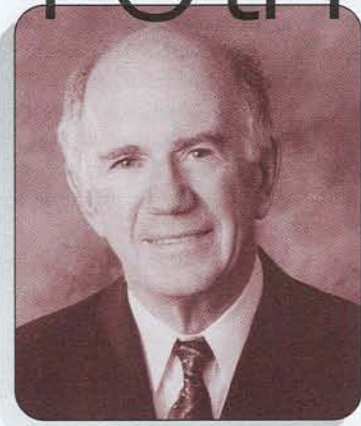


LIBERTAS

10th Anniversary

New Look, New Location



Warren Allmand
Warren Allmand, President

Ten years ago, on October 19, 1990, the doors of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development officially opened. Created in 1988 by an Act of the Canadian Parliament, the Centre is an expression of the voice of Canadians. It is an independent institution that promotes and defends democracy and human rights around the world, free from the pressures of commercial and other extraneous interests.

Ten years later, the cold war is over, the Berlin Wall has fallen, and democracy is taking root in all regions of the world. Our mandate remains

vitaly important as states and citizens groups struggle to promote democratic institutions and human rights practices, as inspired by the *International Bill of Human Rights*. The challenges of defending the rights of women, indigenous peoples, the poor and the marginalized in the context of globalization are pressing. The experience we have gained, working with Canadians and international partners, positions us to take on with confidence and determination these new and complex challenges.

For our 10th anniversary, we have decided to adopt a new look and a new location. We have changed our address to reduce administrative costs and, therefore, provide more money for our partners in the developing world. We have also decided to adopt a short name – Rights & Democracy – to make it easier for our friends and partners to identify us. This short name continues to reflect the importance of linking human rights and democracy. Through a modified logo, we will demonstrate to our Canadian and international partners that we are indeed an expression of Canada's contribution to human rights and democratic development world-wide.

In this 10th Anniversary Edition of *Libertas*, we share some of the highlights of our work over the past 10 years (visit our web site at www.ichrdd.ca for more). We take this opportunity to praise all the courageous human rights defenders who continue to speak out against gross violations of human rights, often at great personal risk, to ensure that human rights and democracy are universally upheld.

RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY'S OPEN HOUSE

May 10, 2000

We invite you to join us in our new offices to celebrate our 10th Anniversary with the President and the Chairperson of Rights & Democracy – Warren Allmand and Kathleen Mahoney – as well as with other past and present board members and employees.

Where? 1001 de Maisonneuve Blvd. East, 11th floor
(corner Amherst; metro Berri-UQAM) Montreal

When? Noon on Wednesday May 10, 2000. RSVP by calling (514) 283-6073, faxing (514) 283-3792 or e-mailing at ichrdd@ichrdd.ca.



Rights & Democracy

International Centre for Human Rights
and Democratic Development

Rights & Democracy is a Canadian organization with an international mandate. It works with civil society and governments in Canada and abroad to promote human rights and democratic development through dialogue, advocacy, capacity building and public education. It focuses on four themes: democratic development, women's rights, indigenous peoples' rights, and globalization and human rights.

Highlights of the

Created by Canadians, Rights & Democracy is an international organization that defends the rights of people around the world. In its first 10 years of existence, it worked with and supported courageous frontline human rights defenders, challenged governments to respect human rights and promoted dialogue between civil society organizations and the state. Here are some of the highlights of the past decade:

Backing Burma's Democracy Movement



In 1990, when the military rulers of Burma refused to hand over power to the democratically elected National League for Democracy, Rights & Democracy was one of the first international organizations to support the government in exile, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB). In 1993, it organized a mission of 10 Nobel Peace Prize laureates, including Bishop Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama and Oscar Arias, to call for the unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and at least 1,500 other prisoners of conscience in Burma. This past year, Rights & Democracy also helped the NCGUB in getting the National Assembly of Quebec to unanimously adopt a resolution recognizing the Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP) of Burma.

Genocide in Rwanda Foretold

In December 1993, in response to a plea from five Rwandan human rights groups, Rights & Democracy participated in an International NGO Fact-Finding Commission on Human Rights in Rwanda. The Commission's report, which was launched in March 1994 to the international community, revealed that acts of genocide were being committed in Rwanda. Published well before the crisis erupted, the report challenged the international community to take prompt, preventive action. André Paradis, Director of the Ligue des droits et libertés du Québec, is pictured here at a site identified as a mass grave of Tutsi victims in Kinigi, north-western Rwanda.



Libertas is the quarterly newsletter of Rights & Democracy. It is available free of charge and is accessible electronically at www.ichrdd.ca. Articles may be freely excerpted, provided credit is given and a copy of the publication in which the material appears is sent to Rights & Democracy. Legal Deposit, 2nd quarter 2000. ISSN 1027-0884.

Rights & Democracy's Documentation Centre is open to the public. Call (514) 283-6073 for an appointment.

• **Editor:** Augie van Biljouw (avbiljou@ichrdd.ca). • **Production:** Laperrière Communication. • **Translation:** Louise O'Neill.

Board of Directors: Kathleen Mahoney (Chairperson), Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny (Vice Chair), Warren Allmand (President), Harry W. Arthurs, Iona Campagnolo, Michel Corbeil, Kamal Hossain, Lydia A. Hwitsum, Suzanne Laporte, David Matas, Juan E. Mendez, Willy Munyoki Mutunga, Robert Pace.

Past Decade



When Indonesian labour leader Muchtar Pakpahan was charged with subversion for organizing a trade union, Rights & Democracy, with Canadian and international trade unions and NGOs, helped coordinate a two-year international campaign for his release and encouraged the Canadian government to provide medical assistance. In May 1998, in the wake of the resignation of President Suharto, Muchtar Pakpahan was released after spending four years in prison. His independent union, SBSI, is now legally recognized, has over a million members and participates in the tripartite deliberation at the International Labour Organization.

Setting New Guidelines for Gender Persecution Cases

Rights & Democracy was active in the campaign to win asylum for Nada, a Saudi Arabian woman who sought refugee status in Canada claiming that she was persecuted because of her gender. In November 1991, the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) rejected Nada's claim. Fearing imprisonment, Nada went underground. Her case called attention to the fate of women fleeing gender persecution and ultimately led to the release of new guidelines for IRB members dealing with cases of women who fear gender-related persecution.

Linking Human Rights and Democratic Development

Rights & Democracy has helped to redefine the notion of development to include, as essential elements, democracy and human rights. Its innovative democratic development framework uses a series of human rights indicators to help determine how best to support democratic development. Rights & Democracy has completed democratic development studies and workshops in Kenya, El Salvador, Tanzania, Thailand, Guatemala, Peru and Pakistan. Another is currently under way in Mexico.

The struggle for justice, peace and reconciliation

Democracy suffers a serious blow when crimes against humanity are suppressed and when human rights violators escape justice or accountability. In 1996, Rights & Democracy organized a conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso to draft a plan of action to tackle the issue of impunity in Africa. The Plan of Action was then adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Since then, Rights & Democracy has been advocating the creation of a strong and effective International Criminal Court (ICC). A member of the Steering Committee of the International NGO Coalition and active in the Gender Caucus, Rights & Democracy contributed to the debate on the structure and mandate of the ICC and now works to ensure that Canada and governments everywhere ratify the Statute. It is currently working with the International Centre for Law Reform in Vancouver on a manual to assist countries in Africa and the Caribbean in developing domestic legislation to implement the Rome Statute on the ICC.



Violence against Women

In 1994, the United Nations named its first Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences. As Special Rapporteur, Radhika Coomaraswamy gathers information on violence against women, names countries where women's rights abuses are a part of life, recommends ways in which to eliminate them and attempt to get the UN to take action. Rights & Democracy advocated the creation of this position and helped establish its mandate and work methodology. Since then, Rights & Democracy has developed an expertise on the issue of violence against women and has published several books on the subject (please visit our web site for more details). It also ensured that in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide crimes committed specifically against women be included in the charges laid by the Tribunal. Through the International NGO Coalition that it coordinates, Rights & Democracy works to ensure that rape is considered a war crime, a crime against humanity and an act of torture.

Restoring Democracy in Haiti



Following the Haitian coup in December 1990, Rights & Democracy played an active role in pressing for the return to power of the democratically elected President. It held a Popular International Tribunal on Human Rights in Haiti to promote justice and national reconciliation in May 1994; it helped establish the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Haiti to investigate human rights violations committed since the coup d'État; and in November 1997, Haitian women's groups organized a public Tribunal on Violence against Women, with the financial and technical support of Rights & Democracy.

(cont'd on page 4)

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Protecting Indigenous Women's Art Designs

What tools do indigenous women have to protect the right to their art designs? Since 1994, Rights & Democracy has been supporting indigenous women in Canada in their efforts to establish links with women in Central and South America. As part of its Indigenous Women of the Americas project, Rights & Democracy supported workshops on commercialization and intellectual property rights. It is currently developing a sample contract for commercial transactions.

Commerce with Conscience

What are the responsibilities of Canadian companies doing business in countries where human rights and workers' rights are abused? Following its conference "Globalization, Trade and Human Rights: The Canadian Business Perspective," Rights & Democracy published a series on corporate codes of conduct. Written by Craig Forcece, these two volumes – *Commerce with Conscience? Human Rights and Corporate Codes of Conduct* and *Putting Conscience into Commerce: Strategies for Making Human Rights Business as Usual* – outlined options for business, consumers, investors, governments and workers to ensure that Canadian businesses operating abroad respect human rights.

Promoting Dialogue between Civil Society and the State

Rights & Democracy is uniquely placed to bring together civil society organizations and governments to promote dialogue on human rights and democratic development issues. It is one of the very few institutions that enjoy the credibility with both sides to play this delicate and essential role. An example of this facilitating role is Rights & Democracy's Consultative Groups on Guatemala, Peru and the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa. These Consultative Groups enable representatives of NGOs, government, parliament, and the academic community to share their ideas and experiences in order to better explore potential approaches for effective and coherent Canadian intervention in these situations.

FOR MORE HIGHLIGHTS, please visit our 10th Anniversary page on our web site at www.ichrdd.ca.

2000 John Humphrey Freedom Award

Rights & Democracy is now accepting nominations for its annual John Humphrey Freedom Award. The deadline for submissions is May 15, 2000. The Award, which includes a \$25,000 grant and a speaking tour of Canada, is presented each year to an outstanding human rights activist or organization. For eligibility requirements or a copy of our brochure, please contact Augie van Biljouw (avbiljou@ichrdd.ca) or visit our web site (www.ichrdd.ca).

New Board Members

Rights & Democracy is pleased to welcome three new members to its Board of Directors: Michel Corbeil, Suzanne Laporte, and Juan E. Mendez.

Michel Corbeil is a Jesuit Priest and social activist who has travelled throughout Latin America. He is the co-founder of Salut, le Monde! as well as the Fondation Jeunes et Sociétés. He has received degrees in Theology and Social Services from the Université de Montréal.

Suzanne Laporte is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Human Resources at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). She previously served as Canadian Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire with accreditation to Benin and Niger and has held various senior positions at the Canadian International Development Agency.

Juan E. Mendez, originally from Argentina, is a Professor of Law and Director at the Center for

Civil and Human Rights at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana in the United States, and former Executive Director of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights in Costa Rica. He was also General Counsel at Human Rights Watch in New York and Executive Director of Americas Watch.

Internships for Young Canadians

Under a programme sponsored and financed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Rights & Democracy is offering five internships with NGOs in Geneva, Hong Kong, Kenya, Panama, and Peru. The deadline for applications is May 31, 2000. For more information on eligibility requirements, please visit our web site or contact Danielle Slawter (dslawter@ichrdd.ca).

Network of Academics

Rights & Democracy is building a contact list of academics which brings together the expertise of the Canadian academic community in the area of human rights and democratic development. This list, which is already 65 strong, helps to mobilize academics to contribute to policy development and advocacy with governments and UN bodies, and allows them to contribute, on a voluntary basis, to the goals pursued by Rights & Democracy. For more details, please contact Danielle Slawter (dslawter@ichrdd.ca).



Rights & Democracy focused on China, the rights of women and the World Trade Organization

in its lobbying efforts during the 56th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights which opened at the end of March. President Warren Allmand argued that Canada should co-sponsor the resolution condemning China's crackdown on dissent. Meanwhile Jacques Champagne, a well-known development specialist, represented Rights & Democracy on an observation mission in Haiti following the Préval government's decision to cancel, for the third time, parliamentary elections which were to be held March 19. The delegation urged Canada and the international community to push for the elections to be held as soon as possible. Tunisia's treatment of its human rights defenders came under scrutiny in March when Rights & Democracy joined with Amnesty International, the Ligue des droits et libertés and 11 others, including Quebec's three largest trade unions, in publishing an open letter to President Ben Ali of

Tunisia. Director of Programmes, Iris Almeida, encouraged Canadian ratification of international human rights instruments, including the American Convention on Human Rights, at a meeting of parliamentarians convened by Senator Lois Wilson and Irwin Cotler, MP. It was also agreed at this meeting to create a Human Rights Parliamentary Group. Marie Léger of the Indigenous Peoples' programme attended the 3rd Indigenous Women of the Americas meeting in Panama. Isabelle Solon Helal of the Women's Rights Programme travelled to Rwanda in April to meet with women's groups to assess the programme's work in the region with regards to the International Criminal Tribunal. Warren Allmand attended the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions convention in South Africa in early April and travelled with Africa Officer Akouété Akakpo-Vidah to Nigeria to visit partners and government officials. Rights & Democracy also launched *Protecting Human Rights in a Global Economy: Challenges for the World Trade Organization* at the Palais des Nations in Geneva at the end of April, with authors Makau Mutua and Robert Howse.