**Cuba**

**Question**

In 2009, Cuba accepted the recommendation to provide human rights training for government officials. What steps have been taken to provide human rights training for government officials and are there plans to continue with this?

**Recommendations**

Canada recommends that Cuba:

1.     Improve transparency and due process in the criminal justice system by ensuring fair and public hearings within a reasonable timeframe, ensuring anyone arrested is promptly informed of the reasons for arrest and ensuring that defendants have access to effective representation by their defence counsel, which is able to function fairly and without undue constraint.

 2 .    Ensure that prisoners or detainees are treated with dignity and humanity, with due consideration for the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

3.    Take further measures to improve freedom of expression by allowing  for  an independent  media  and improving  access to information through public access to the internet by taking advantage of recent investment in the fibre the optic network,

 4 .    Ratify and implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, both of which Cuba signed in February 2008.

**Observations:**

Canada has noted some of the positive developments in the area of civil, political and religious rights and freedoms, including an increase in independent publications and more open debate in various fora. We also note positive legislation implemented in January 2013 to liberalize Cuba’s migration policy. We encourage a continuation and expansion of this trend toward greater individual freedom on the island.

We warmly welcome Cuba’s co-sponsorship of the Canada-led resolution on the elimination of violence against women in June 2012, a clear commitment of support for international efforts to end this scourge.