

ONUSAL's Human Rights Division is working with the Office of the National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights (Human Rights Ombudsman) to ensure its ability to assume ONUSAL's human rights verification activities. A joint verification mechanism has been in place since July 1994. The National Counsel is now operating regional offices and has received a budget increase of 33 per cent for 1995.

### CANADIAN POSITION

While recognizing the achievements thus far in the peace process, the Canadian government will continue to closely monitor the evolution of the human rights situation and the implementation of the peace accords in El Salvador.

In the past year, the Ambassador and other officials of the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala have made regular visits to El Salvador to assess the general political and human rights situations; maintaining an on-going dialogue with representatives of the Government of El Salvador, the United Nations Observer Mission (ONUSAL), the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman and numerous non-governmental organizations. In April 1994 the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa, the Honourable Christine Stewart, paid an official visit to El Salvador where she met with President Cristiani, among others, to convey the Canadian government's concerns about the human rights situation.

Since January 1992 the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has provided \$2.6 million in funds for human rights and democratic development projects in El Salvador. In 1995 a \$25 million five-year program for social reconstruction will begin.

The 50th Session of the CHR in March 1994 witnessed an extensive debate as to how the Commission should address the human rights situation in El Salvador. Canada worked with other delegations to reach a consensus on this issue which resulted in the Commission deciding to monitor the developments in human rights in El Salvador under the agenda item "Advisory Services in the field of human rights", and the renewal of the Independent Expert's mandate for another year. As the present Government of El Salvador has made a formal arrangement to cooperate with the Independent Expert, Canada will support continued consideration of the situation in El Salvador at the 51st session of the CHR.