

# Annual 2007-2008 Report

Supporting  
Human Rights  
and Democracy  
for 20 Years



Rights & Democracy  
years

1001 de Maisonneuve Blvd. East  
Suite 1100  
Montreal, Quebec H2L 4P9  
Canada  
Tel.: 1.514.283.6073  
Fax: 1.514.283.3792  
Email: dd-rd@dd-rd.ca  
Web site: www.dd-rd.ca

© Rights & Democracy (International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development), 2008.

**Coordination and Production:** Anyle Coté, Officer, Special Events & Publications, Rights & Democracy

**Writing:** Augie van Biljouw

**Translation:** Denise Veilleux

**Design:** Green Communication Design inc.

Printed in Canada.

Legal Deposit: Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2008  
National Library of Canada, third quarter 2008.

ISBN: 978-2-923539-20-1

# Table of Contents

Message from the Chairperson of the Board of Directors	2
Message from the Interim President of Rights & Democracy	3
Staff of Rights & Democracy in 2007-2008	4
■ DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT	5
Rights & Democracy in Africa	5
Rights & Democracy in the Americas	8
Rights & Democracy in Asia	11
Rights & Democracy in the Middle East and North Africa Region	14
■ ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS	17
■ WOMEN'S RIGHTS	20
■ RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	23
■ ENGAGING YOUTH	25
■ ENGAGING CANADIANS	28
■ RELATIONS WITH CANADA'S PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENT	31
■ INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS	32
■ ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	34
■ MANAGEMENT REPORT	37
■ AUDITOR'S REPORT	38
■ FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	39

## History and Mandate

Rights & Democracy is an independent public institution that works in partnership with frontline human rights groups, democratic movements, and governments around the world to promote human rights and democracy. While its mandate is wide-ranging, it currently focuses its work on four themes: Democratic Development, Women's Rights, Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Economic and Social Rights. Its geographic focus is on the following priority countries: Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Indonesia, Côte d'Ivoire, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe. It also works at the regional level in Africa, Asia and the Americas to strengthen human rights mechanisms, such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the inter-American human rights system. Its rapid response mechanisms, including the Urgent Action and Important Opportunities Fund, enable Rights & Democracy to respond quickly to unforeseen crises and to support partners when they face unexpected difficulties.

Rights & Democracy is headquartered in Montreal. It has project-based offices in Port-au-Prince (Haiti) and Kabul (Afghanistan), as well as an office in Geneva (Switzerland) to work with the UN Human Rights Council.

Formerly directed by Ed Broadbent (1990-1996), Warren Allmand (1997-2002) and Jean-Louis Roy (2002-2007), Rights & Democracy is currently presided by Interim President Jean-Paul Hubert. Janice Stein is the Chairperson of Rights & Democracy's 13-member Board of Directors.

Rights & Democracy is a non-profit charitable organization (registration number 0808345-59). It receives the majority of its funding from Canada's Overseas Development Assistance budget through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency. The Chairperson of the Board submits the annual report on Rights & Democracy's activities to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who tables it in Parliament. Each year, the Auditor General of Canada examines the financial accounts and transactions.

*Rights & Democracy is a non-partisan, independent Canadian institution created by an Act of Parliament in 1988 to promote democratic development and to advocate for and defend human rights set out in the International Bill of Human Rights. In cooperation with civil society and governments in Canada and abroad, Rights & Democracy initiates and supports programmes to strengthen laws and democratic institutions, principally in developing countries.*





## Message from the Chairperson of the Board of Directors

As we celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Rights & Democracy and the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), there is reason for both optimism and concern. There have been many advances in human rights, most notably the creation of new mechanisms and strategies such as the International Criminal Court, the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples and the Human Rights Council. There have also been civil society initiatives such as the Nairobi Declaration on Women's and Girls' Right to Remedy and Reparation. However, there has been an increased backlash against those struggling on the frontline for human rights in many countries and regions of the world, including the Middle East, Afghanistan and Burma. We must redouble our efforts to ensure that we do not regress on the advances that have been made and that the rights and principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are not only declaratory but also exercised and implemented in the daily lives of citizens the world over.

Rights & Democracy remains committed to support and strengthen the capacity of our civil society partners around the world to influence political processes, help build democratic institutions and strengthen the rule of law. Our programmes reinforce the link between human rights and democratic development, support the implementation of universally recognized norms of human rights, and promote accountability when these rights are denied or undermined.

I would like to thank outgoing President Jean-Louis Roy, whose mandate came to an end in August 2007 after five years of dedicated service. We are very appreciative of his valuable contribution and commitment to Rights & Democracy. In December 2007, we welcomed interim president Jean-Paul Hubert until a full-term replacement could be appointed. We also welcomed four new board members announced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on February 29, 2008: Payam Akhavan, Jacques P. Gauthier, Jean L. Guilbeault and Elliot L. Tepper.

As we review the year in the following pages, I am impressed anew by the dedication, hard work and enthusiasm of our staff and partners, and I look forward to Rights & Democracy's ongoing contribution to the promotion of human rights and democracy around the world.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Janice Stein'.

Janice Stein

## Members of the Board of Directors

Payam Akhavan, Baha R. Abu Laban, Guido Riveros Franck, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Sima Samar, Jacques P. Gauthier, Jean L. Guilbeault, Jean-Paul Hubert, Peter S. Li, Nancy Riche, Michael Small, Janice Stein, Elliot L. Tepper

# Message from the Interim President of Rights & Democracy



It has been my pleasure to serve as interim President of Rights & Democracy in 2007-2008 as our institution begins to celebrate its many accomplishments over the 20 years since its creation in 1988.

At Rights & Democracy, I have found a committed team with strong programmes and impressive partnerships with human rights defenders and democracy supporters in developing countries. Nimble and responsive, this Montreal-based institution continues to have an important impact in our priority countries and on our specialized thematic issues.

The programmes and initiatives in this annual report demonstrate the expertise of Rights & Democracy and some of the highlights of our actions. Furthermore, as we have responded to current events—such as the uprising of Buddhist monks in Burma, the crackdown on democratic forces in Zimbabwe, or the struggle against impunity for crimes of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—we have illustrated the relevance of Rights & Democracy in upholding the universal values of human rights and democracy that Canadians share with our partners around the world.

In my mandate as interim President, I have maintained a continuity of purpose regarding a number of important files for Rights & Democracy. In particular, I would mention our continued engagement with respect to the Canadian Parliament's on-going reflections on strengthening Canada's mechanisms and programmes for international democracy abroad, notably through our active participation in the Democracy Council. Furthermore, we have deepened our involvement with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, notably through the establishment of an office in Geneva.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the many achievements of our outgoing President, Jean-Louis Roy, as well as the guidance of our Chairperson, Janice Stein, throughout this transitional period. I look forward to the appointment of a new full-term President in the summer of 2008 and to the future successes of Rights & Democracy.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jean-Paul Hubert".

Jean-Paul Hubert

# Staff of Rights & Democracy in 2007-2008

**Antonio José Almeida**, Legal Analyst,  
International Obligations & National Practices  
**Lara Arjan**, Regional Officer, Middle East & North Africa  
**Sylvain Aubé**, Webmaster, Affiliated Sites  
**Sylvain Beauchamp**, Partnership Officer  
**Naïma Bendriss**, Programme Officer, Women's Rights  
**Manon Boisvert**, Liaison Officer, Côte d'Ivoire  
**Caroline Brodeur**, Programme Officer, Economic & Social Rights  
**Elaine Brooks**, Administrative Assistant  
**Ariane Brunet**, Coordinator, Women's Rights  
**Louise Chicoine**, Administrative Assistant  
**Marie-France Cloutier**, Director, Administration & Resources  
**Anyle Côté**, Officer, Special Events & Publications  
**Gisèle Eva Côté**, Programme Officer, Women's Rights  
**Patricia Daigle**, Coordinator, Administrative Support  
**Nicholas Galletti**, Regional Officer, Latin America  
**Alexandra Gilbert**, Project Coordinator,  
Women's Rights in Afghanistan  
**Leila Kayali**, Webmaster  
**France-Isabelle Langlois**, Deputy Director,  
Policy, Programmes & Planning  
**Louise Lavallée**, Coordinator, Reference Centre  
**Anne-Marie Lavoie**, Senior Assistant, Human Resources  
**Karim-André Laz**, Regional Officer, Africa  
**Marie Léger**, Coordinator, Rights of Indigenous Peoples  
**Jean-François Lesage**, Regional Officer, China  
**Geneviève Lessard**, Programme Officer,  
Democratic Development  
**Micheline (Mika) Lévesque**, Regional Officer, Asia  
**Lloyd Lipsett**, Senior Assistant to the President  
**Maxime Longangué**, Regional Officer, Africa  
**Lise Lortie**, Publications Assistant  
**Carmen Melfi**, Receptionist  
**Diane Migneault**, Administrative Assistant  
**Louis Moubarak**, Officer, External Relations  
**Mireille Ouellet**, Project Officer, Sudan  
**Razmik Panossian**, Director, Policy, Programmes & Planning  
**Viviane Poirier**, Assistant to the President  
**Lauren Ravon**, Officer, Monitoring & Evaluation  
**Nancy Rochefort**, Accounting Clerk  
**Sophie Rondeau**, Coordinator, Rights & Democracy Network  
**Carole Samdup**, Coordinator, Economic & Social Rights  
**Steve Smith**, Officer, External Relations

**Isabelle Solon Helal**, Programme Officer, Women's Rights  
(on sick leave)  
**Marie St-Louis**, Programme Officer, Rights of Indigenous Peoples  
**Patrick St-Louis**, Assistant, Archives & Database  
**Kingslyne Toussaint**, Assistant, Reference Centre  
**Dominic Tremblay**, Senior Assistant,  
Financial & Material Resources  
**Isabelle Vallée**, Administrative Assistant  
**Michael Wodzicki**, Coordinator, Democratic Development  
**Elana Wright**, Liaison Officer, Rights & Democracy Network

## Afghanistan Office

**Palwasha Hassan**, Country Director  
**Mustafa Herawi**, Driver  
**Aziza Hussini**, Cleaner  
**Abdul Karim**, Operation Manager  
**Fakhria Latifi**, (SPO) Assistant  
**Sanawber Mirzai**, Cleaner  
**Zia Moballegh**, Senior Project Officer  
**Adela Mohseni**, Civil Society Officer  
**Mohammed Omar Karokhai**, Guard  
**Daud Omari**, Project Officer  
**Wagma Orya**, (CSO) Assistant  
**S. Hanayatullah Mosleh**, Driver  
**Mohammed Qaseem Wali Khail**, Guard  
**Ahmad Rafi Maseer**, IT Officer/ Webmaster  
**Mohammed Nazir Pardess**, Guard  
**Helai Rahimpur**, Administrative Assistant  
**S. Hashim Sadat**, TOT  
**Ahmed Shekeb Danishjo**, Driver

## Geneva Office

**Cynthia Gervais**, Director

## Haiti Office

**Claudy Cauvin**, Administrator  
**François Démésier**, Trainer  
**Jean-Raymond Jean**, Driver  
**Danièle Magloire**, Coordinator  
**Josette Montmaitre**, Maintenance  
**Yves Saint-Louis**, Receptionist



# Democratic Development



- The Democratic Development team develops and implements its programming following the specific context of each country, based on local conditions affecting civil society, the state, and the dynamics between them. We have also begun to incorporate more local or municipal level programming.

## Rights & Democracy in Africa

Rights & Democracy works in Africa in the following priority countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Zimbabwe and Côte d'Ivoire. We also work at the regional level and our Women's Rights team is active in Africa as well, focusing on gender crimes (see page 20).

In 2007, Rights & Democracy, with backing from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), supported the presence of three Canadian lawyers at the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). These lawyers learned from and worked with the members of the Commission's Secretariat, acting as legal assistants to the Commission's Special Rapporteurs. In September 2007, two of these Special Rapporteurs were our guests in Canada. They met with Canadian university students, academics, and policy makers in Trois-Rivières, Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto to raise the profile of the ACHPR in Canada and to formally discuss the potential for long-term Canadian support of the ACHPR in promoting and protecting human rights in Africa.

We also supported the organization of two Pan-African NGO Forums, prior to the African Commission's bi-annual Ordinary Sessions. Working with the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, Rights & Democracy was able to create a space for African and international NGOs to interact with the African Commission and other African Union human rights mechanisms.

Finally, we also supported the Africa Democracy Forum, an African regional network of civil society organizations dedicated to the promotion of democracy, and a pan-African human rights NGO.



## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Rights & Democracy's work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) dates back to 1992, when it contributed to the participation of Congolese civil society in the Sovereign National Conference through the National Council of Development NGOs. We established partnerships with human rights organizations, such as the Association africaine pour la défense des droits de l'homme en République démocratique du Congo (ASADHO).

When the war began in the DRC in October 1996, Rights & Democracy played a role in the campaign for a peaceful resolution by organizing the International Conference in Support of Democratic Opportunities in the African Great Lakes Region. Held in Montreal in January 1997, the conference brought together civil society leaders from three countries as well as African regional NGOs. In June 1998, jointly with ASADHO, we published the findings of the International Non-Governmental Commission of Inquiry on the Massive Violations of Human Rights Committed in the DRC during the war from 1996 to 1997. In reaction to the resumption of war in the DRC in August 1998, we organized the Montreal Conference for Durable Peace and Democratic Development in the Congo in January 1999, and contributed to the launching of an international campaign for a national dialogue and inclusive political negotiations.

Three years later, we witnessed the fruits of this campaign with the opening of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in Addis Ababa in October 2001, and its continuation in Sun City from February to April 2002, culminating in the signing of a global, inclusive agreement, the adoption of a new transitional constitution and the implementation of new institutions in 2003. Throughout this period, we strengthened the advocacy role of several of our partners in Congolese civil society, including promoting the participation of women in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

In 2007, Rights & Democracy focused on the post-election needs of the DRC. In the coming year, we will be working with Equitas and the Carter Centre's Human Rights House in Kinshasa to establish leadership and human rights training for local NGOs, elected officials, and government officials. Through our Women's Rights theme, we have been working in Ituri, Kisangani and north Kivu (Beni) on the issue of violence against women in conflict situations (see page 20).

## Côte d'Ivoire

Our work in Côte d'Ivoire focuses on civil society capacity building. We facilitate the coordination of the Regroupement des acteurs ivoiriens des droits humains (RAIDH), a coalition of NGOs dedicated to the defence and promotion of democracy. The aim is to have a coalition that can represent more effectively public opinion and participate actively in the building of a peaceful, democratic country. Activities include training workshops for coalition members as well as the

## ■ ■ RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

### ■ JANUARY 1997

Rights & Democracy organizes Conference in Support of Democratic Opportunities in the African Great Lakes Region with human rights groups from Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi, UN Officials and other Canadian and international groups. A Plan of Action to strengthen democracy in the region is presented to government officials.

### ■ 1997

Rights & Democracy works to promote national dialogue to pave the way for an inclusive participatory peace process and democracy in the Great Lakes Region.

### ■ JUNE 1998

Rights & Democracy organizes the International Non-governmental Commission of Inquiry into the Massive Violations of Human Rights Committed in the DRC, 1996-1997.

### ■ JANUARY 1999

Civil society representatives form an independent commission on a national dialogue in the DRC following a three-day international meeting, the Montreal Conference on Durable Peace and Democratic Development in the DRC, which was sponsored by Rights & Democracy. Eight years later, many of the recommendations in the Montreal Declaration have been implemented as part of the DRC peace process.

### ■ MAY 2000

Opposition leader Étienne Tshisekedi tours North America to build support for the peace process in the DRC.

### ■ APRIL 2003

Rights & Democracy supports Women as Partners for Peace in Africa to encourage women to participate in the peace and democracy process and to integrate a gender perspective in the DRC's legal texts.



publication of a monthly magazine on human rights in Côte d'Ivoire. Rights & Democracy is the only Canadian organization supporting civil society in Côte d'Ivoire.

## South Sudan

In April 2007, with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Rights & Democracy began to work with the newly-formed Southern Sudan Human Rights Commission. We organized a training programme in March 2008 for commissioners and the Commission's secretariat on human rights and the functioning of a national human rights institution. We will assist the Commission in establishing a documentation centre within its office. We hope to increase the human rights expertise of grassroots civil society groups, namely through training activities with the help of a local NGO, the Sudan Self-Help Foundation. We are also working to promote dialogue and cooperation between the Commission and civil society groups.



Participants of the training programme on human rights and the functioning of a national human rights institution, Kampala, March 2008.

## Zimbabwe

Of Zimbabwe's estimated 12 million people, between 3,5 and 4,5 million are in political or economic exile, mostly along the border with South Africa, where the majority struggle to survive and send money and food home. The actual number of migrants increases each month by the thousands. Many of the exiled are also victims of human rights violations committed by Zimbabwe's government.

Rights & Democracy has been working with the Zimbabwean Exiles Forum (ZEF) based in South Africa to reach out to these victims and to document cases of human rights violations. ZEF collects testimony (between 800 and 1000 each year) for affidavits to be used in court. We support ZEF in bringing these cases before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights twice a year, as well as facilitating access to other international human rights protection mechanisms. We collaborated with ZEF on a mission in March 2008 to Musina and Beitbridge and witnessed first-hand the challenges faced by Zimbabweans living on the border and their disturbing treatment by South African authorities. We called on the government of South Africa to ensure that the basic human rights of the exiled Zimbabweans are being protected. We also work with ZEF to raise awareness in Canada and at the international level of the gravity of the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. In March 2008, we supported the visit of ZEF's Executive Director to Canada, where he covered the Zimbabwean elections through the Canadian media.

### FEBRUARY 2004

Rights & Democracy supports women's rights groups initiatives related to the peace process which aim to raise awareness about Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the DRC at all levels.

### JUNE 2004

Rights & Democracy organizes its annual international conference on the democratic transition in the DRC, with representatives of civil society, government and the UN.

### OCTOBER 2004

Rights & Democracy supports the National League for Free and Fair Elections (LINELIT) in the DRC to train impartial election observers and create a secretariat for the Coordination nationale des observateurs électoraux.

### MARCH 2006

Rights & Democracy holds a five-day training of trainers workshop in Kisangani on international and African regional mechanisms dealing with the protection and rights of victims and witnesses to crimes, especially with respect to violence against women.

### JULY 2006

Rights & Democracy supports the Centre national pour le développement et la participation populaire (CENADEP) to promote free and transparent elections, and the rule of law. It also supports a coalition of over 40 women's organizations from the eastern provinces of the DRC, known as ESSAIM, to organize election observers in the regions of Ituri, Beni-Butembo and Uvira-Fizi.

### FEBRUARY 2007

Rights & Democracy holds training workshops designed to help women's organizations in their work with survivors and victims of sexual violence and to ensure these crimes are fully investigated and brought to trial.

## Rights & Democracy in the Americas

Rights & Democracy works in Latin America to build the capacity of civil society organizations to promote human rights (particularly indigenous peoples' and women's rights) and strengthen democratic institutions. We currently work in three priority countries—Bolivia, Colombia, and Haiti—and at the regional level, strengthening regional human rights mechanisms in the Americas, principally through the Organization of American States (OAS) and its human rights system comprising the Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court on Human Rights.

We have been working for a decade to strengthen civil society participation at the OAS and to ensure that its human rights protection system is strong, well-funded and autonomous. For the year to come, Rights & Democracy will prioritize a series of activities to support the full implementation of the regional human rights system's decisions at the national level, namely in Colombia.

Rights & Democracy's regional work has been developed jointly with the International Coalition of Organizations for Human Rights in the Americas. We also support other regional networks, such as the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM) and the Continental Network of Indigenous Women (Enlace).



### ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY IN HAITI

Since its beginnings, Rights & Democracy has been working in Haiti building bridges between civil society and government. Following the coup d'État in Haiti in December 1990, we played an active role in pressing for the return to power of the democratically elected President. We held a Popular International Tribunal on Human Rights in Haiti to promote justice and reconciliation in May 1994 and helped establish the mandate of Haiti's Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate human rights violations committed during the coup d'État period. In November 1997, we worked with Haitian women's rights groups to organize a public tribunal on violence against women. We continued to support the human rights and women's rights movements in their efforts to end impunity in the following years. The holding of free and fair elections and the establishment of a new government

### ■ ■ RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY IN HAITI

#### ■ 1992

Rights & Democracy supports victims of human rights violations, human rights documentation and dissemination, namely through La Plateforme des organismes haïtiens de droits de l'homme, ENFOFANM and Kay Fanm, throughout the 1990s.

#### ■ DECEMBER 1993

Rights & Democracy presents its second John Humphrey Freedom Award to La Plateforme, whose Secretary General, M. Jean-Claude Jean, tours Canada to raise awareness of Haiti's human rights crisis.

#### ■ 1994

Rights & Democracy spearheads the International Popular Tribunal on Human Rights in Haiti. Human rights experts listen to Haitian testimony and legal arguments and recommend establishment of a truth commission.

#### ■ 1994

At President Aristide's request, Rights & Democracy begins first draft of mandate for the National Truth and Justice Commission to provide official account of what took place during three years of military rule in Haiti.

and parliament in February 2006 opened a new window of opportunity for stronger state-society relations in Haiti. One month later, we opened our Haiti Office in Port-au-Prince to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to engage in dialogue with decision makers and influence public policy in favour of human rights.

With financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency's local development fund in Haiti, we work to strengthen the participation of civil society and the capacity of state institutions to respond to the needs of society, developing links between the two. We support the political participation of marginalized sectors of civil society, especially women, emphasizing their essential role in a truly representative democracy. Our Haiti office has implemented an Advocacy Training and Coaching Programme that has benefited 350 civil society activists from over 100 organizations, spread throughout 9 of the 10 departments or provinces in the country.

Following their participation in the training programme, we supported the Groupe d'appui aux repatriés et réfugiés (GARR) in their efforts to apply their new advocacy skills in favour of a universal civil registration and national identification system from a rights-based perspective in Haiti. In March 2008, we partnered with the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center to organize a conference in Washington D.C. on the right to identity in Latin America, where GARR presented their findings and recommendations.

In February 2008, we supported an event for young political party activists organized by the Political Party Convention, a multiparty association in Haiti, on the challenges to the

Haitian economy and the role of political parties in addressing inequality and building democracy in Haiti.

We also work with the Office du protecteur du citoyen (OPC), Haiti's only independent state human rights institution, in its efforts to raise awareness and educate the Haitian public and decision makers on the importance of its role in promoting and protecting human rights, and by reinforcing the capacity of the OPC to implement its mandate according to United Nations principles.

## Bolivia

Rights & Democracy works to strengthen democratic culture and foster greater political participation of indigenous peoples and women, which is crucial to the current process of social change in Bolivia. We began our programming in Bolivia in 2006 with two pilot projects. We supported a coalition of five organizations called the Unity Pact (Pacto de Unidad), enabling their participation in the constitutional reform process, through coalition building activities and the development of proposals for protecting indigenous rights in the new Bolivian constitution. Thanks to the support of Rights & Democracy and others, indigenous organizations successfully advocated for the inclusion of a number of indigenous rights provisions in the draft constitution. We continue to support the work of the Centre for Applied Studies of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CEADESC) to strengthen the capacity of indigenous organizations and communities to promote and protect their rights, and to ensure that internationally recognized indigenous rights principles are guaranteed by the Bolivian government in law and in practice. We are also developing a long-term project

### ■ 1996

Rights & Democracy first to support the establishment of the Office de la protection du citoyen (OPC), created by the Haitian Constitution to protect individuals against all forms of abuse by the public administration.

### ■ 1996-1997

Rights & Democracy and Kay Fanm develop campaign to raise public awareness of violence against women, culminating in the International Tribunal on Violence against Women in Port-au-Prince.

### ■ 1997

Rights & Democracy supports the Programme alternative justice (PAJ) in its unique approach to politically engage Haitian civilians and reform the justice system to take into account all sectors of society.

### ■ 2005

Rights & Democracy supports the Coordination nationale de plaidoyer pour les droits des femmes (CONAP) and the Forum citoyen pour la réforme de la justice in taking stock exercises, which led to publications on lessons learned in the women's rights and human rights movements.

### ■ MARCH 2006

Rights & Democracy opens office in Port-au-Prince to implement national level advocacy training and coaching programme.



with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to support the work of the Association of Bolivian Council women (ACOBOL), a national network of women political leaders active at the municipal level.

## Colombia

Rights & Democracy has been involved in Colombia since 2000, supporting indigenous peoples' struggle to survive in the face of armed conflict, strengthening the political participation and peacebuilding efforts of women and indigenous peoples, particularly at the local level, and raising awareness in Canada of the situation of Colombia's indigenous peoples.

This past year, we worked with the Instituto Popular de Capacitación (IPC) in Medellín to support the progressive democratization of local political structures, such as the Department of Antioquia's municipal constituent assemblies, which bring together citizens, authorities, and other relevant actors to address common concerns with regards to peace, equity and democratization. After observing local elections in Marinilla and El Penol (Antioquia) in October 2007, we worked to ensure that those elected included citizens' priorities in the drafting of their local development plans. We also support IPC's work to raise awareness through educational programmes on the importance of citizen participation in the constituent assemblies.

We work with the Antioquia Indigenous Organization to strengthen the participation of indigenous women and youth in building a more inclusive society that respects the rights of indigenous peoples and helps them become agents of change. Through this project, we hope to counter the effects of the war by promoting a culture of participation and training for women and youth.

We continued to support the Colombian National Indigenous Organization's (ONIC) work to protect indigenous peoples in danger of extinction and to counter threats to ethnic and cultural integrity, territorial rights and the right to autonomy. From December 9 to 14, 2007, we supported the participation of indigenous women in all aspects of ONIC's annual congress, particularly in formulating political proposals on issues that affect their peoples and communities.

Rights & Democracy also supported the Association of Indigenous Peoples of Northern Cauca Province (ACIN) to strengthen communications, educational and training skills of indigenous women from all regions in Colombia so that they may share lessons learned and articulate their voices in civil society peacebuilding efforts.

From October 10 to 20, 2007, we invited a prominent Colombian human rights defender, Alirio Muñoz Uribe, to Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto, where he met with NGOs, government officials and the media to discuss the continuing human rights crisis in Colombia.



Training workshop on women and peacebuilding of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of Northern Cauca Province (ACIN).

## Rights & Democracy in Asia

Rights & Democracy works in partnership with Canadian and international partners in the following priority countries in Asia: Afghanistan, Burma, China and Indonesia.



### ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND BURMA

We have been working for a peaceful transition towards democracy in Burma since we first opened our doors in 1990, providing support each year to the democratically elected government in exile as well as to other members of the Burma pro-democracy movement. With our partners, we have been calling for Canadian sanctions against Burma for

over 18 years to pressure the military junta to engage in a meaningful tripartite dialogue with the elected National League for Democracy and Burma's ethnic leaders, as stated in 28 United Nations resolutions. Both Burma's placement on the Permanent Agenda and the historic presidential statement of the UN Security Council are meaningful first steps towards peace in Burma.

In the fall of 2007, we strongly condemned the Burmese military's bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators and called on the UN Human Rights Council to immediately convene a special session on the human rights atrocities occurring in Burma. We applauded the November 14, 2007 announcement by Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs of a series of sanctions against the military regime in Burma including a ban on all exports, imports and new investments. We also called upon the Canadian government to continue



John Humphrey Freedom Award laureates Su Su Nway (fifth from left), re-arrested on November 13, 2007 and Min Ko Naing (to her right), re-arrested on August 21, 2007, are both currently in prison in Burma.

### ■ ■ RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND BURMA

#### ■ MAY 1990

Democratic elections are held in Burma. The military rulers refuse to cede power to elected National League for Democracy, which won over 80% of the seats.

#### ■ FALL 1990

Rights & Democracy begins to work on Burma, supporting the elected MPs who left Burma to establish a government in exile, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB).

#### ■ 1991

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receives Nobel Peace Prize.

#### ■ FEBRUARY 1993

Rights & Democracy organizes Nobel Peace Laureates Mission to Thailand and Switzerland for the liberation of Aung San Suu Kyi, under house arrest since 1989.

its actions to support democracy and human rights in Burma by providing tangible support to the legitimate authorities in Burma and its democratic institutions, namely the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), the Members of the Parliamentary Union of Burma (MPU) and the Committee Representing the Peoples' Parliament (CRPP).

We continued to support our long-term partner, the grass-roots Burmese Women's Union (BWU), which works to increase women's political participation within the Burmese pro-democracy movement through their Women Empowerment and Resource Centre. In collaboration with Sigrid Rausing Trust, we also supported the BWU magazine, *Dove*.

Through the Glyn Berry Program at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Rights & Democracy supported training sessions for Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) journalists. Journalists received training on gender equality, professional journalistic standards, and the production of ready-to-air programs. The DVB played a critical role during Burma's "saffron revolution" in September 2007 and subsequent military crackdown by providing citizens' access to information about the political situation and by providing images to the international media.

We continued to work with the Canadian Friends of Burma to mobilize Canadian government support for the restoration of democracy in Burma.

## Afghanistan

Rights & Democracy has been working in Afghanistan since 2002, initially through its *Women's Rights in Afghanistan Fund*, which supported women's rights education, leadership training for women, capacity building and peace building

initiatives, the participation of women in political processes, networking and information sharing, and programmes for gender mainstreaming, with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The opening of an office in Kabul paved the way for a longer-term commitment by Rights & Democracy to issues related to women's rights in Afghanistan.

In April 2007, we designed and launched a project entitled *A Measure of Equality for Afghan Women: Rights in Practice*, funded principally by CIDA. The aim of this four-year project is to support the process of family law reform in Afghanistan and to promote the implementation of a national marriage contract. It targets six provinces: Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Nangahar, Balkh and Kunduz.

Implemented by our Afghan-staffed Kabul office, this project is based on three strategies to create spaces for discussion, training and the exchange of knowledge on issues related to women's rights, family law and the marriage contract. The first strategy supports efforts to adopt an equitable family code and implement the national marriage contract.



Staff of Rights & Democracy in Kabul, Afghanistan.

## ■ ■ RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND BURMA

### ■ DECEMBER 1999

Dr. Cynthia Maung, who runs a clinic for refugees and migrant workers on the Thai-Burma border, and Min Ko Naing, political prisoner and leader of the student pro-democracy movement share John Humphrey Freedom Award.

### ■ MAY 2005

Canada's House of Commons adopts Burma Motion, calling for sanctions against Burma and tangible support to the legitimate authorities of Burma.

### ■ OCTOBER 2005

Rights & Democracy organizes a Burma Day in Ottawa with partners to commemorate the 10 years Suu Kyi has spent under house arrest.

### ■ DECEMBER 2006

Su Su Nway wins John Humphrey Freedom Award for her efforts to hold Burma's military junta accountable for its forced labour practices. Rights & Democracy holds international seminar entitled *Putting an End to Forced Labour: What is Canada's Role?*, followed by official launch of the Parliamentary Friends of Burma.



The second strategy involves a capacity-building programme at the community level, with training on women's rights, family code reform and the use of the marriage contract; an awareness campaign using radio broadcasts, as well as the funding of six legal aid clinics and a women's support centre in Kandahar. Thirdly, the project will focus more specifically on Afghan women's groups and activists to build their capacity to deliver programmes related to women's rights and empowerment. For more information, visit the project Web site: [www.dd-rd.af](http://www.dd-rd.af).

## China

In March 2008, a few months before the Olympic Games, several events underscored the continuing problems with regard to the respect for human rights in China. Rights & Democracy called on China to exercise restraint in its response to protests in Tibet and neighbouring provinces and urged an open dialogue with Tibetan leadership. We also called on the government to reverse its decision to sentence Chinese human rights defender, Hu Jia, to three and a half years in prison for "inciting subversion of state authority."



In the spring of 2008, we published a study by researcher Yiyi Lu entitled *Public Interest Litigation and Political Activism in China*, which examines a bold yet prudent approach by lawyers to promote the primacy of the law and human rights awareness in China. Chinese lawyers appear in courts to contest the price of a highway toll, the absence of a receipt for a meal served at the canteen on a train, or the appearance of parking metres that impede access to a bicycle path in an attempt to bring about political change in a country that is resistant to this kind of questioning.

Rights & Democracy has begun a dialogue with the Chinese Communist Party Central School to promote human rights and democratic development issues with both students and teachers. The Central Party School trains new generations of decision makers and advises China's central government on public policy. In September 2007, a delegation of Canadian academics with expertise on human rights and China travelled to Beijing to participate in a human rights education seminar at the Party School. The delegation raised

themes that are still considered to be taboo in China and invited their hosts to engage in a greater respect for freedom of expression, conscience and association. In 2008-09, these exchanges will continue on the gap between international human rights law and its implementation.

In January 2008, Rights & Democracy also supported training for Chinese human rights defenders to strengthen their knowledge of international instruments and mechanisms for the protection of human rights. Just as the lawyers who practice public interest litigation, participants in this workshop are part of a rights protection movement (*weiquan yundong*), a network of jurists, bloggers, and citizens who advocate respect for the rule of law in China. They do so peacefully, citing existing Chinese laws, the Constitution and international covenants signed by their country.

We also continued to support our long-term partner the China Labour Bulletin (CLB), founded in 1994 to promote independent, democratic unions and the protection of labour rights in mainland China. This past year, we supported the CLB's case intervention project, which provides legal aid services to migrant workers and helps develop a case law database, using existing Chinese legislation.

## Indonesia

Major steps towards democratization have taken place since the onset of the *reformasi* (reform period). Amendments to the 1945 Constitution and the adoption of new laws have changed the state structure and contributed to the establishment of key democratic institutions. Elements of Suharto's authoritarian power structures nevertheless remain, most notably the changing role of Indonesia's security forces in Indonesia's developing democracy.

This past year, Rights & Democracy partnered with Indonesian civil society actors and representatives of state institutions to strengthen the participation of Indonesian civil society in security sector reforms. Such reforms include the passage of legislation and the implementation of laws and regulations designed to increase civilian control of the military. We also supported public engagement activities in Canada on human rights issues in Indonesia, particularly

human rights abuses committed by Indonesia's security services. Our long-term objective is to make the key elements of Indonesia's security sector, namely the military, police, and intelligence services, more accountable to democratically elected civilian authorities, and grounded in a culture of human rights.

In May 2007, Rights & Democracy called on the Government of Indonesia to make public its presidential fact-finding team's report on the murder of human rights leader Munir Said Thalib and to strengthen the ongoing police investigation. We sponsored the visit to Canada by Munir's wife, Suciwati, who was seeking Canadian support for her efforts to identify those involved in her husband's murder and see them prosecuted. Following her visit, Canada's Subcommittee on International Human Rights passed a Motion recommending Canada "use diplomatic means to express publicly to the government of Indonesia its profound disagreement with the non-publication of the report of the presidential commission on the murder of Munir Said Thalib." In January 2008, we welcomed the sentencing of Polycarpus Budihari Priyanto to 20 years in prison for the murder of human rights activist Munir Said Thalib, which marks an important first step towards identifying and prosecuting those who ordered Munir's death as well as towards ending impunity in Indonesia.



Rights & Democracy, in partnership with the Asian Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN) and the Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN), published an information kit, *Portrait of the Indigenous Women of Asia*, to highlight indigenous women's work at the local, national and international levels to ensure their rights are respected. The kit reveals ways indigenous women can benefit from international legal instruments, fora and mechanisms.

## Rights & Democracy in the Middle East and North Africa Region

Rights & Democracy works in the Middle East and North Africa region in the following priority countries: Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and the Palestinian Territories. Our programming mostly focuses on civil society and youth engagement.

The annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) was held in Montreal in November 2007. Rights & Democracy hosted a roundtable at the conference entitled, "Democratic Transition in Majority Islamic Countries of the Maghreb, Middle-East, and Asia: Present Situation and Future Prospects." Six panelists, including Mona Makram-Ebeid (Egypt), Akbar Ganji (Iran), Rachida Afilal (Morocco), and Uly Mulyandari (Indonesia), provided a comparative analysis of democratic transition in majority Islamic countries. During their visit, the panelists also met with women's rights and human rights groups, parliamentarians, government agencies and the media in Montreal and Ottawa.



## Jordan

Civil society in Jordan is governed by the Societies and Social Institutions Act No. 33 1966, which places severe limits on the activities of civil society organizations, preventing them from playing an effective role in the development of public policies and from participating actively in public affairs. Rights & Democracy seeks to strengthen civil society in Jordan by helping to improve the legal context in which NGOs function in Jordan. In addition, we aim to strengthen Jordan's civil society in the long term through the promotion of youth and women's participation in decision-making processes.

This past year, we supported NGOs to contribute to the reform process of legislation that regulates civil society in accordance with international standards, ensuring them a more effective role and independence from governments and political parties. We are currently working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) in Jordan to develop a programme targeting women's participation at the municipal level. A joint mission with the FCM was conducted in March 2008.

We continued to support the *Youth Advocacy in Action* project run by the Princess Basma Youth Resource Centre to promote the participation of Jordan's young people in the decision-making processes in their society. This project targets three groups of youths aged 15 to 26 living in underprivileged regions in Irbid, Zerka, and Jerash and provides them with the tools they need to become involved as citizens in their local communities as well as teaching them effective methods for developing projects and presenting their needs to authorities.

## Mauritania

We work in Mauritania to support civil society organizations, Mauritania's new National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) and members of parliament through a joint initiative with the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). Among the major challenges facing a democratic Mauritania are the need to resolve the legacies related to the persistence of traditional slavery and to the violations directed against the Black African population between 1989 and 1993. The new government, elected in March 2007, has pledged to resolve these issues during its first term in office.

We supported a mission to Morocco for the six members of the NCHR to learn from Conseil consultatif des droits de l'homme du Maroc (CCDH) as it proposes options for national reconciliation. We also provided modest support to Mauritanian civil society through the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH) and SOS Esclaves.

## Morocco

We worked to improve government accountability for inhabitants of marginalized communities in Morocco, namely through the Regional Association for the Development of Gharb (ARDEG) and its human rights training project to engage youth from Sidi Yahia al Gharb in the democratic process. The project provides youth with advocacy training and tools, such as writing and filmmaking skills, to better access municipal and other levels of government so that they become involved citizens in their communities. We provided them with a meeting space, multimedia library, and human rights resources for their advocacy work. We also helped strengthen the capacity of NGOs in the Gharb region, providing training on accessing Morocco's National Initiative for Human Development and encouraging the creation of a network of NGOs.



Youth participants in Rights & Democracy's project in collaboration with the Regional Association for the Development of Gharb (ARDEG).



In partnership with Morocco's Collectif Démocratie et Modernité, we also held our annual international conference in Casablanca on the promotion of human rights and democracy. On June 8 and 9, 2007, approximately 200 people from Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas shared their visions and experiences of democracy in four roundtable debates.



Driss Moussaoui, Past President, Collectif Démocratie et Modernité, Ahmed Herzenni, President, Conseil consultatif des droits de l'homme (Morocco), and Jean-Louis Roy, Past President, Rights & Democracy, at our international conference held in Morocco, June 8-9, 2007.

## Palestinian Territories

Rights & Democracy supported the NGO Project Hope, in its organization of a series of workshops, entitled *Social Justice and Human Rights: Thematic Workshops for Palestinian Youth Living within the Context of a Man-Made Emergency Situation*, in the Palestinian town of Nablus. The project encourages Palestinian youth (aged 13 to 25) to explore social justice and human rights issues with the goal of promoting civil society, voluntarism, democracy, good governance, human rights, and women's rights. The project focuses on marginalized areas such as refugee camps, Nablus old city, and nearby villages. We also continued to support the Society of St. Yves and their legal aid work with Palestinians, who have suffered human rights abuses. Founded in 1991, the Society offers legal aid services to Palestinians in need and promotes a non-violent approach to the protection of human rights. The Society manages some 500 cases per year.



Youth participants in the Social Justice and Human Rights workshop, Balata Refugee Camp, Nablus, Palestine.

# Economic and Social Rights



■ Rights & Democracy works to reduce the gap between human rights in theory and human rights in practice. In particular, it devotes attention to vulnerable and excluded sectors of society, especially those who live in poverty. Our Economic and Social Rights theme focuses on two broad issues: the human rights impact of foreign investment projects at the community level and the human right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food.

## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY ON TRADE, INVESTMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The human rights impact of trade and foreign investment has long been a concern of Rights & Democracy. More than a decade ago, we began to examine the issue of corporate accountability by hosting a conference with the Business Council on National Issues and publishing two studies on corporate codes of conduct: *Commerce without Conscience? Human Rights and Corporate Codes of Conduct* and *Putting Conscience into Commerce: Strategies for Making Human Rights Business as Usual*.

In the summer of 2000, we argued before the World Trade Organization (WTO) that the trade regime should be accountable to international human rights law. Subsequently, we published one of our most popular

publications, *Protecting Human Rights in a Global Economy: Challenges for the World Trade Organization*. We participated in WTO ministerial meetings, supported civil society initiatives around the WTO and organized many workshops and panel discussions on this issue.

This past year, we published Volume 1 of the *Investing in Human Rights* series entitled *Human Rights Impact Assessments for Foreign Investment: Learning from Community Experiences in the Philippines, Tibet, Democratic Republic of Congo, Argentina, and Peru*. This publication documents the effect of five foreign investment projects on communities in Africa, South America, and Asia. On September 24, 2007, we presented this methodology to the Business and Human Rights Tools Forum in Zurich, where it was welcomed by participants from around the world, including representatives of the United Nations, World Bank, business and civil society. We have begun work on Volume 2 of the series, revising the methodology and producing a guide with accompanying CD-ROM for community-based human rights impact assessments.

Rights & Democracy's methodology is rooted in a participatory approach that provides civil society organizations with conceptual and methodological tools to ensure the meaningful participation of communities throughout the assessment process. Our publication has served various purposes and the results of the case studies have informed other processes. For example, in Argentina, the team



Workshops on the main findings of the Human Rights Impact Assessment study in Peru.



submitted an amicus curiae brief to the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes, a body of the World Bank. For the first time this tribunal accepted an amicus brief from civil society organizations. In the Philippines, the team submitted their report as part of an NGO report to United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Peruvian team organized workshops with women in several regions to share the main findings of the study, collect comments from the communities and distribute the report. The team also created a video presentation that enabled them to share the findings with local communities and sensitize them to the broader issue of investment and human rights.

## The Human Right to Food

Rights & Democracy's Economic and Social Rights theme also maintains a focus on the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food. Informed by the 2004 Food and Agriculture Organization's voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food, we organized an international fact-finding mission to Malawi in 2006, applying the human rights framework to determine hunger eradication strategies. The success of this mission led us to collaborate with the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, FIAN-International and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on a similar mission to Nepal. The mission produced a report, *Human Right to Food in Nepal: Report of an International Fact-Finding Mission*, with recommendations

for the Government of Nepal, the international donor community and civil society. Both missions encouraged states to respect their human rights obligations and encouraged civil society to hold the state accountable.

In November 2007, we presented our findings during a parallel event at the FAO General Council Meeting in Rome. In February 2008, we were invited to London to present the case studies to the Network on Governance of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee. From January to March 2008, as follow up to our Nepal mission, we supported a series of eight regional workshops on the right to food concluding in a national event in Kathmandu, where representatives of civil society and government met to determine a national policy that takes into account rural development, improved methods of distribution and inter-departmental coordination.

We also organized a similar fact-finding mission to Haiti to highlight the problem of chronic hunger through the lens of human rights and democratic governance. An international delegation of human rights experts visited communities across Haiti in May 2008 to learn about the challenges faced in accessing sufficient, nutritious and safe food. A report will be published in the fall of 2008, with recommendations to the Government of Haiti, the international community and civil society.



Most agricultural labourers in Nepal are women.



The International Fact-Finding Mission to Nepal, from April 9 to 18, 2007 was the second in a series of country studies undertaken by Rights & Democracy.



## Drafting a Complaints Mechanism for the ICESCR

We also support the Social Rights Advocacy Centre (SRAC) in its efforts to ensure civil society participation in the drafting of an effective complaints procedure for the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The ICESCR is currently the only UN human rights treaty (with the exception of the Convention on the Rights of the Child) that lacks an individual complaints mechanism. This lack of international recourse has resulted in poor implementation of state obligations at the national level. For the past several years, SRAC has played a leading role in the international coalition of non-governmental organizations working in collaboration with the UN Working Group drafting the Optional Protocol (OP) text. In March 2008, a final text was successfully completed and forwarded to the Human Rights Council for its consideration. Rights & Democracy welcomes the completion of the OP drafting process. Its early adoption represents a significant advance in the protection of economic, social and cultural rights.



In May 2007, we partnered with the Canadian Council for International Cooperation to organize an international conference, *Reconciling Human Rights and Trade: the New Development Agenda*. Martin Khor of the Third World Network and Olivier de Schutter of the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) headlined this conference, which attracted over 100 people who explored ways in which the human rights framework can inform new strategies for trade, development and the eradication of poverty. The final report is available in English, French and Spanish on our Web site.

# Women's Rights



- Rights & Democracy's Women's Rights theme supports women's leadership and participation in civil society, condemns violence against women in conflict situations, works towards ending impunity for these crimes within national and transitional justice systems, and builds women's capacity to meet the challenges of fundamentalisms and militarism.

Reaffirming women's rights as human rights has always been a fundamental concern for us at Rights & Democracy and we work to ensure that women's rights permeate all of our work. We have developed an expertise in addressing the issue of violence against women, particularly in conflict situations, and work to end impunity for crimes of sexual violence as well as to promote women's participation in peacebuilding processes. We coordinate the work of the Coalition for Women's Human Rights in Conflict Situations and monitor the prosecution of sex crimes at the International Criminal Tribunals. We have published a standardized methodology on gender-sensitive research with a series of booklets that focus on the monitoring and documenting of women's rights violations. Our work to ensure accountability and reparation for gender crimes culminated this year in the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration.

## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Rights & Democracy has been working for over ten years on the issue of obtaining justice for victims and survivors of sexual violence in conflict situations. We founded and coordinate the Coalition for Women's Human Rights in Conflict Situations, which brings together survivors, activists, community workers, lawyers, and advocates from around the world who raise awareness of women's human rights abuses in conflict situations, to condemn the practice of sexual violence and other inhumane treatment of women as deliberate instruments of war, and to ensure that these

are prosecuted as war crimes, torture, crimes against humanity, and crimes of genocide, where appropriate. The main focus of the Coalition's work is to promote the adequate prosecution of perpetrators of crimes of gender violence in transitional justice systems based in Africa, in order to create legal precedents that recognize violence against women in conflict situations and help find ways to obtain justice for women survivors of sexual violence.

Following the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration last March 2007, which sets out principles on the right to remedy and reparation to survivors of sexual crimes, we launched an international campaign to ensure that States and multilateral and regional institutions and other national entities understand and promote the principles of the Declaration. Over 200 experts in international law, parliamentarians, senators, judges, ambassadors, prominent human rights advocates including Mary Robinson the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, women's NGOs, women's networks and human rights NGOs throughout the world have endorsed the Declaration. Rights & Democracy seeks to ensure that international, regional and national mechanisms— both judicial and non-judicial— continue to understand and see the benefits and value of this Declaration and continue to promote and enact its principles. This past year, we published *The Nairobi Declaration*, a handbook with CD Rom, in six languages, to provide an historical context of the Declaration, background documents, and tools to help grassroots groups promote the Declaration.



Julienne Lusenge, of the *Solidarité féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral* (SOFEPADI).

We also continued our work to ensure that crimes committed against women in conflict situations are adequately examined and prosecuted, in order to establish case law that recognizes these crimes and to assist the survivors in obtaining justice. In October 2007, we welcomed the arrest of the DRC's militia leader Germain Katanga, viewing it as a sign of renewed interest in pursuing crimes of massive violence, and in particular of acknowledging the wide range of sexual crimes against women and young girls, such as rape and forced pregnancy, in the DRC. Katanga appeared before the International Criminal Court in the Hague in October 2007, only the second DRC war crimes suspect to be arrested (Thomas Lubanga was detained in March 2006).

Rights & Democracy works with women's rights groups in the DRC to document human rights abuses and liaise with the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to ensure gender-based crimes are investigated and prosecuted in the DRC.

We work in partnership with the *Solidarité féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral* (SOFEPADI), an Eastern Congolese women's group to strengthen the capacity of Congolese human rights and women's rights defenders to combat impunity for crimes of sexual violence and to expand their influence in the justice sector (including at the International Criminal Court).

We continued to support the training of Congolese women and human rights defenders in Bunia, Beni-Butembo, Bukavu, Fizi-Uvira and Kalemie. We also supported the training of young women jurists on documenting women's rights violations. Our partners met with judicial and civil society actors to plan joint actions related to access to justice for victims and survivors of sexual violence. They distributed copies of the national law on sexual violence crimes to judicial actors, mayors' offices, police, army and civil society in general.

In October 2007, our partner and DRC human rights activist, Julienne Lusenge of *Solidarité féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral*, visited Montreal to discuss her work on the rights of women and children in the DRC.

### Nairobi Declaration on the Right of Women and Girls to Remedy and Reparation

*"Women's right to reparation is not only about restitution, compensation, preservation of memory and access to judicial redress, it is about women playing an active role in repairing the social fabric and building a just and equal society."*

#### *The Nairobi Declaration*

The Nairobi Declaration gives voice to women and girls who are survivors of sexual violence, redefining reparation and guiding policymaking to implement the right to reparation specifically for victims of sexual violence. The concept of reparation as a transformative and participative process put forward in the Nairobi Declaration constitutes its most innovative and inspiring contribution. Visit [www.womensrightscoalition.org](http://www.womensrightscoalition.org) to read the complete Declaration.

*reconcile ■ remember ■ redress*



This past year, we also supported the Congolese Women's Campaign Against Sexual Violence in the DRC, which aims to raise awareness about crimes of sexual violence in the DRC and their petition to ensure better coordination of international assistance. Local women's associations and NGOs in the Eastern DRC are concerned with the lack of coordination, disregard for their efforts and inadequacy of current initiatives compared to the needs on the ground, all of which undermine the effectiveness of the fight against sexual violence. A special Web site was created to widely disseminate the petition and to serve as a clearinghouse for all information and reports on women's rights in the DRC. Prior to the campaign, we facilitated and supported the participation of women's associations and victims of sexual crimes during the DRC mission in July 2007 of Yakin Ertük, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women.



Yakin Ertük, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

We also organized a series of public conferences in January 2008 in Montreal, Ottawa and New York for Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Ertük and the newly mandated Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women for the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Soyata Maïga. The series focused on violence against women, the struggle against impunity and efforts to build more democratic institutions and societies after more than a decade of bloody wars and difficult political transitions to peace and national reconciliation.

In March 2008, Ms. Lusenge was the target of death threats. We issued an alert calling on the government of the DRC, local authorities and the UN Mission in the DRC to ensure her protection and to prosecute those who have made threats against her. Ms. Ertük, jointly with the Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, answered our plea and sent an urgent appeal to the DRC government to ensure Ms. Lusenge's safety.

On April 16, 2007, we presented the North American Premiere of the French documentary, *Tuez les tous! Rwanda : histoire d'un génocide "sans importance."* The screening was co-hosted by Page-Rwanda and was followed by a discussion on justice for survivors with special guest Françoise Nduwimana. The event's proceeds were donated to SEVOTA and ABASA, two Rwanda-based support groups for survivors of the genocide. SEVOTA is led by Godeliève Mukasarasi, Rights & Democracy's 2004 John Humphrey Freedom Award laureate.

# Rights of Indigenous Peoples

■ The recognition and implementation of indigenous peoples' collective rights, most notably the right to self-determination, are at the heart of our Rights of Indigenous Peoples theme. We support indigenous organizations and work with like-minded organizations on the adoption of regional and international standards for indigenous peoples, such as the UN and OAS Declarations. We monitor the evolution of jurisprudence and help indigenous peoples and their organizations use human rights mechanisms to defend their rights. We also work to strengthen the full participation of indigenous women in decision-making processes.

## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

This past year, we saw our main objective come to fruition, the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Rights & Democracy has been supporting this issue for over 10 years, working to improve the climate of cooperation between governments, the UN and indigenous leaders. After more than two decades within the UN system, the Declaration was finally adopted on September 7, 2007, by a vote of 144 (4 voted against the adoption and 11 abstained). This non-binding declaration reaffirms the individual and collective rights of the world's 370 million indigenous people. For many, it is an important symbol of the beginning of the end of invisibility, marginalization and oppression. For instance, President Morales submitted the UN Declaration to the Bolivian Congress one week after its adoption in a bid to have it incorporated into the national legislation and to make it legally binding in a country where the majority of the population is indigenous.

Rights & Democracy will continue to work with its partners to ensure all states incorporate this vitally important and long overdue human rights instrument in their domestic law and practice so that it makes a difference in the lives of indigenous peoples.

In December 2007, the UN Human Rights Council established an expert mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples. This mechanism is composed of five independent experts whose mandate is to advise the Council on indigenous rights issues. It will hold annual sessions, open to indigenous peoples, and coordinate actions on indigenous peoples' rights.

### Evaluating our Work

Following the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we commissioned a team of external evaluators to assess our contribution to the process by which the Declaration was secured. According to the evaluation, our work towards securing the Declaration "warrants much praise." Although the process was long, the outcome has made it worthwhile.

The evaluation determined that "Rights & Democracy was a pivotal part of the NGO machinery working for the Declaration...serving as an intermediary between governments and indigenous peoples' groups...(and) also positioned as an intermediary between NGOs with more access to governments and indigenous peoples' groups."



## Promoting the Political Participation of Indigenous Women

We work to promote the full participation of indigenous women, who are often the most impoverished and marginalized, in political and peacebuilding processes. We place particular emphasis on leadership training and network building to enable women to intervene more effectively in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. We have been working with the Continental Network of Indigenous Women (Enlace), an initiative of Canadian native women, since 1993 to unite indigenous women from North, Central and South America in addressing the many common concerns affecting them and their peoples. This past year, we supported the Fifth Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women of the Americas held in Kahnawake, near Montreal, from July 9 to 11, 2007.

In collaboration with the National Coordination of Indigenous Women in Panama (CONAMUIP) and the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC), we organized a three-day workshop in Panama City in November 2007 entitled *Research for Indigenous Women's Rights in Latin America*. Representatives of indigenous women's organizations from Latin America shared research activities, experiences and needs and identified how research can best promote the rights of indigenous women. Rights & Democracy also helped strengthen the organizational capacity of CONAMUIP to ensure increased political participation, which enabled CONAMUIP to develop training tools, such as virtual training sessions. CONAMUIP organized a virtual training session based on our *Indigenous Women of*



The information kit *Indigenous Women of the Americas*, published by Rights & Democracy in partnership with the Continental Network of Indigenous Women (Enlace) and Quebec Native Women, is used for training sessions organized by the Coordinadora de Organizaciones Aborígenes de Jujuy in Argentina. It is also used in the context of a virtual training session developed in Panama, but available to all indigenous women on the continent.

*the Americas* toolkit, which highlights the work of women at the local, national and international levels to ensure that their rights are respected.

We continued our work in collaboration with indigenous groups and the International Clinic for the Defense of Human Rights of the Université du Québec à Montréal to create specific jurisprudence in the inter-American system that counters the double discrimination experienced by indigenous women. In 2006, we appeared before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights using examples from Mexico, Argentina, Colombia and Canada to illustrate the combined effect of gender and ethnic discrimination on indigenous women. This experience generated a more ambitious project targeting three communities, Jujuy in Argentina, Chiapas in Mexico and another that remains to be determined in Colombia. This project will allow for documenting this double discrimination affecting indigenous women, and bringing these cases to the national and regional levels. Over the last year, the Argentina team started their work on the right to education for indigenous women. The Coordinadora de Organizaciones Aborígenes de Jujuy organized training workshops on women's rights and their right to education throughout the province, and works to document the situation of indigenous women's access to education.



These women, one from Panama (Kuna) and the other from Peru (Quechua), were interns at Quebec Native Women for the organization of the 5<sup>th</sup> Continental Indigenous Women meeting, held in Kahnawake, with the support of Rights & Democracy.



# Engaging Youth



■ Rights & Democracy is committed to engaging youth in the promotion and protection of human rights and democratic development, principally through its Rights & Democracy Network, which has 30 student delegations in campuses across the country. The Network, which is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year, also offers opportunities to establish and develop sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships between Canadian university students and youth in developing countries. Two Delegations exist outside of Canada: one is based at the Université de Ouagadougou, in Burkina Faso; and the second is at Université Mohammed V, in Rabat, Morocco. Relationships are also being built between Network members and youth in Colombia and Haiti, with plans to expand to other countries where Rights & Democracy is already active.

## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY'S NETWORK

This past year, the Rights & Democracy Network held its Annual Retreat in Montreal from September 27 to 30, 2007, welcoming representatives from its university-based delegations from across Canada to share information and participate in human rights training sessions.



From left to right: Sandrine Muir Bouchard, Salim Ouazghiri, Catherine Berger, who journeyed along the roads of Quebec, as part of « Opération sur la piste des réfugiés ».

To raise awareness of the situation of refugees, our Université Laval delegation organized a journey along the roads of Quebec, called « Opération sur la piste des réfugiés », from January 8 to 13, 2008. Carrying only \$2 per day, which corresponds to the level of the world poverty line, and equipped with video cameras, members travelled through Rimouski, Sainte Anne-des-Monts, Gaspé, Matane, Rivière-du-Loup and Quebec City to raise public awareness of issues related to the integration of refugees. On April 4 and 5, 2008 they organized a follow-up project, *On the Refugee Path*, inviting high school students and the community to explore a labyrinth and learn about the maze that refugees and displaced people have to successfully pass through when seeking refuge.

York University's Glendon College hosted the Ontario and Quebec regional event, *Diversity & Equality: From Misunderstanding to Inclusion* from February 29 to March 2, 2008, which brought representatives from delegations across Ontario and Quebec to discuss and develop ways for students to promote the universality of rights, despite differences.

In Winnipeg from March 7 to 9, 2008, the city's three Delegations (Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, University of Winnipeg, and University of Manitoba) co-hosted the Western Regional Event, which brought delegates from across the four western provinces to learn about human rights issues related to sports. Topics discussed included the human rights situation in China leading up to the 2008 Beijing Games, sports as a tool for development, and protecting the rights of girl athletes.

This winter, the University of Victoria Delegation presented a series of hard-hitting and thought-provoking documentaries on human rights, including *Life and Debt* – a film by Stephanie Black on the effects of free trade on developing countries and Oscar-winning documentary *Born into Brothels*, a portrait of several unforgettable children of sex workers who live in the red light district of Calcutta.

The Delegation at Malaspina University-College organized a fair trade bazaar and sweatshop fashion show during the Nanaimo Global Film Festival from February 22 to 24, 2008, where they also presented the Delegation's annual student film award on human rights.

The University of Saskatchewan Delegation in Saskatoon examined the dynamics of the relationship between Afghanistan and Canada by presenting a panel called *Into Afghanistan: Moving Beyond the Headlines* on April 11, 2008 to examine the lines of communication between the government and its citizens in both countries, and how this relates to human rights.

The Mount Allison Delegation hosted a Community Literacy Festival from February 11 to 15, 2008 to highlight the plight of elementary school-age children in developing countries. In a workshop presented by world-renowned New York storyteller Laura Simms, participants created children's storybooks to be shipped to the Donkoi Children's Development Centre in Laos.



Network's Annual Retreat in Montreal, September 27 to 30, 2007.

## Engaging Youth in the Millennium Development Goals

Rights & Democracy also supports the 8 Goals Campaign, a coalition of Canadian organizations working to inspire and encourage student involvement and action in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In September 2007, the 8 Goals Campaign launched its new Web site (8goals.ca), which provides students with more information and resources on the MDGs and highlights upcoming awareness raising activities on campuses across the country. Between October 16 and 17, student groups all over Canada mobilized for *Stand Up and Speak Out* to demand that Canada keep its promise to end poverty and meet the MDGs by 2015. The campaign saw over 38.7 million people in 110 countries break the Guinness World Record for the largest number of people to stand up against poverty in 24 hours. During International Development Week, the 8 Goals Campaign organized a speaking tour for youth activist Robin Sitoula of Nepal who spoke at university campuses across Ontario and Quebec about what his youth-driven organization, Youth Initiative, had done towards the achievement of the MDGs.

In July 2007, Rights & Democracy worked in partnership with the Youth Assembly of the United Nations to help bring international youth and young professionals (16 to 28 years) to Edmonton, Canada, for the *Global Youth Assembly 2007: Reach Out, Speak Up! Ignite Change Now*. The Assembly focused on UNESCO's eight areas of action for establishing a culture of peace and human rights.

## Internships

Through its Internship Programme, Rights & Democracy provides youth with international work experience and opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge on issues related to human rights and democratic development by placing them within human rights organizations. We also benefit from the research capacity and dynamism of our interns. We currently have interns in the following institutions: The Danish Institute for Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNESCO, and the Due Process of Law Foundation (Washington).



# Engaging Canadians

■ Rights & Democracy promotes within Canada issues and activities related to human rights and democratic development in developing countries, to give visibility to outstanding defenders of human rights and democracy, particularly through the John Humphrey Freedom Award, and to educate the Canadian public and policy makers on topics related to our mandate.

We organize and participate in various educational activities to enhance human rights and democratic development knowledge within Canada, through the use of the media, publications, campaigns, consultative groups, conferences and seminars. We also work with Canadian organizations, such as Equitas and the North-South Institute, to coordinate and enhance Canadian efforts in the strengthening of democracy and human rights in the developing world.

## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY'S JOHN HUMPHREY FREEDOM AWARD

Created in 1992, our annual flagship human rights prize, the John Humphrey Freedom Award, has raised the profile of courageous frontline international human rights defenders, providing a certain measure of protection for those who work in difficult and hostile environments. Named after the Canadian, John Peters Humphrey, who prepared the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Award is presented to activists and organizations for exceptional achievement in the promotion of human rights and democratic development in countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Colombia, East Timor, Egypt, Haiti, Iran, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru, Rwanda, Tibet, and West Papua. Through the accompanying cross-country speaking tours, we have been able to raise awareness among the Canadian public of the difficult human rights situation around the world.



Akbar Ganji, 2007 John Humphrey Freedom Award laureate.

On December 4, 2007 journalist and dissident Akbar Ganji of Iran received Rights & Democracy's John Humphrey Freedom Award at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, in Gatineau, Québec. Mr. Ganji delivered a dynamic acceptance speech in favour of human rights and democracy, and called upon Canada not to engage in a military attack on Iran. He also encouraged the international community to put pressure on repressive states to respect human rights and to make the transition towards democracy. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, also paid tribute to Mr. Ganji. Mr. Ganji visited Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Montréal, Québec City, and Ottawa, from November 19 to December 4, 2007.

## Canadian International Human Rights Network

This past year, Rights & Democracy with a small working group of Canadian human rights organizations helped create the Canadian International Human Rights Network to mobilize the Canadian human rights community, particularly in light of the work of the UN Human Rights Council.

## Media Relations and Communications

Trough Media Relations efforts, we continued to communicate the priority issues and activities of Rights & Democracy and its partners to the Canadian and international public. We ensured wide coverage in print, radio and television, notably with regards to the John Humphrey Freedom Award and the human rights situation in Zimbabwe and Burma. We continued to reach out to Canadians and our partners around

the world through our Web site. Our Web site reached 35% more visitors this year, with an average 35,000 unique monthly visitors. Moreover, visits soared to well over a million, representing a 62% increase from last year. We also worked on affiliated Web sites, revamping the sites of the Rights & Democracy Network and the Coalition for Women's Human Rights in Conflict Situations.

Most of our publications are available on our Web site free of charge. You can also visit our Web site to order copies. All our publications are free for NGOs in developing countries. We publish a biannual newsletter, *Libertas*, and an electronic newsletter, E-Libert@s.

### Recent Publications

- *Public Interest Litigation and Political Activism in China*, by Yiyi Lu.
- *Portrait of the Indigenous Women of Asia: Information Kit*.
- *Governing Diversity - Democratic Solutions in Multicultural Societies*
- *Right to Food in Nepal: Report of an International Fact-Finding Mission*
- *Human Rights Impact Assessments for Foreign Investment Projects: Learning from Community Experiences in the Philippines, Tibet, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Argentina, and Peru*



Rights & Democracy launched a book of ten policy papers on democratic approaches to ethnic diversity issues at the opening of the Ethnicity and Democratic Governance (EDG) Project's Conference, *Immigration, Minorities and Multiculturalism in Democracies*, which took place from October 24-26, 2007 in Montreal. The publication, *Governing Diversity: Democratic Solutions in Multicultural Societies*, addresses the relationship of identity issues to conflict and democracy and highlights the key

issues and challenges facing political leaders and policy makers in democratically governed multi-ethnic, multi-national, and multi-religious societies. It is available in French and English on our Web site.

## Further Examples of our Engagements with Canadians

On September 20, 2007 we participated in the public forum *Mission Afghanistan: Examining Canada's Role*, hosted by CBC Radio in Montreal to discuss the different elements of Canada's role in Afghanistan.

We sponsored the international exhibit, *Slaves in Paradise*, as part of the third edition of the Montreal International Haitian Film Festival held from September 19 to 23, 2007. We participated in the festival's international symposium *Blood, Sugar and Sweat*, which focused on modern slavery in the Dominican Republic's sugar plantations, where thousands of Haitian sugar cane cutters, known as *braceros*, live and work in inhuman conditions.

In addition to presenting the French documentary about the Rwandan genocide and sponsoring the Montreal visit of DRC activist Julienne Lusenge (See Women's Rights, page 20), Rights & Democracy supported the human rights component of an international documentary festival in November 2007, the *Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal (RIDM)*. We participated in several debates following film screenings on Bolivia, Colombia, indigenous peoples, citizen involvement against war, migrant workers in Quebec, and women filmmakers in war-torn countries.

In partnership with Concordia University's Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, we organized an international conference entitled *Radio War: Breaking the Waves of Hate, Turning the Tide Towards Peace* from May 13 to 15, 2007. An international array of speakers including academics, journalists, and activists addressed the power of radio in conflict situations in countries such as Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, East Timor and Haiti.

In October 2007, we co-sponsored the *Global Conference on the Prevention of Genocide*, which was held in Montreal from October 13 to 15 and organized by the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism and the McGill University Faculty of Law. The Conference brought together survivors, witnesses, legislators, diplomats, activists and others from around the world whose lives have been forever changed by genocide to explore the prevention, rather than ad hoc intervention, of genocide.

### Rights & Democracy's Documentation Centre

On September 26, 2007, Rights & Democracy's Documentation Centre launched its online catalogue in Montreal. Friends and partners gathered at our offices to discover this new online search engine and to familiarize themselves with our wide and unique collection of over 20,000 documents on international human rights and democratic development. To consult the online catalogue, visit our Web site. To consult our resources on site, call us at 514 283-6073, extension 263, or email us at [document@dd-rd.ca](mailto:document@dd-rd.ca).



# Relations with Canada's Parliament and Government



■ As a non-partisan institution, Rights & Democracy develops links with Parliamentarians from all political parties as well as government officials. In addition to the many Members of Parliament and Senators who attend our events, we have the opportunity to participate in the work of a number of Parliamentary Committees.

Rights & Democracy organized a roundtable on religion and human rights in Ottawa on October 22, 2007 to help develop proposals for dealing with this emerging human rights and foreign policy issue. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade provided financial support for this event. The roundtable was followed by a public discussion with United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Asma Jahangir of Pakistan, organized in collaboration with the Human Rights Research and Education Centre and the University of Ottawa. When Asma Jahangir was later placed under house arrest after emergency rule was imposed in Pakistan, we called on the international community to pressure the Government of Pakistan to release all those who were unlawfully detained, lift restrictions to the media, restore an independent judiciary and end emergency rule.

In April 2007 and February 2008, Rights & Democracy was invited to speak before the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights in its deliberations about Canada's role at the United Nations Human Rights Council. We also participated in Parliament's deliberations about Canada's role in international democracy assistance, notably through our dialogue with the Democracy Council. In November 2007, we made a presentation to the Parliamentary Friends of Burma about Burma's democratic institutions.

In 2007-2008, we continued our fruitful cooperation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency, which are our main governmental partners, and with other departments concerned with human rights issues. On February 27, 2008, Rights & Democracy participated in the annual Democracy Dialogue in Ottawa to explore the challenges and opportunities for supporting democracy in the Americas from a policy and programming perspective.

## Rapid Response Mechanisms

Established by Rights & Democracy's Board of Directors, the Urgent Action and Important Opportunities Fund enables Rights & Democracy to respond quickly and effectively to human rights violations or similar developments that have not been earmarked in the regular budget. The Fund gives Rights & Democracy the flexibility to deal with unforeseen circumstances and respond to partners' urgent unforeseen needs within the scope of Rights & Democracy's mandate. Examples of rapid response funding include the alert and support provided to DRC partner Juliette Lusenge after she received death threats (see Women's Rights, page 20), and support to the Zimbabwean Exiles Forum during the election crisis in Zimbabwe (see Rights & Democracy in Africa, page 5).



# Institutional Partnerships

We have established several strategic partnerships with international and Canadian organizations with complementary programming to avoid duplication of work, enable the sharing of information and resources, and increase impact at the country level.

- We have developed a close working relationship with Equitas, particularly with respect to Haiti, Indonesia, Sudan, human rights education, national human rights institutions, and our Student Network. We continue to support their International Human Rights Training Programme, particularly with selection and follow-up activities for human rights activists in our priority countries.
- We work with the Commonwealth Secretariat, particularly its Commonwealth Forum of National Institutions, to strengthen international and national human rights institutions. In June 2007, we participated in the Commonwealth Orientation Workshop for Cameroon's National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms in Yaoundé to discuss the role of national human rights institutions within the Paris Principles and Commonwealth Best Practices, the international human rights system as well as the existing national legal framework for the promotion and protection of human rights in Cameroon.
- We work with The North-South Institute, a Canadian research institute focused on international development. We have collaborated on joint initiatives in Haiti and Indonesia and on the Millennium Development Goals and Security Sector Reform.
- We work with the Danish Institute for Human Rights, which was created by a statute of the Danish Parliament in 1987, sharing information on common geographical and thematic areas of interest, namely West Africa, the Americas, Afghanistan, China and Haiti as well as national human rights institutions, human rights education, regional human rights mechanisms, business and human rights, and women's rights.

- We work with the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA), to create and strengthen national human rights institutions in developing countries. At a workshop during CASHRA's annual conference, *Gathering Wisdom* in June 2007, we examined the protections available to indigenous peoples at the international, regional and national levels. In addition, CASHRA members are actively involved in Rights & Democracy projects, which focus on building the capacity of national human rights institutions abroad, particularly in South Sudan, where CASHRA expertise was a key component in our workshop for the Southern Sudan Human Rights Commission. We also work closely with the Canadian Human Rights Commission, which is the current chair of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions.

## ■ ■ FEATURE: RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Since its inception, Rights & Democracy has been actively engaged in the work of the United Nations human rights system, addressing the reform of the UN before and after the September 2005 Summit as well as the creation of the new Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights. In June 2007, we opened our Geneva office to better monitor the Human Rights Council and to strengthen our partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, particularly its National Institutions and Civil Society Units. Our Geneva office also supports the effective participation of our partners from developing countries in the Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which regularly scrutinizes the human rights records of all countries. In December 2007, we held our first workshop on the UPR for NGOs and national human rights institutions from around the world to gain a better understanding of the new UPR mechanism and its potential value for implementing human rights. Our Geneva office also hosted a public event

during the resumed sixth session of the Human Rights Council on December 11, 2007 entitled *Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on the UPR* to discuss best practices for NGOs and national human rights institutions with respect to national coordination and consensus-building. At the request of the participants from the December 2007 workshop, a follow-up workshop was also held in March 2008. It focused on the preparation for the first ever session of the Working Group of the Human Rights Council on the UPR that was conducted from April 7 to 18, 2008.

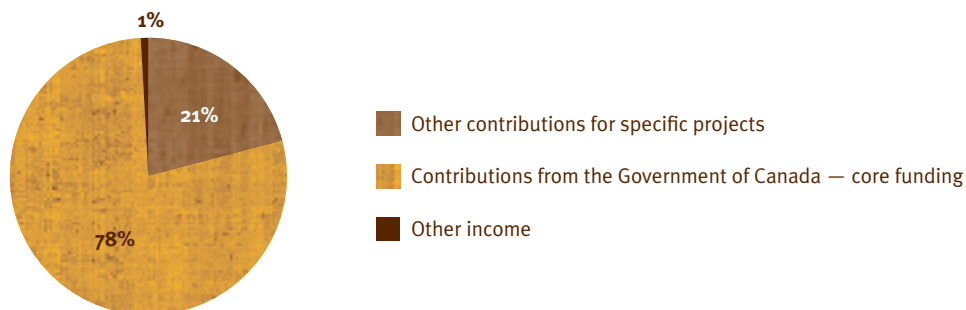
### Administration and Human Resources

2007-2008 was marked by a transition between presidencies. Members of Rights & Democracy's Board of Directors governed the institution from mid-August until the beginning of December, while the Management Committee ensured the smooth running of Rights & Democracy's day-to-day operations. The Senior Assistant to Human Resources was included in the Committee's weekly meetings to ensure employee relations were addressed at the same level as regular programme and administrative issues. The employees were also invited to participate in frequent staff meetings, where they learned about certain changes, asked questions and provided comments. The Management reflected on ways to better integrate regional and thematic programmes while improving supervision and resource management. Following this exercise, the Board gave the interim president, who was named in December, the green light for a workplace reorganization, including the creation of a Communications department and regional working groups. Moreover, a policy team responsible for ensuring the cross section of themes, partnerships and evaluation will also be established. The effects of these initiatives will likely be felt over the course of the next fiscal year, 2008-2009.



# Analysis of Financial Statements

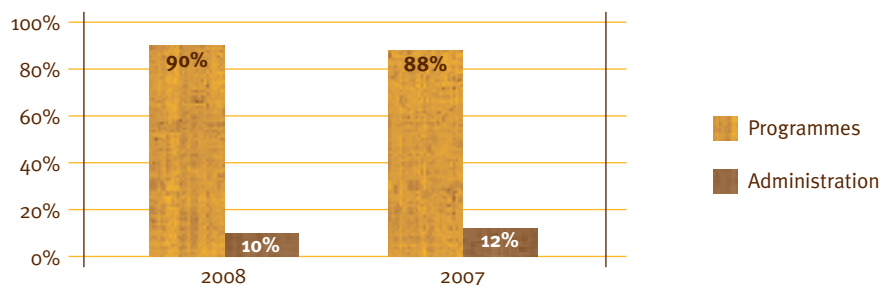
## I. Sources of Income



Much like last year, income received by Rights & Democracy in 2008 can be divided into three main categories. The percentage of contribution from the Government of Canada for general operations decreased by 7% compared to the year before, because the contributions tied to specific projects rose from 14% to 21%. However, in absolute terms, the basic parliamentary appropriation increased by \$0.406M. In 2008, Rights & Democracy signed a significant four-year contribution agreement with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to develop a project focused on women's rights in Afghanistan (\$0.548M in 2008) and with the Department of Foreign Affairs to carry out activities in Sudan and Burma (\$0.223M and \$0.216M in 2008).

Finally, other types of income, such as donations, sales of publications plus interest, make up the remaining 1% share of total income.

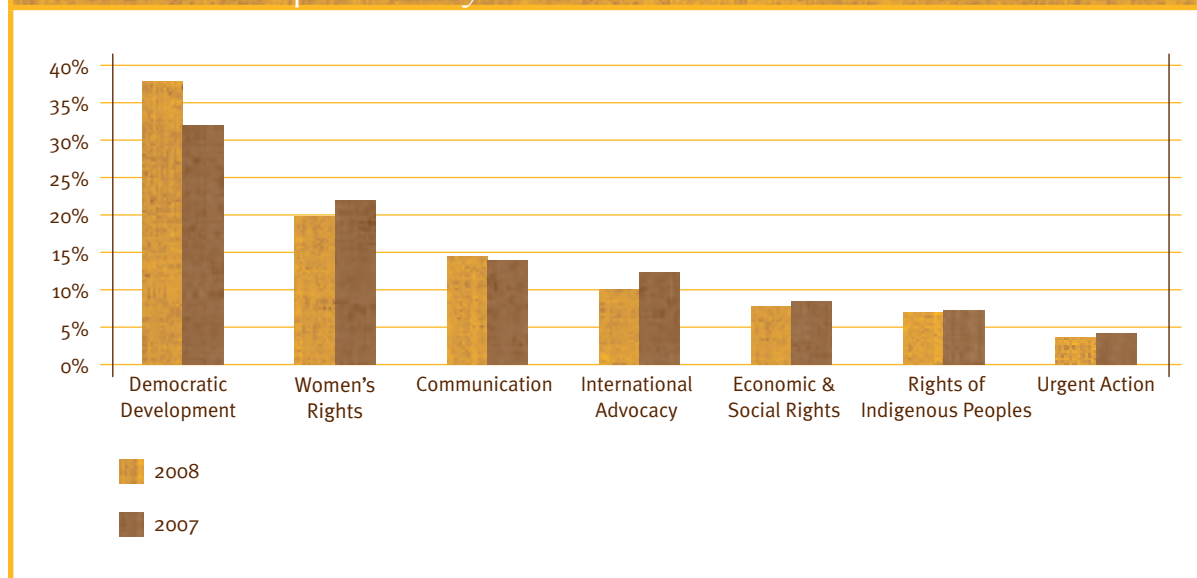
## 2. Breakdown of Spending Between Programmes and Administration



The proportion of administrative expenses was 12% in 2007, while in 2008 it is 10%. This is due to the fact that Rights & Democracy maintained its fixed operating expenses at virtually the same level as last year, while core funding and contributions received for specific projects increased by \$0.406M and \$0.971M, respectively.

This low percentage of administrative costs is the direct result of Rights & Democracy's constant efforts to keep them at a minimum.

### 3. Breakdown of Expenditures by Field



It is important to specify that the breakdown of expenditures by thematic takes into account overhead costs, such as rent, which were distributed according to the number of employees concerned and/or the surface area occupied, depending on the type of expense. Remaining overhead costs were absorbed by the administration.

The expenditure breakdown between thematics is directly related to the proposals made during the budget development process, external funding received for specific projects and the number of employees working in each thematic. Consequently, the expenditures of Democratic Development represent 38% of total programme expenditures, compared to 32% the previous year. The proportion of programme expenditures related to Women's Rights and International Advocacy decreased by 2% compared to last year.

The other thematics maintained percentages similar to those in 2007.

#### 4. Analysis of Expenditures by Category

	Statement 2008	Statement 2007	Gap (\$)	Gap (%)
Projects	\$ 7,457,148	\$ 6,571,908	\$ 885,240	13%
Salaries and benefits	\$ 2,855,997	\$ 2,991,933	\$ (135,936)	-5%
Rent and office expenses	\$ 645,891	\$ 627,698	\$ 18,193	3%
Travel	\$ 99,055	\$ 183,039	\$ (83,984)	-46%
Information	\$ 101,740	\$ 88,153	\$ 13,587	15%
Board of directors	\$ 145,553	\$ 227,384	\$ (81,831)	-36%
	<b>\$ 11,305,384</b>	<b>\$ 10,690,115</b>	<b>\$ 615,269</b>	<b>6%</b>

In order to facilitate the reading, some expenses were grouped in a different way than in the financial statements' presentation. The analysis of the table of expenditures by category reveals the fact that total expenditures increased compared to the previous financial year. This widespread increase can be explained by the Government of Canada's appropriation increase and by the funding of specific projects by CIDA and the Department of Foreign Affairs. With an increase of \$0.885M compared to 2007, the projects received the largest portion of these budget increases.

The Salaries and Benefits line shows the salaries of employees not associated with any particular project. In 2007, a large number of projects in development were undergoing the process of approval and therefore, the employees could not yet allocate their time to them. As the situation is different in 2008, additional salaries have been posted directly to projects.

The Travel Expenses line includes only those expenses that cannot be directly linked to active projects. Consequently, they primarily involve travel expenses related to the President's and Programme Director's offices. Members of management are regularly required to travel to ensure the institution's visibility, meet potential partners or explore the possibilities for future projects. Their travel expenses decreased in 2008 because, for almost four months, Rights & Democracy did not have a President. During this period, the Programme Director limited his travel.

Finally, the expenses linked to remuneration and travel for the members of the Board of Directors decreased by \$0.082M compared to the previous year. The Board of Directors of Rights & Democracy met four times in 2008, as they did in 2007. However, the numerous vacant positions within the Board and the low level of participation of international members contributed to reducing honorarium and travel expenses. In addition, in 2007, the Board of Directors retained the services of a firm to help better define its role and responsibilities, but this initiative was not repeated in 2008.



# Management Report

The consolidated financial statements of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Rights & Democracy) are the responsibility of management and have been approved by the Board of Directors of Rights & Democracy. The consolidated financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and, where appropriate, include estimates based on the experience and judgement of management. Management is also responsible for all other information in the annual report and for ensuring that this information is consistent with the consolidated financial statements.

Management maintains books of account, financial and management control, and information systems, together with management practices designed to provide reasonable assurance that reliable and relevant information is available on a timely basis, that assets are safeguarded and controlled, that resources are managed economically and efficiently in the attainment of Rights & Democracy's objectives, and that operations are carried out effectively. These systems and practices are also designed to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are in accordance with the *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development Act* and the by-laws and policies of Rights & Democracy.

The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring that management fulfils its responsibilities for the financial reporting as stated above. The Board exercises its responsibilities through the Finance and Audit Committee, which consists of directors who are not officers of Rights & Democracy. The Committee reviews the annual consolidated financial statements and related reports; the Committee meets with the external auditors annually and, may make recommendations to the Board of Directors with respect to these and/or related matters.

The external auditor, the Auditor General of Canada, conducts an independent audit of the consolidated financial statements, and reports to Rights & Democracy and to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.



Jean-Paul Hubert  
Interim President



Marie-France Cloutier  
Director of Administration & Resources

Montreal, Canada  
May 30, 2008

# Auditor's Report

***To the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade***

I have audited the consolidated balance sheet of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development as at March 31, 2008 and the consolidated statements of operations, comprehensive income, changes in equity and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Centre's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In my opinion, these consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Centre as at March 31, 2008 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.



Sylvain Ricard, CA  
Assistant Auditor General  
for the Auditor General of Canada

Montreal, Canada  
May 30, 2008

# Financial Statements

## INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

### Consolidated Balance Sheet as at March 31

2008

2007

#### ASSETS

##### Current

Term deposits (Note 5)	\$ 2,580,869	\$ 2,070,876
Accrued interest	28,871	32,251
Accounts receivable	120,278	97,723
Contributions receivable	125,473	25,552
Prepaid expenses	<u>60,317</u>	<u>42,356</u>
	2,915,808	2,268,758

##### Long Term

Property and equipment (Note 6)	<u>788,166</u>	<u>887,218</u>
	<b>\$ 3,703,974</b>	<b>\$ 3,155,976</b>

#### LIABILITIES

##### Current

Bank overdraft	\$ 321,614	\$ 547,799
Accounts payable	178,323	196,515
Accrued salaries and vacations	558,603	424,827
Grants payable	522,838	287,203
Obligations under capital leases (Note 7)	40,790	36,957
Deferred contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities (Note 8)	<u>438,307</u>	<u>266,790</u>
	2,060,475	1,760,091

##### Long Term

Deferred lease inducements	146,610	178,611
Obligations under capital leases (Note 7)	70,540	111,330
Other liabilities	<u>37,500</u>	<u>50,000</u>
	254,650	339,941
Deferred capital funding (Note 10)	<u>491,024</u>	<u>598,738</u>
	<b>2,806,149</b>	<b>2,698,770</b>

#### EQUITY

Retained earnings	829,399	420,381
Accumulated other comprehensive Income	<u>68,426</u>	<u>36,825</u>
	897,825	457,206
	<b>\$ 3,703,974</b>	<b>\$ 3,155,976</b>

Commitments (Note 14)

Contingencies (Note 16)

*The accompanying notes form an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.*

Approved by:



Jean-Paul Hubert  
Interim President of Rights & Democracy



Janice Stein  
Chair of the Board



**Consolidated Statement of Operations for the year ended March 31**

	2008	2007
Expenses (Note 11)		
Programmes and Activities		
Democratic Development	\$ 3,833,228	\$ 3,022,228
Women's Rights	1,997,068	2,076,667
Communication and Public Education	1,468,569	1,324,327
International Human Rights Advocacy	1,004,357	1,155,090
Economic & Social Rights	789,312	783,207
Rights of Indigenous Peoples	693,568	687,525
Urgent Action and important Opportunities	<u>377,066</u>	<u>400,466</u>
	10,163,168	9,449,510
General administration	1,142,216	1,240,605
Cost of operations	<b><u>11,305,384</u></b>	<b><u>10,690,115</u></b>
Revenues		
Contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities for specific projects (Note 12 )	1,673,730	867,844
Contributions from unrelated entities (Note 13)	789,860	625,095
Interest	<u>75,908</u>	<u>58,840</u>
	<b><u>2,539,498</u></b>	<b><u>1,551,779</u></b>
Results of operations before funding from the Government of Canada	<b><u>8,765,886</u></b>	<b><u>9,138,336</u></b>
Funding from the Government of Canada		
Parliamentary appropriation – Core funding	9,032,799	8,632,147
Amortization of deferred capital funding (Note 10)	<u>142,105</u>	<u>137,053</u>
	<b><u>9,174,904</u></b>	<b><u>8,769,200</u></b>
Results of operations for the year	<b>\$ <u>409,018</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>(369,136)</u></b>

**Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended March 31**

	2008	2007
Results of operations for the year	\$ 409,018	\$ (369,136)
Other comprehensive income		
Deferred contributions from unrelated entities recognized as revenue in the year (Note 9)	(23,143)	(27,525)
New deferred contributions from unrelated entities for the year (Note 9)	<u>54,744</u>	<u>24,973</u>
Total other comprehensive income (loss)	31,601	(2,552)
Comprehensive income (loss)	<b>\$ <u>440,619</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>(371,688)</u></b>

*The accompanying notes form an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.*

<b>Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended March 31</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Retained earnings, beginning of year	\$ 420,381	\$ 789,517
Results of operations for the year	<u>409,018</u>	<u>(369,136)</u>
Retained earnings, end of year	829,399	420,381
Accumulated other comprehensive income, beginning of the year	36,825	39,377
Other comprehensive income (loss)	<u>31,601</u>	<u>(2,552)</u>
Accumulated other comprehensive income, end of the year (Note 9)	68,426	36,825
Total retained earnings and accumulated other comprehensive income	<b>\$ <u>897,825</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>457,206</u></b>

<b>Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended March 31</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Cash provided by (used in) operating activities		
Results of operations for the year	\$ 409,018	\$ (369,136)
Items not affecting cash		
Amortization of property and equipment	227,233	211,779
Amortization of deferred capital funding	(142,105)	(137,053)
Increase in the fair value of term deposits	<u>(11,398)</u>	<u>-</u>
	482,748	(294,410)
Decrease (increase) in accrued interest	3,380	(13,776)
Decrease (increase) in accounts receivable	(22,555)	43,928
Decrease (increase) in contributions receivable	(99,921)	109,468
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses	(17,961)	38,801
Decrease in accounts payable	(18,192)	(7,830)
Increase in accrued salaries and vacations	133,776	81,931
Decrease in termination benefits payable	-	(139,828)
Increase (decrease) in grants payable	235,635	(58,287)
Decrease in deferred lease inducements	(32,001)	(32,002)
Increase (decrease) in other liabilities	(12,500)	50,000
Increase in deferred contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities	171,517	135,800
Increase (decrease) in deferred contributions from unrelated entities	<u>31,601</u>	<u>(2,552)</u>
	<b>855,527</b>	<b>(88,757)</b>
Cash provided by (used in) financing activities		
Parliamentary appropriation – capital funding	34,391	170,853
Payments on obligations under capital leases	<u>(36,957)</u>	<u>(33,485)</u>
	<b>(2,566)</b>	<b>137,368</b>
Cash provided by (used in) investing activities		
Acquisition of term deposits	(7,151,329)	(6,351,329)
Redemption of term deposits	6,652,734	6,251,329
Acquisition of property and equipment	<u>(128,181)</u>	<u>(170,853)</u>
	<b>(626,776)</b>	<b>(270,853)</b>
Net change in bank overdraft	<b>226,185</b>	<b>(222,242)</b>
Bank overdraft, beginning of the year	<u>(547,799)</u>	<u>(325,557)</u>
Bank overdraft, end of the year	<b>\$ <u>(321,614)</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>(547,799)</u></b>

*The accompanying notes form an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.*

## Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements March 31, 2008

### 1. Authority and operations

The International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development was established by the Parliament of Canada in 1988 by the *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development Act*. The Centre is operating as Rights & Democracy.

The mission of Rights & Democracy is to initiate, encourage and support cooperation between Canada and other countries in the promotion, development and strengthening of democratic and human rights institutions and programmes that give effect to the rights and freedoms enshrined in the *International Bill of Human Rights*. In carrying out its mission, Rights & Democracy shall:

- a) support developmental programmes and activities for the benefit of developing countries;
- b) support programmes and activities for the benefit of countries other than developing countries; and
- c) foster and support research and education, discourse, the exchange of information and collaboration among people and institutions in Canada and other countries.

Rights & Democracy is exempt from any income taxes; it is registered as a charitable organization for the purpose of the *Income Tax Act*.

#### Financial provisions

For the purpose of supporting programmes and activities for the benefit of developing countries in accordance with the Act, Rights & Democracy is to be paid such amount as may be appropriated by Parliament. Rights & Democracy may also receive monies from sources other than the Government of Canada.

For the purpose of supporting programmes and activities for the benefit of countries other than developing countries, Rights & Democracy may, in addition to such monies as may be appropriated by Parliament for that purpose, receive and use monies provided to it from sources other than the Government of Canada.

### 2. Changes in accounting policies

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 Rights & Democracy adopted retrospectively without prior period restatement the new standards of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountant (CICA) Handbook sections 1506 "Accounting changes", 1530 "Comprehensive

income", 3251 "Equity", 3855 "Financial instruments – Recognition and measurement" and 3861 "Financial instruments – Disclosure and presentation".

Section 3855 requires that the organization classifies all its financial assets into one of these four categories: held for trading, held to maturity, available for sale or loans and receivables. Financial assets held for trading or available for sales are to be measured at fair value. Financial assets held to maturity and loans and receivables are to be measured at amortized cost, using the effective interest method. It also requires that the organization classifies its financial liabilities into one of these two categories: held for trading or other financial liabilities. All financial liabilities are to be measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method, except for financial liabilities that are classified as held for trading which are to be measured at fair value. Rights & Democracy has classified all its financial liabilities as other financial liabilities. Section 3855 also requires that all derivatives, including embedded derivatives, be recorded in the balance sheet at fair value unless they qualify for the exemption criteria specified in the CICA Handbook. Rights & Democracy does not hold any derivative as at March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. A review of every important contract was performed as at April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 and no embedded derivatives were found. The only balance sheet item that was affected by these changes in accounting policies relates to term deposits. Rights & Democracy has decided to classify its term deposits as held for trading and to measure them at fair value. Since all the term deposits held by Rights & Democracy are in titles quoted in active markets, their fair value can be determined by using published quotes. Prior to that change, the term deposits were measured at cost less amortization of premiums or discounts on purchase. The financial impact of this change in accounting policies in 2008 was not material.

Section 1530 requires the presentation of comprehensive income and its components in a new financial statement. Comprehensive income is the change in the organization's net assets that result from transactions, events and circumstances from sources other than the Government of Canada and other related entities. Other comprehensive income includes revenues, expenses, gains and losses that, in accordance with primary sources of GAAP are recognized in comprehensive income, and excluded from net earnings. Section 3251 includes changes that are correlative to section 1530. The adoption of section 1530 and of the correlative changes in section 3251 had



an impact on the financial presentation but no impact on the amounts recorded. In 2007, \$36,825 have been removed from deferred revenue and reclassified in accumulated other comprehensive income.

Section 3861 replaces former Section 3860 and requires that more information be disclosed about the nature and extent of an entity's use of financial instruments, the business purposes they serve, the risks associated with them and management's policies for controlling those risks. It also includes new requirements for disclosures about fair value and revised requirements for an entity to provide accounting disclosures. The adoption of Section 3861 had an impact on the financial presentation but no impact on the amounts recorded.

Section 1506, effective for the years beginning on or after January 1, 2007, prescribes the criteria for changing accounting policies, together with accounting treatment and disclosure of changes in accounting policies, changes in accounting estimates and correction of errors. Furthermore, the new standard requires the communication of the new primary sources of Canadian GAAP that are issued but not yet adopted by the organization. The adoption of Section 1506 had an impact on the financial presentation but no impact on the amounts recorded.

### Future accounting changes

#### a) Capital disclosures

In December 2006, the CICA published a new Section 1535, "*Capital Disclosures*". The new section establishes standards for disclosing information about an entity's capital and how it is managed. The standard is effective for interim and annual financial statements relating to fiscal years beginning on or after October 1, 2007, and Rights & Democracy will implement it as of April 1, 2008. Rights & Democracy is in the process of studying this new requirement and, at this stage, it does not anticipate that it will have a significant impact on its financial results.

#### b) Financial instruments

In December 2006, the CICA published the new sections 3862, "Financial Instruments – Disclosures", and 3863, "Financial Instruments – Presentation", which establish standards for the presentation and disclosure of financial instruments. These new standards are effective for interim and annual statements relating to fiscal years beginning on or after October 1, 2007, and Rights & Democracy will implement them as of April 1, 2008. Rights & Democracy is in the process of studying these new requirements and, at this stage, it does not anticipate that they will have a significant impact on its financial results.

### 3. Significant accounting policies

The consolidated financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Significant accounting policies follow.

#### a) Consolidation

*Rights & Democracy* controls the non profit organization *Rights & Democracy (Switzerland)*. The latter's mission is to initiate, encourage and support cooperation between Canada and other countries in the promotion, development and strengthening of democratic and human rights institutions and programmes that give effect to the rights and freedoms enshrined in the *International Bill of Human Rights*.

The financial statements of *Rights & Democracy (Switzerland)* have been consolidated with the financial statements of *Rights & Democracy*. All inter-companies operations and balances have been eliminated.

#### b) Parliamentary appropriation

Rights & Democracy is mainly funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency through grant agreements. The portion of the parliamentary appropriation used to finance the acquisition of property and equipment is recorded as deferred capital funding and amortized on the same basis and over the same period as the related property and equipment. The other portion of the appropriation is recorded in the statement of operations in the year for which it is approved.

#### c) Contributions

Rights & Democracy follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Contributions from unrelated entities that are externally restricted are recorded in other comprehensive income and recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities that are externally restricted are deferred and recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

#### d) Grant expenses

Grants are charged to operations in the year in which the criteria for awarding the grants are met.

#### e) Term deposits

Term deposits are recorded at fair value with changes in fair value recognized in earned interest.

f) Property and equipment

Furniture and equipment, data processing equipment, automotive equipment and website design and improvements are recorded at cost and amortized on the straight-line basis at an annual rate of 20%. Leasehold improvements are recorded at cost and are amortized over the remaining term of the lease. Assets acquired by capital leases are recorded at the present value of the minimum lease payments and are amortized over the term of the lease.

g) Employee future benefits

All eligible employees participate in the Public Service Pension Plan administered by the Government of Canada. Rights & Democracy's contributions reflect the full cost as employer. This amount is currently based on a multiple of an employee's required contributions and may change over time depending on the experience of the Plan. Rights & Democracy's contributions are expensed during the year in which the services are rendered and represent the total pension obligation of Rights & Democracy. Rights & Democracy is not currently required to make contributions with respect to any actuarial deficiencies of the Public Service Pension Plan. These benefits represent the only obligation of Rights & Democracy that entails settlement by future payment.

h) Deferred lease inducements

Costs incurred by the lessor on behalf of Rights & Democracy are recorded on the balance sheet as deferred lease inducements. These deferred lease inducements are amortized on a straight line basis as a reduction to the expense over the term of the lease.

i) Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, as well as the reported amounts of income and expenses during the period. Estimated useful lives of capital assets, fair value of financial instruments and contingent liabilities are the most significant items where estimates are used. Actual results could differ from those estimated.

#### 4. Fair value of financial instruments

The transactions related to cash (bank overdraft), accrued interest, accounts receivable, contributions receivable, accounts payable, accrued salaries and vacations and grants payable are incurred in the normal course of business. The carrying amounts of each of these accounts approximate their fair values because of their short-term maturity. Rights & Democracy has no significant concentration of credit risk.

#### 5. Term deposits

As at March 31, 2008 the term deposits have an average interest rate of 3.62% (3.82% in 2007) and an average term to maturity of 365 days (365 days in 2007). In 2008, an unrealized gain of \$11,398 due to changes in fair value of term deposits was recorded in interest income.

## 6. Property and equipment

	2008			2007
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net	Net
Furniture and equipment	\$ 835,478	\$ 602,644	\$ 232,834	\$ 291,038
Data processing equipment	305,794	174,184	131,610	153,147
Website	60,974	19,300	41,674	43,710
Leasehold improvements	494,576	179,382	315,194	375,982
Automotive equipment	<u>83,525</u>	<u>16,671</u>	<u>66,854</u>	<u>23,341</u>
	<b>\$ 1,780,347</b>	<b>\$ 992,181</b>	<b>\$ 788,166</b>	<b>\$ 887,218</b>

The above assets include equipment under capital leases for a total cost of \$213,625 (\$213,625 in 2007), less accumulated amortization of \$122,680 (\$79,858 in 2007). The automotive equipment is being used by the Port-au-Prince and the Kabul personnel within the activities of the projects financed by CIDA in Haiti and Afghanistan.

Part of the 2008 amortization (\$11,954) is attributed to specific projects and is recognized in programmes and activities expenses and the balance (\$215,279) is split between programmes and activities expenses and general administration expenses (Note 11).

## 7. Obligations under capital leases

Rights & Democracy has entered into agreements to rent office equipment under capital leases. The obligations under these capital leases have been discounted at a rate of interest varying from 9.5 to 15.59% per annum. The related obligations are paid over a 5-6 year lease term. Minimum lease payments totalling \$50,003 (\$50,003 in 2007) for the year ended March 31, 2008, including interest of \$13,276 (\$16,519 in 2007), were charged to results.

At March 31, 2008, the future minimum lease payments are:

2009	\$	50,001
2010		45,876
2011		<u>31,105</u>
Total future minimum lease payments		126,982
Less: imputed interest		<u>(15,652)</u>
		111,330
Short term portion		<u>(40,790)</u>
	\$	<u>70,540</u>

## 8. Deferred contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities

The amounts below represent unspent resources externally restricted from the Government of Canada and other related entities for implementing specific projects, received or receivable in the current period that are related to subsequent periods. Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	2008	2007
Deferred contributions, beginning of year	\$ 266,790	\$ 130,990
Amount recognized as revenue in the year (Note 12)	(266,790)	(25,203)
Canadian International Development Agency		
Strengthening of Haitian Civil Society Project	-	115,509
Canada Corps: Strengthening of Governance in Africa	5,331	1,209
A Measure of Equality for Afghan Women's Rights in Practice	401,031	-
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade		
International Internships for Young Professionals	-	23,680
Haiti: Youth Engagement in Democratic Development Project	-	10,000
ICC Victims Manual and Workshop in DRC Project	-	5,605
Building a Stable Rule of Law Institution in Southern Sudan	31,945	-
International Development Research Centre		
Network of Student Delegations	-	<u>5,000</u>
Deferred contributions, end of year	\$ <u>438,307</u>	\$ <u>266,790</u>

The composition of deferred contributions as at March 31 is as follows:

Canadian International Development Agency		
Strengthening of Haitian Civil Society Project	\$ -	\$ 169,309
Canada Corps: Strengthening of Governance in Africa	5,331	53,196
A Measure of Equality for Afghan Women's Rights in Practice	401,031	-
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade		
International Internships for Young Professionals	-	23,680
Haiti: Youth Engagement in Democratic Development Project	-	10,000
ICC Victims Manual and Workshop in DRC Project	-	5,605
Building a Stable Rule of Law Institution in Southern Sudan	31,945	-
International Development Research Centre		
Network of Student Delegations	-	<u>5,000</u>
	\$ <u>438,307</u>	\$ <u>266,790</u>



## 9. Deferred contributions from unrelated entities

The amounts below represent unspent resources externally restricted from unrelated entities for implementing specific projects, received or receivable in the current period that are related to subsequent periods. Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	2008	2007
Deferred contributions, beginning of year	\$ 36,825	\$ 39,377
Amount recognized as revenue in the year (Note 13)	(23,143)	(27,525)
Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa		
DRC – Justice for Sexual Violence Victims Project	-	20,695
Immigration et Communautés Culturelles du Québec		
Network of Student Delegations	-	1,000
Development & Peace		
Advocacy Project in Indonesia	-	1,130
Contributions to the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group	8,670	-
International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group – Research Project	16,534	-
Canton de Genève	10,026	-
Other contributions	17,274	-
Donations	<u>2,240</u>	<u>2,148</u>
Deferred contributions, end of year	\$ <b><u>68,426</u></b>	\$ <b><u>36,825</u></b>

The composition of deferred contributions as at March 31 is as follows:

Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa		
DRC – Justice for Sexual Violence Victims Project	\$ 4,946	\$ 20,695
Development & Peace		
Advocacy Project in Indonesia	-	1,821
Contributions to the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group	15,387	6,717
International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group – Research Project	16,534	-
Canton de Genève	10,026	-
Other contributions	17,794	1,000
Donations	<u>3,739</u>	<u>6,592</u>
	\$ <b><u>68,426</u></b>	\$ <b><u>36,825</u></b>

## 10. Deferred capital funding

	2008	2007
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 598,738	\$ 564,938
Parliamentary appropriation – capital funding	34,391	170,853
Amortization of deferred capital funding	<u>(142,105)</u>	<u>(137,053)</u>
Balance, end of year	\$ <b><u>491,024</u></b>	\$ <b><u>598,738</u></b>

## 11. Expenses

	2008		2007
	Programmes and Activities	General Administration	Total
Projects	\$ 7,327,846	\$ -	\$ 7,327,846
Salaries and employee benefits	1,827,210	610,989	2,438,199
Professional fees	184,013	233,785	417,798
Rent	230,090	66,751	296,841
Board fees and expenses	-	145,553	145,553
Amortization of property and equipment	166,669	48,610	215,279
Travel	90,122	8,933	99,055
Cost of awards	129,302	-	129,302
Information	95,027	6,713	101,740
Mail and telephony	49,051	9,073	58,124
Office expenses	37,603	6,956	44,559
Miscellaneous	<u>26,235</u>	<u>4,853</u>	<u>31,088</u>
	<b>\$ 10,163,168</b>	<b>\$ 1,142,216</b>	<b>\$ 11,305,384</b>
			<b>\$ 10,690,115</b>

## 12. Contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities

Contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities reported in the consolidated statement of operations come from the following sources:

	2008	2007
Contributions from the Government of Canada and other related entities for specific projects	\$ 1,406,940	\$ 842,641
Amount of deferred contributions recognized as revenue in the year (Note 8)		
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade		
International Internships for Young Professionals	23,680	257
Haiti: Youth Engagement in Democratic Development Project	10,000	-
ICC Victims Manual and Workshop in DRC Project	5,605	-
Canadian International Development Agency		
Strengthening of Haitian Civil Society Project	169,309	-
Economic Integration and Human Rights in the Americas	-	1,320
Canada Corps: Strengthening of Governance in Africa	53,196	-
International Development Research Centre	<u>5,000</u>	<u>23,626</u>
	<b>266,790</b>	<b>25,203</b>
	<b>\$ 1,673,730</b>	<b>\$ 867,844</b>

### 13. Contributions from unrelated entities

Contributions from unrelated entities reported in the consolidated statement of operations come from the following sources:

	2008	2007
Contributions from unrelated entities for specific projects	\$ 764,076	\$ 589,206
General contributions from unrelated entities	<u>2,641</u>	<u>8,364</u>
	<b><u>766,717</u></b>	<b><u>597,570</u></b>
Amount of deferred contributions recognized as revenue in the year (Note 9)		
Development & Peace		
Advocacy project in Indonesia	1,301	-
Inter-Pares		
National Health and Education Committee Project	-	2,015
Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa		
DRC – Justice for Sexual Violence Victims Project	15,749	-
Canadian Institute for Environment Law Protection		
Think Link VI — Media and Public Policy	-	6,159
International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group	-	18,788
Immigration et Communautés Culturelles du Québec		
Network of Student Delegations	1,000	-
Donations	<u>5,093</u>	<u>563</u>
	<b><u>23,143</u></b>	<b><u>27,525</u></b>
	<b>\$ 789,860</b>	<b>\$ 625,095</b>

### 14. Commitments

#### a) Leases

Rights & Democracy has entered into a lease for the rental of office space until 2016. The balance of the commitment under the lease is \$ 2,160,364. Minimum payments payable over subsequent years are as follows:

2009	\$ 267,368
2010	267,368
2011	289,405
2012	295,887
2013 and subsequent	<u>1,040,336</u>
	<b>\$ 2,160,364</b>

#### b) Grants

As of March 31, 2008, Rights & Democracy has approved grants totaling \$616,434 in the coming years, under certain conditions.

### 15. Employee future benefits

Rights & Democracy and all eligible employees contribute to the Public Service Pension Plan. This pension plan provides benefits based on years of service and average earnings at retirement. The benefits are fully indexed to the increase in the Consumer Price Index. Rights & Democracy's and employees' contributions to the Public Service Pension Plan for the year were as follows:

	2008	2007
Rights & Democracy	\$ 363,649	\$ 343,791
Employees	\$ 158,081	\$ 138,764

### 16. Contingencies

In the normal course of business, various claims have been brought against Rights & Democracy. These matters are subject to many uncertainties and the outcome is difficult to predict. In Management's opinion, these actions will not likely result in any material liabilities. No provision has been taken in this regard.

### 17. Comparative figures

Certain of the 2007 figures have been reclassified to conform to the financial statements presentation adopted in 2008.