



REMARKS
The Honourable Marc Garneau
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada

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Greetings from Canada.

It's an honour to address the Human Rights Council.

My congratulations to Ambassador Khan of Fiji on her election to the presidency of the Council. We trust she will bring to us the much-needed perspective of Small Island Developing States, including the human rights impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

IMPACT DE LA COVID-19 SUR LES DROITS DE L'HOMME

Nous nous réunissons à un moment où le monde est confronté à la crise de santé publique la plus grave de notre vie.

La pandémie de COVID-19 a dévasté des vies et des moyens de subsistance.

Elle a aggravé les inégalités dans nos sociétés et, trop souvent, elle a mis en péril les droits humains fondamentaux.

LES DROITS DE L'HOMME SONT ESSENTIELS POUR LUTTER CONTRE LA COVID-19

Alors que le monde tente de protéger la santé publique, notamment par le développement et la distribution de vaccins, il est de notre responsabilité de veiller à ce qu'aucune communauté vulnérable ne soit laissée pour compte : les femmes, les enfants, les personnes âgées, les réfugiés et les personnes déplacées, ainsi que les LGBTQ2 et les personnes autochtones.

Ce virus ne sera pas totalement éradiqué tant qu'il ne sera pas éradiqué partout.

Le Canada s'est engagé dans un effort mondial vigoureux pour garantir que chacun, partout, ait accès aux tests, aux traitements et aux vaccins COVID19.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS / CANADA'S FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

Having adopted a feminist foreign policy, Canada believes gender equality must also guide our efforts to revitalize the international institutions and build a better world that is more just, equitable, and inclusive.

Sadly, the pandemic has been used as a pretext by some governments to undermine the human rights they are entrusted to uphold. This is unacceptable.

This Council has a responsibility to continue to closely monitor these situations and engage with people on the ground to have rights respected.



SRI LANKA

Canada is deeply concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Sri Lanka, which include threats to human rights defenders and civil society organizations, suppression of memorialization, forced cremations of religious minorities and the deterioration of the rule of law.

The recent report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights highlights the need for this Council to ensure accountability for crimes committed in Sri Lanka. Canada will continue to support measures that will support accountability, reconciliation and peace.

VENEZUELA

On Venezuela, the crimes against humanity detailed in the recent report of the UN Fact Finding Mission are extremely troubling.

Canada encourages the Council to continue its efforts to unite the international community in targeted efforts to end the human suffering in Venezuela.

IRAN

In Iran, we are concerned with ongoing reports of human rights abuses. They include restricted freedoms of expression and assembly; discrimination against unrecognized religious and ethnic groups; and violence against women and girls.

CHINA / UYGHURS / HONG KONG

Meanwhile in China, we are seeing an erosion of rights and freedoms in Hong Kong, and crackdown on ethnic and religious minorities.

A mounting campaign of repression and deplorable treatment cannot be ignored. We call on China to halt the human rights violations affecting Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang.

MYANMAR / ROHINGYA

Canada unequivocally condemns the recent coup in Myanmar and unjust detentions of elected officials, opposition figures, civil society leaders, and journalists. We are also deeply concerned by the military's suppression of widespread public protests.

Canada also backs international efforts to help the Rohingya, as well as other conflict-affected populations in Myanmar.

LIBERTÉ DES MÉDIAS ET ACCÈS NUMÉRIQUE

La liberté des médias et l'accès numérique sont essentiels à la protection et à la promotion des droits de la personne.

En effet, l'accès à des informations précises et opportunes est plus important que jamais. Les journalistes du monde entier font un travail essentiel en rapportant des faits sur cette crise sanitaire. Trop nombreux sont ceux qui ont été confrontés à la censure, à l'intimidation ou à la violence.

Le Canada est également très préoccupé par le fait que les fermetures d'Internet sont utilisées pour réprimer l'expression démocratique.



Avec les plus de 40 membres de la Coalition pour la liberté des médias, le Canada appelle tous les États à garantir des médias libres, indépendants, pluriels et diversifiés.

BELARUS

On this note, I want to reiterate our support to the many voices of Belarussians, including journalists. Those responsible for undermining democracy and for violating human rights must be held accountable.

CONCLUSION

Human rights light the path through the tumultuous times.

From the Black Lives Matter Movement, to the campaigns for LGBTQ2 rights, we are inspired by human rights defenders and all those advocating for justice.

We all have a duty to ensure human rights are protected at home and we must stand by those who seek to uphold their rights abroad. We look forward to doing so alongside members of this council.