

**COMMENT ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE UN SPECIAL
RAPPORTEUR ON THE SITUATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL
FREEDOMS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
AT THE 4th SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

- Canada welcomes the reports of the Special Rapporteur, re-affirms our support for the important work carried out by Dr. Stavenhagen, calls for closer cooperation with and support for the Special Rapporteur, in particular from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and appreciates that the Special Rapporteur has noted a few of the "best practices" which reflect the positive relations between the government and Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
- ~~However,~~ ^{In} the interest of promoting real and on-going dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, Canada feels it is important to comment on areas in the report which in our view do not adequately or accurately reflect Canada's positions. In particular, when making reference to the so-called Kelowna Accord, the Special Rapporteur also should have referred to the concrete and practical steps of the new government to deal with the pertinent issues involved in cooperation with Aboriginal peoples. Budget 2006 provided \$3.7 billion to support both Aboriginal peoples and northern communities, with initiatives in the areas of education, water safety, and the protection Aboriginal women's rights, among others .
- ~~In addition,~~ ^{The} Special Rapporteur did not provide a balanced commentary on Canada's vote against the Draft Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous peoples at the Human Rights Council in June 2006. Canada has worked since the mid-1980s, for a Declaration that would promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of every indigenous person without discrimination and recognize the collective rights of indigenous peoples around the world. Unfortunately, the current Draft Declaration does not help in providing practical guidance to States, indigenous peoples and multilateral organizations as parts of the text are vague and ambiguous, leaving it open to different, and possibly competing, interpretations.
- Canada is committed to renewed negotiations and to achieving an effective Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Canada supports the development of a process for future consultations on the Draft Declaration that is open, transparent and includes indigenous participation.