

Canada

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
SOUS RÉSERVE DE MODIFICATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

**AMBASSADOR GILBERT LAURIN
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF CANADA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE
60TH SESSION OF UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ITEM 71c: RIGHT OF REPLY

NEW YORK, 7 NOVEMBER 2005

DÉCLARATION DE

**L'AMBASSADEUR GILBERT LAURIN
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. DU CANADA
AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES**

**À LA TROISIÈME COMMISSION
60^E SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES NATIONS UNIES**

POINT 71c : DROIT DE RÉPONSE

NEW YORK, LE 7 NOVEMBRE 2005

Mr. Chairperson,

We heard the statement on Wednesday from the distinguished representative of Iran, which was exclusively devoted to Canada.

We certainly agree that no country can claim a perfect human rights record. And we certainly agree that we all need guidance, assistance and collective wisdom to move forward.

By any reasonable set of indicators, Canada takes its human rights obligations extremely seriously. No one in Canada is sent to jail for having expressed an opinion. Anyone can run for political office. We do not execute juveniles, or anyone else for that matter.

Yet, we know there are areas where we need to improve. What characterizes Canada is that we acknowledge our challenges, and we have a desire to progress. What characterizes Canada is that there are open and vibrant public debates on human rights issues and what needs to be done to address them. There are also well established independent legal institutions through which people whose rights have been violated can seek redress.

Further, what characterizes Canada is that we cooperate fully with all UN institutions and mechanisms on human rights. We welcome their reviews of Canada's situation, and take their findings and recommendations seriously.

We would encourage delegations to read all UN reports on human rights in Canada, and to read them in their entirety.

Mr. Chairperson,

If only countries with a perfect human rights record were allowed to speak out internationally on human rights, I am afraid there would be silence in this room.

Canada, even as it works to advance human rights domestically, will continue to speak out on human rights wherever we see challenges. We encourage others to do so as well. Unfortunately, the statement by the distinguished representative of Iran is nothing more than an effort to deflect attention from the very serious and troubling human rights situation in that country. If there is to be true advancement in the area of human rights in the world, all member states must be prepared to engage in an open, transparent and honest discussion leading to decisions that stimulate progress. Let all of us benefit from the collective wisdom and re-double our efforts to address these serious problems.