

**HUMAN RIGHTS LAW: A HALF-CENTURY OF PROGRESS**

Over the years, Canada has been a partner in the building of an elaborate network of international conventions, declarations and other instruments that

set out the standards for the protection of human rights. The list starts with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, and includes:

# ICE:

## New institutions

## bring war criminals

## within range

## of justice

- the establishment of the Commission on Human Rights, the UN's main policy-making body on human rights issues, plus its subcommissions on the prevention of discrimination against minorities;
- the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;
- the 1965 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- the 1977 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- the 1977 Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- the 1979 Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- the 1985 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- the 1990 Convention on the Rights of the Child, including two Optional Protocols currently being negotiated—one relating to the prohibition of the sale of children or child pornography, and another for the elimination of the use of children in armed conflict; and
- the establishment of the Commissions on the Status of Women and on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the main UN policy-making bodies on gender equality and criminal justice respectively.



photos: CANAPRESS

Canada is also supporting the work of such bodies as UNICEF, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

Of course, much remains to be done to stop war crimes and bring offenders to justice. Now, however, there is an international will along with the accompanying instruments to hold offenders accountable for their acts. ●