Government of Canada Policy for CIDA on Human Rights, Democratization and Good Governance

Canada

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Canada's policy for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) on human rights, democracy and good governance is situated within the framework of Canadian foreign policy and overall Government objectives. The foreign policy statement, *Canada in the World,* has noted:

> *The Government regards respect for human rights not only as a fundamental value, but also as a crucial element in the development of stable, democratic and prosperous societies at peace with each other. (page 34)*

Objectives for CIDA are tied closely to the three key objectives the Government has identified for its international actions in the years to come: the promotion of prosperity, the protection of our security within a stable global framework, and the projection of Canadian values of democracy and the rule of law, and culture. The Government recognizes that a broad approach is required to build a more secure world, one that for Canada includes promoting international cooperation, building stability and preventing conflict. Canadians expect our relations with the rest of the world, including with developing countries through the development assistance program, to be guided by such values as respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. This policy builds on those values.

All development assistance links Canadians with people in developing countries. Our cooperation and exchanges give us opportunities in every project, every day, to express our values, to help others understand them, and to support those who strive to increase respect for human rights and democracy and improve governance in their own societies. We recognize that events unfold rapidly, often in unpredictable ways, with outcomes that are far from certain. We are also aware that progress will be achieved only over periods of time better measured in decades, than in years. Development of durable institutions and the democratic culture to sustain them is a lengthy undertaking; a long-term perspective is intrinsic to CIDA's work.

2. HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRATIZATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: POLICY AND OBJECTIVES FOR CIDA

Human rights are founded on the inherent dignity of the human person. As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Democratization builds the effective participation of individuals in decision making and the exercise of power in society, both through the formal processes of democracy, and through the organizations of civil society that give voice to popular concerns. Good governance ensures the effective, honest, equitable and accountable exercise of power by governments.

The values that underlie human rights, democracy and good governance -- among them respect for human dignity, justice, equity, participation and accountability -- are deeply held throughout the world. Their importance to Canadians is demonstrated in efforts to address concerns about rights at many levels in our own society, through the framework of law, through federal and provincial institutions, and in the work of community-based organizations throughout the country.

Respect for human rights, democratization and good governance are important, in their own right, for the security of individual children, women and men and the development of the societies in which they live. These three issues are integral to CIDA's purpose, to promote sustainable development in developing countries in order to reduce poverty and to contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world. CIDA's vision of sustainable development builds on the inherent link between political, economic, environmental, social and cultural processes in all societies and seeks to integrate this understanding into the Agency's efforts to promote development. Underpinning this vision is the recognition that the equitable distribution of power and resources within and between societies, and public participation in decision making, are critical to the success of CIDA's work.

Together, respect for rights, democratization and good governance create the framework of society within which the development efforts of people, whether working as individuals, as groups in civil society, or through their governments, can be effective. Canada's interest in a more just, more stable and more prosperous world requires that the Canadian government, through the development assistance program, addresses rights, democracy and governance concerns in the context of promoting sustainable development. CIDA's dialogue and program initiatives are important instruments for expressing Canadian values, and in working to build a more just, secure and prosperous world for all.

> *With respect to the development cooperation program administered by CIDA, the Government's policy is to enhance the will and capacity of developing country societies to respect the rights of children, women and men, and to govern effectively and in a democratic manner.*

OBJECTIVES

CIDA will seek to strengthen:

* *the role and capacity of civil society in developing countries in order to increase popular participation in decision making;*

* *democratic institutions in order to develop and sustain responsible government;*

* *the competence of the public sector in order to promote the effective, honest and accountable exercise of power;*

* *the capacity of organizations that protect and promote human rights in order to enhance each society's ability to address rights concerns and strengthen the security of the individual; and*

* *the will of leaders to respect rights, rule democratically and govern effectively.*

The Government's approach to rights, democracy and governance, expressed in these CIDA objectives, is broad. It emphasizes organizations in civil society as key vehicles for articulating popular concerns and channelling popular participation in decision and policy making. It also focuses on governments for their responsibility to respect rights and govern well, in an honest, effective and accountable manner. It encompasses processes such as elections and the rule of law, which comprise formal democracy, as well as responsible institutions. It also includes decision makers who must demonstrate political will and leadership. This approach includes a wide range of activities to foster rights, democracy and governance, and a wide range of partners.

The Government's approach is practical and results-oriented. It recognizes that it is the people of developing countries, their organizations and governments, who play the central role and hold prime responsibility for achieving progress. The fundamental principles are universal, although each society and each region crafts its own approach, drawing on its culture, history, and political and economic legacy. Canadians and their government, through CIDA, play a critical but supporting role, drawing on our heritage. CIDA does not seek to export particular Canadian institutions or practices; rather, the Agency seeks to work carefully and sensitively with those in developing countries who are best placed to achieve positive change.

3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

CIDA's record of action with respect to human rights, democratization and good governance dates back many years, involving all program branches. CIDA works with a broad range of partners, including governments, non-governmental organizations and other organizations in civil society, and inter-governmental organizations. Initiatives include dialogue and funding related to a broad range of activities, such as peace and reconciliation initiatives, human rights education, widening access to legal remedies, strengthening legislatures, and public sector reform.

POLICY COHERENCE

Canadian development assistance initiatives are most effective when they are part of a coherent Canadian approach, based on clearly articulated objectives, solid analysis of events and trends, and the coordinated use of policy instruments. The impact of CIDA's actions can be blunted when information and analysis are lacking or faulty, when objectives are unclear and when other foreign policy measures work at cross purposes. Greater coherence does not imply uniformity, however. Canadian

responses must continue to reflect the particular characteristics of each situation and the differing potentials for effective action.

The development perspective articulated by CIDA is not the only interest to be reflected in Canadian foreign policy; political and commercial interests are also important. CIDA is in a position, however, to effectively advocate development perspectives in the long-term interest of Canada, in keeping with the purpose of the official development assistance (ODA) program and the Agency's program and policy experience. CIDA will work to build more coherent and more effective foreign policy on rights, democracy and governance, with respect to developing countries, by:

❖ seeking coherence with the broad international consensus on rights, democracy and governance issues reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, and declarations adopted at recent UN conferences on environment and development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), human rights (Vienna, 1993), population and development (Cairo, 1994), and women (Beijing, 1995); and at the children's summit (New York, 1990) and the social summit (Copenhagen, 1995);

❖ ensuring effective policy coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade;

❖ ensuring proper interdepartmental consultation with such departments as

Defence, Finance and Environment; and

❖ working with provincial governments and other agencies in the public sector, including the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, the International Development Research Centre and the Export Development Corporation, to share information and program insights.

PROMOTE DIALOGUE

Through dialogue on rights, democracy and governance issues, pursued at many levels, CIDA seeks to deepen its own understanding of the interests and positions of partner organizations and governments, and to influence the development of the partners' approaches. Like all participants, CIDA learns a great deal through dialogue and incorporates this knowledge into its own policies and programs. The process is not coercive in nature, but positive, and mutually beneficial. For CIDA to play an effective role requires a depth of country and issue knowledge, policy and program coherence, and where appropriate, financial support for dialogue and related program initiatives.

CIDA will promote dialogue on rights, democracy and governance issues by:

❖ encouraging Canadian and developing country organizations in civil society to engage in dialogue amongst themselves, with their societies, governments,

donor agencies and multilateral institutions;

❖ engaging, as an Agency, in dialogue with partner organizations to reinforce the mutual understanding and priority placed on these issues in policy and programs;

❖ working with international financial institutions and other multilateral organizations to integrate the objectives of this policy into their work, through Canada's participation in their governing bodies, in international meetings, and through ongoing dialogue; and

❖ working in concert with other governments to build understanding, identify issues, share concerns and discuss policy options, including with developing country governments through regular contacts as well as with other donor agencies.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING

By working closely with many local organizations in developing countries, CIDA helps to build their capacity to advocate for access to the legal system, advance the rights of children and women, and, increasingly, to hold governments accountable for their actions. In its work with governments, CIDA helps to build the skills and structures required for governing well. CIDA adjusts bilateral aid allocations to take into account the priority placed by recipient governments on social sector spending vis-à-vis military expenditures. Through the multilateral system,

CIDA supports initiatives that address rights, democracy and governance issues.

Development agencies active in this field agree that there are few formulas for success. As the importance of rights, democracy and governance for sustainable development comes to be recognized, it is important for CIDA and others to test approaches, monitor and evaluate initiatives, and build this learning into future policy and programming. Reflecting lessons drawn from its experience, CIDA will place strong emphasis on local participation and ownership in all stages of programming, and on increased program coordination with developing country governments and institutions, international organizations and development agencies.

CIDA program branches will continue to build programming in this area by:

❖ analyzing the context of developing countries, the needs of partners, opportunities for action, and the capacity of Canadian partners to intervene effectively;

❖ developing explicit objectives for rights, democracy and governance programming, particularly within the scope of regional/country development policy framework documents and institutional support strategies; and

❖ continuing to increase programming that directly address rights, democracy and governance objectives.

ADDRESS NEGATIVE IMPACTS

CIDA is sensitive to the reality that projects can occasionally have harmful, if unintended, impacts on particular groups – for example, those displaced by large infrastructure projects without adequate consultation or compensation. CIDA will seek to prevent adverse impacts by:

❖ consulting with partners and other development agencies to share information and identify promising approaches for the assessment of human rights impacts of programs and policies; and

❖ investigating and consulting with affected groups and concerned organizations with a view to resolving problems.

RESPOND TO EXTREME SITUATIONS

In serious human rights situations, Canada's first goal is to work for change with the government and civil society. In doing so, Canada will use all possible means, continuing to cooperate in order to ensure leverage and exert influence.

Before deciding to take further action, Canada will take care to avoid hurting even more those who are suffering abuses and whom we are trying to help.

Canada may need to implement additional measures when the first course of action is insufficient. To the extent possible, the Government implements measures in concert with other countries, coordinating through such organizations as the Commonwealth, la Francophonie and the United Nations.

It is clear that a collective approach is one of the most effective ways of expressing Canada's deep concern. In extreme circumstances, the Government might have to examine a range of measures including development assistance and other instruments of foreign policy.

4. *MONITORING AND EVALUATION*

Implementation of this policy will be achieved through the actions of CIDA's corporate and program branches. Also important are the actions of other departments and agencies implementing programs with official development assistance funds, Canadian and international non-governmental organizations, professional associations, educational and other institutions. CIDA will identify roles and responsibilities within the Agency to monitor the implementation of this policy and will continue efforts to clarify the roles of partner departments and agencies.

The Political and Social Policies Division of Policy Branch will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The Division will work closely with CIDA corporate and program branches to assemble and review program information, and with the group responsible for maintaining the corporate database to ensure project information is recorded and retrievable.

Companion Documents

1. An indicative listing of CIDA interventions and partner agencies in the areas of human rights, democratization and good governance

This note outlines in broad terms the types of interventions taken or supported by CIDA in the areas of human rights, democratization and governance, and the partner agencies in Canada and in developing countries with which CIDA works.

Types of interventions

CIDA has supported a wide range of interventions in support of human rights, democratization and good governance objectives. Among these have been initiatives to:

➢ strengthen the advocacy role of organizations in civil society, including building the capacity for independent social, economic and political analysis, through training, technical assistance, participation in conferences and international networking;

➢ build the service role of organizations in civil society through funding for institutional development and program initiatives addressing particular needs, for example, the legal rights of street children, humanitarian and legal support for political prisoners and their families, human rights concerns of indigenous peoples, and human rights education;

➢ build the participation in civil society and the political process more generally of women and other marginalized groups in society, through support for education and outreach programs, and policy development;

➢ build the role of an independent, responsible media through training, technical assistance and linkages between journalists;

➢ improve the functioning of the legal system, for example, through the training of judges and practitioners, provision of equipment and facilities, and the provision and dissemination of statutes and law reports;

➢ assist in the creation and strengthening of national human rights institutions such as human rights commissions and ombuds offices;

➢ support commissions of investigation, truth commissions and international human rights monitors;

➢ support the reform of police and security forces, the creation of new police forces as part of peace processes, and the training of staff;

➢ support law reform, for example, in relation to gender equality, land rights, family law, the media and conditions of work, through technical assistance and study tours;

➢ widen access to the law through public outreach, legal education, pamphlets on legal issues, training of paralegal workers, and provision of paralegal services;

➢ support improvements in the functioning of democratic institutions such as legislatures, legislative committees,

research branches, offices of the Speaker, through training, provision of equipment and facilities, study tours to Canada and linkages to Canadian institutions;

➢ support the development of electoral processes, including voter education campaigns, strengthening electoral institutions, providing Canadian observers, supporting domestic observer groups, providing materials and equipment and assisting with electoral mapping;

➢ develop post-secondary education programs that build knowledge and skills in such areas as human rights law, law reform and policy development;

➢ support conflict resolution and dialogue initiatives through sponsoring fora, mediation initiatives, networking and linkages to concerned Canadian organizations;

➢ support governments undergoing democratic transitions, for example, by providing technical assistance on such issues as public service reform, law reform, regulatory reform and policy development, and by upgrading the knowledge and skills of the new leadership;

➢ assist demobilization of ex-combatants in support of peace/reconciliation initiatives, for example, by providing humanitarian assistance, supporting land registration and transfer programs, and assisting the development of cooperatives;

➢ support initiatives to remove anti-personnel mines;

➢ assist governments in developing procedures for financial accountability, such as technical assistance and networking to build the capacity of audit institutions and public accounts committees;

➢ work with other donor agencies to share information and program insights, and coordinate program interventions and policy approaches; and

➢ encourage international financial institutions and regional development banks to increase the priority placed on rights, democracy and good governance in their policies and programs.

Program partners

CIDA works with a wide range of program partners to achieve the objectives of the Government policy for CIDA on human rights, democratization and good governance.

In developing countries, CIDA works with:

➢ departments and agencies of government, including:

  • departments responsible for justice, prisons, police, internal security, primary and post-secondary education, foreign affairs;

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- central agencies responsible for check and balance mechanisms and public sector reform, such as auditors general, public service commissions, and treasury boards;
- agencies responsible for the conduct of elections, such as electoral commissions;
- legislatures and legislative institutions such as the Speaker, legislative committees dealing with justice and public accounts, and the research bureau/branch;
- national institutions responsible for human rights protection, including ombuds, human rights commissions, police complaint boards;
- the court system, including magistrates courts, courts of appeal, supreme courts;
- law reform commissions; and
- educational institutions, including universities, colleges, management training institutes.

➢ organizations in civil society, including:

- grassroots non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working at the community level, focused on particular issues, or based in particular sectors of society; for example: women's rights, health, social welfare, children's issues, education, popular theatre, legal advice, refugee support, people with disabilities, consumers rights;
- national NGOs that address such issues, and umbrella organizations;
- churches and church-based organizations;

- cooperatives and cooperative federations;
- media;
- indigenous communities, and community organizations;
- trade unions, and trade union federations;
- professional associations, including lawyers, doctors, nurses, auditors, public administrators;
- business associations, such as chambers of commerce; and
- regional and international NGOs and networks, and regional and international trade unions and labour organizations.

➢ regional and international inter-governmental organizations, including:

- human rights commissions and courts;
- units of regional organizations such as the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, and the Organization of American States created to address human rights, law, gender equality, and the status of children.

Canadian program partners

CIDA also works with a wide range of Canadian-based partners in order to achieve the objectives of the policy on human rights, democratization and good governance, supporting their own programs and utilizing their expertise to implement development projects initiated by CIDA.

Among such organizations are:

- departments and agencies of the federal and provincial governments, including justice departments, auditors general, public service commissions, human rights commissions and ombuds;
- professional associations, including associations of lawyers, journalists and public administrators;
- development NGOs;
- church-based organizations;
- labour unions and labour solidarity funds;
- indigenous peoples' organizations;
- educational institutions, such as universities and community colleges, and their associations; and
- Canadian-based international NGOs.

2. Principles guiding CIDA action in response to particularly serious human rights situations

In serious human rights situations, Canada's first goal is to work for change with the government and civil society. In doing so, Canada will use all possible means, continuing to cooperate in order to ensure Canada has leverage and exerts influence. Before deciding to take further action, Canada will take care to avoid hurting even more those who are suffering abuses and whom we are trying to help.

Canada may need to implement additional measures when the first course of action is insufficient. To the extent possible, the Government implements measures in concert with other countries, coordinating through such organizations as the Commonwealth, la Francophonie and the United Nations. It is clear that a collective approach is one of the most effective ways of expressing Canada's deep concern. In extreme circumstances, the Government might have to examine a range of measures, including development assistance and other instruments of foreign policy.

In its approach to serious human rights situations, CIDA seeks to:

➢ consult concerned Canadians, including non-governmental organizations, institutions, private sector organizations and individuals, before actions are taken;

➢ coordinate development assistance measures with other foreign policy measures as part of an overall Government strategy;

➢ implement measures in concert with other donor countries to the extent possible;

➢ base its actions on a broad development analysis that incorporates rights, democracy and governance; CIDA's actions will not be based on an assessment of a recipient government's rights, democracy and governance performance alone;

➢ build an approach consisting of constructive initiatives, such as support for human rights organizations and other non-governmental organizations, wherever possible, in addition to punitive measures;

➢ target measures appropriately, for maximum effectiveness;

➢ minimize the extent to which measures impose a double penalty on those already victimized by abusive governments;

➢ specify desired results and place emphasis on realistic, achievable objectives;

➢ establish realistic time-frames for the achievement of results;

➢ inform Parliament and the Canadian public of the details of all measures taken; and

➢ closely monitor the implementation of all measures and assess their impact in terms of the objectives of the Government's policy for CIDA on human rights, democratization and good governance.

3. Measures to build the capacity of CIDA and its partners

To achieve the objectives of the Government's policy for CIDA on human rights, democratization and good governance, CIDA is taking steps to further develop its own capacity and that of its partners to undertake policy, dialogue and program initiatives.

Information

CIDA will seek out information on rights, democracy and governance for development assistance policy and programs. CIDA will:

➣ participate actively in the preparation and review of the Department of Foreign Affairs' regular rights, democracy and governance assessments for those countries receiving Canadian development assistance;

➣ gather additional relevant information from non-governmental organizations, the private sector, international organizations, other governments, academics and others on an ongoing basis;

➣ through CIDA`s International Development Information Centre, inform staff of, and ensure they have access to, relevant academic and professional literature; and

➣ support non-governmental organizations' efforts to gather and direct information to the attention of public officials.

Consultation

CIDA will consult and exchange information and experiences with partner organizations in Canada and developing countries, and with other donors. The purpose of this exercise is to improve the quality of policy and programs. CIDA will:

➣ include rights, democracy and governance in regular consultations with partner organizations and recipient governments, and in specially organized consultations dealing with particular issues, countries or regions; and

➣ consult informally with individuals and organizations on an ongoing basis.

Analysis

CIDA will undertake rights, democracy and governance analysis and incorporate it into Agency strategic planning, policy development, program branch strategies, regional/country development policy frameworks, and positions for donor consultative groups and meetings of intergovernmental organizations. This will complement CIDA's current analysis of Canadian interests in developing countries, including environmental, economic, social, commercial, political and humanitarian considerations.

CIDA branches will analyze:

➣ development needs and constraints with respect to rights, democracy and governance, program opportunities and implementation capacity in developing countries and in Canada.

New tools

CIDA will further build the understanding and skills of its staff and that of partner organizations, and will develop new tools to increase programming expertise. Activities to support this approach include:

➢ the continuation of efforts to identify best practices and results of Agency initiatives with respect to rights, democracy and governance, and to develop indicators of performance;

➢ the development and application of guidelines in key areas and with respect to particular disadvantaged or vulnerable groups;

➢ the identification and exploration of "niches" within which Canadian interventions can be particularly effective, drawing on Canadian expertise and programming capacity;

➢ the preparation of tools, including studies of Canadian and local capacity to implement programming, frameworks for analysis, needs assessments, identification of potential negative impacts, project level indicators, and evaluation approaches;

➢ the systematic identification of lessons learned through monitoring, evaluation and dialogue with partners, and their application to policies and programs; and

➢ the development of staff and managers' skills to analyze, plan, implement and evaluate programs, including through training courses.

Integration into CIDA systems

CIDA will incorporate rights, democracy and governance analysis and the objectives of this policy into guidelines and administrative processes of the Agency, including, for example:

➢ guidelines for the preparation of regional/country development policy frameworks;

➢ frameworks for program and project funding of non-governmental organizations;

➢ guidelines for Canadian missions abroad on the use of Canada Funds;

➢ evaluation systems; and

➢ project information tracking.

Communications

CIDA will inform the Canadian public, parliamentarians and partner organizations about CIDA's rights, democracy and governance policy and programs in order to build greater understanding of how these initiatives relate to the public's expectations of the aid program. CIDA will:

➢ develop a comprehensive rights, democracy and governance communications strategy for the Agency, and incorporate these issues into branch communications strategies;

➣ produce and disseminate regular reports on Agency rights, democracy and governance initiatives; and

➣ disseminate reports on the implementation of this policy.

Internal practice

CIDA will continue to incorporate respect for the principles of human rights and democracy in the internal practice of the Agency, including principles outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, and the Employment Equity Act.

4. Definitions of human rights, democratization, civil society and good governance

Human rights

'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.'

(Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1)

Human rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are fundamental to the well-being of the individual and to the existence of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

The key international documents defining human rights are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Together, they comprise the International Bill of Rights. Among the rights elaborated in these documents are:

➢ Economic, social and cultural rights, including:

- the right to an adequate standard of living including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.
- the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- the right to education, including free primary education which shall be compulsory, and to accessible secondary, technical and professional, and higher education.
- the right to work, to receive equal pay for work of equal value, and to protection against unemployment.
- the right of minorities to enjoy their own culture, religion and language.
- the right to participate in the cultural life of one's community.

➢ Civil and political rights, including:

- the right to life, liberty and security of the person.
- the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- the right to a nationality and to reside in one's country.
- the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
- the right to vote and be elected in periodic and genuine elections held by secret ballot.
- the right to be free from arbitrary interference with one's privacy, family, home or correspondence.
- the right to own property.
- legal rights such as the rights to due process of law, equal protection of the law, to not be subject to cruel or inhuman punishment, or torture, to be free from arbitrary arrest, detention or exile, and to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- such freedoms as the freedom of movement and lawful residence within the borders of a state, of thought, conscience and religion, opinion and

expression, peaceful assembly and association.

Democratization

By democratization we mean strengthening popular participation in the exercise of power, building democratic institutions and practices, and deepening democratic values in society.

Mechanisms for participation include formal processes such as elections and referenda. Participation also takes place less formally through a wide range of independent popular organizations (referred to collectively as "civil society") which serve to articulate and channel people's concerns. Democratic institutions include federal and provincial/state legislatures and municipal councils, and institutions such as the judiciary that are responsible for the rule of law.

A strong democratic society will be marked by respect for human rights, particularly the "democratic rights" of freedom of opinion, expression and association, the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, and to vote and be elected at genuine and periodic elections held by secret ballot. It will be characterized by a strong and vibrant civil society, and tolerance for dissent and opposition, an active, independent media, an independent judiciary, and

a high level of public understanding of and participation in the political process.

Civil society

The term civil society refers broadly to organizations and associations of people, formed for social or political purposes, that are not created or mandated by governments. Included are non-governmental organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, churches, grassroots organizations and business associations.

These groups are important in terms of this policy for their role in articulating and advocating for popular concerns. This advocacy function gives voice to a variety of interests and perspectives that governments and decision makers may otherwise not hear. Many also provide a range of services to their members or communities, a role which, depending on the nature of the group, can have a direct bearing on the promotion of human rights and democratization.

Good governance

By governance we mean the manner in which power is exercised by governments in the management of a country's social and economic resources. "Good" governance is the exercise of power by various levels of government that is effective, honest, equitable, transparent and accountable.

There is no internationally agreed definition as yet. The term is generally interpreted to include the following important dimensions:

➢ the development and implementation of sound economic and social policies;

➢ strong management in the public sector, with a professional administrative cadre and an effective public service;

➢ the existence of a sound, predictable legal framework with a reliable and independent judiciary;

➢ very low levels of corruption in public life and the existence of effective mechanisms to deal with corruption when it is identified;

➢ financial probity and accountability, with structures to ensure financial accountability and transparency; and

➢ appropriate levels of military expenditure, and appropriate roles for the military in civilian life.