

HUMAN RIGHTS

A total of 57 instruments are listed in the UN Document "Human Rights: a Compilation of International Instruments" produced in 1983. With the adoption of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in December 1984, there are now 58 instruments. Of these 58, 31 are treaties (this term includes covenants, conventions and protocols). The remainder are declarations, codes and standard minimum rules.

Canada is party to 20 of these 31 treaties. More importantly we are party to five of the six major human rights instruments, i.e. the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The one major human rights convention to which Canada is not party is the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

On August 23, 1985 Canada signed the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Discussions have been initiated with the provinces and territories with a view to considering legislative changes that may be necessary to enable Canada to fully implement the Convention and subsequently to ratify it.

CANADIAN REPORTS UNDER THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS

Canada represented a supplementary report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to the Human Rights Committee on October 30 - November 1, 1984. Our first report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was presented to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in January 1985. A first report on articles 13 - 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was tabled in Parliament and submitted to the United Nations in April 1985. Our seventh report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was submitted to the United Nations in August 1985. Subject to translation-time and committee scheduling, Canada may be called upon to present these latter two reports to the relevant committee in the coming year.