

From the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights over 50 years ago through recent contributions and actions, Canada has been a strong voice in human rights matters. More recent initiatives include Canada's role in establishing the International Criminal Court; contributions to draft the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women; and work to protect children from sexual exploitation and from child labour.

In the belief that international peace and security can best be served through economic and social development, Canada has been a strong advocate and major contributor to the work of the many UN specialized agencies concerned with these matters over the years.

For example, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Canada has led in promoting Child Health and Nutrition Days, an initiative that integrates the delivery of vaccines, vitamin A, deworming medications, and other lifesaving interventions. Canada has also been working with UNICEF and the UN World Food Programme to better target emergency food aid to those most in need and to improve the nutritional quality of food-aid rations.

A strong supporter of environmental protection, Canada has also played an important role on the international stage by supporting the Kyoto Protocol, contributing to the UN-led Forest Principles, and being one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Today, the United Nations is facing challenges and pressures unimagined by its founders. No one country can meet all of the challenges on its own. The need for effective multilateral co-operation is greater than ever. Canada is committed to continuing its work with a revitalized UN system, one that is ready to meet the challenges of promoting international peace and security, human rights, and economic, social and cultural development in the 21st century.

Facts and figures

- The two-year regular budget for core UN functions in 2004 and 2005 is \$3.16 billion US, (about \$4 billion Cdn). These functions include secretariat operations in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi, and the five regional commissions.
- Canada's assessed contribution to the UN regular budget for 2004 is about \$53.1 million. Based on Canada's population of 32 million, this is about \$1.66 a person. Canada continues to be the seventh largest contributor to the UN regular budget.
- The UN Budget Honour Roll at www.un.org/News/ocg/hon2004.htm provides a status report on member state contributions to the UN regular budget for 2004. As of Feb. 9, 2004, 37 of 191 UN member states had paid