

In 1998, the "strike hard" (yanda) anti-crime, anti-corruption campaign continued, with a large number of arrests resulting in harsh sentences, including widespread use of the death penalty. Even under China's reformed criminal code and procedure, accused persons have not always been accorded **due process** and appropriate procedural safeguards. In addition, the death penalty is being administered more frequently for non-violent crimes. There are some indications, however, that China recognizes the need for better trained judges and a more modern judicial system, and some steps have been taken in this direction.

The human rights situation in the regions of Tibet, Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia remains a special concern to Canada. In these regions the "strike hard" campaign has led to the arrest and imprisonment of Tibetans, Uygurs and Mongolians for alleged separatist activities. While often difficult to confirm, the reports of repression by the Chinese officials and police agencies are both serious and numerous.

With respect to the human rights situation of more **vulnerable groups**, discrimination on the basis of sex, language, race, gender and ethnicity are illegal and religious freedom is protected under the constitution. There are only partial guarantees of equality for disabled individuals. Perhaps more importantly, the implementation of these rights through enforceable pieces of legislation and other mechanisms is often incomplete or non-existent.

### **CANADIAN POSITION**

Canada remains very concerned about the human rights situation in China. A central goal of Canada's policy towards China is to promote a greater respect for human rights by supporting and initiating positive change in Chinese attitudes and actions on human rights questions. In 1998 Canada used its **bilateral human rights dialogue** with China to express its concern on a range of issues including: children's rights, women's rights, minority rights and the rights of the accused.

Canada has launched a number of initiatives to promote human rights, good government and respect for the rule of law in China. Our goal is to **promote change from within**, through ongoing dialogue with the Chinese government and through support for projects such as the provision of legal aid for the accused.

The major components of **Canada's package of human rights initiatives** include: the establishment of a Canada China Joint Committee on Human Rights to address human rights concerns, assistance with the review of China's Criminal Procedure Law, assistance in the training of judges, development of a legal aid system, promotion of women's rights and addressing China's obligations under UN Conventions. Many of these initiatives were designed and implemented by CIDA in partnership with Canadian and Chinese NGOs. Another result of this bilateral package of human rights initiatives was the International Symposium on Human Rights, which Canada co-hosted with China in British Columbia in 1998.

Canada continues to raise human rights concerns during meetings with Chinese government officials and Ministers. Canada registers concerns about human rights abuses both in general terms and regarding specific cases, where appropriate. Canada continues to make reference to China in our annual "country situation" statements at the **UN General Assembly Third Committee** and the **CHR**, and to support multilateral initiatives which promote our human rights objectives.