

system of agreed rules. This is the best way for developing countries - and indeed for all countries - to ensure their access to global markets.

Another crucial obstacle to the implementation of the right to development identified by the Working Group is the continued discrimination against women, indigenous people and many vulnerable groups - such as persons with disabilities - in the development process.

Canada entirely agrees that women should be full participants in, and beneficiaries of, an integrated approach to development. Obstacles to the rights of women to full and equal participation, land and property ownership, health care, and education must be eliminated. And all forms of violence - societal or domestic - affecting women and children must be eradicated. Similarly, the inherent dignity and the unique contribution of indigenous people to the development and plurality of society should also be recognized.

Popular participation in the development process does not mean bypassing governments. The effective implementation of the right to development requires committed governments and public services. At the same time, a more determined emphasis on individual initiative and private sector promotion is equally necessary. More and more, this will require shifting away from bilateral channels of aid and building on local and national NGOs and private sectors, in order to foster a more participatory decision-making process in the implementation of the right to development.

My delegation agrees with the Working Group's conclusion that Member States bear the ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the right to development. We also agree with the Working Group that development cannot be seen as an imported phenomenon, or one that is based on the charity of developed nations. Advancing the cause of the right to development, and of all universally recognized human rights, does not imply the imposition of "western values" or forms of government. Guarantees of basic rights and freedoms can and do translate into different institutional structures based on specific national traditions, needs and habits of thought, just as economic and social programs are shaped according to national circumstances.

We welcome the Working Group's view that democracy, good governance and development are mutually reinforcing. The implementation of the right to development requires that all individuals and groups - including the vulnerable ones - take an active part in the decision-making and development processes of their own society. A vigorous civil society is indispensable for implementing the right to development, which must include ensuring respect for economic, social and cultural rights. As mentioned by the Secretary-General in his first report on the Agenda for Development, democracy provides the only long-term basis for managing competing ethnic,