Madam Chairman,

The situation in **Burma** continues to deteriorate with massive abuses of human rights. Recent repressive measures against the Burmese democracy movement compound the military regime's long record of human rights violations. These developments cause mounting concern not only in the international community at large but also among Burma's neighbours. Canada calls on the Burmese authorities to respond to these concerns by cooperating with the international community in the implementation of all pertinent UN resolutions.

Canada expects **Nigeria** to meet all its commitments concerning the transition to democracy, and to follow up on the recommendations of the UN fact-finding mission. We urge the Nigerian authorities to make prompt and appropriate arrangements for the visit of the two thematic rapporteurs they have agreed to receive. Given its importance both on the African scene and internationally, it is essential that Nigeria set an irreproachable example of full respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens.

In **Afghanistan**, we are deeply troubled by reports of serious human rights violations, especially with respect to restrictions on the rights of women and their access to employment, health care and education. Canada calls on all Afghan factions to respect all of Afghanistan's international commitments on human rights.

The Government of **Iraq** continues to demonstrate a callous disregard for the lives and well-being of its citizens, particularly the Kurdish and Shi'a minorities. Canada calls on the Government to recognize and guarantee the rights of all Iraqis.

Canada remains deeply concerned by the treatment of religious minorities in **Iran**, particularly the Bahais, and by continuing interference with the rights of free expression and free assembly. Canada urges Iran to give UN special rapporteurs and independent human rights groups its full cooperation. Canada also calls on Iran to nullify the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie.