Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (Paulo Sergio Pinheiro)
HRC7: March 13, 2008

Mr. President,

Canada strongly supports the work of the Special Rapporteur and would like to thank him for his efforts. Canada was pleased that the Special Rapporteur was able to travel to Burma last year for the first time since 2003. Canada remains appalled by the disregard shown by the Burmese regime for the human rights of the people of Burma, and the continued deterioration of the human rights situation in that country since the violent crackdown by the regime on last fall's peaceful protests.

We are deeply concerned by a number of the Special Rapporteur's findings, including the imposition of "severe restrictions on the freedoms of movement, expression, association and assembly" by Burmese authorities, the acceleration of "unlawful arrests", and reports of "widespread and systematic human rights violations".

QUESTION: In the Special Rapporteur's opinion, what can be done by the international community to encourage Burmese authorities to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Burma?

Mr. President,

Canada concurs with the opinion expressed by the Special Rapporteur that Burma's "draft constitution must be broadly representative of the views of all the people" of that country. In Canada's view, all concerned parties must be included in the constitutional and electoral process in order to allow for true national reconciliation.

QUESTION: What can the international community do to ensure that the Burmese regime enters into a genuine and substantive dialogue with members of Burma's democratic movement, including Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as representatives from ethnic minority groups.

Thank you, Mr. President.