

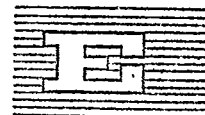
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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities

Thirty-seventh session
Agenda item 6(b)

THE EFFECTS OF GROSS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON INTERNATIONAL
PEACE AND SECURITY

Written statement submitted by the International League for the
Rights and Liberation of Peoples, a non-governmental organization
placed on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following communication, which is
circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

The threat of war as a violation of the rights of peoples

The International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples wishes to
submit to the Sub-Commission some thoughts on the relation between war and the
threat of war on the one hand and human rights and the rights of peoples on the
other.

A proliferation of regional conflicts and the threat of another world war:
such are the tragic elements of the current situation.

Everyone is aware that war itself constitutes a violation of the most
elementary human rights, so that it may be said that any State which takes the
initiative of starting a war is thereby guilty of aggression against mankind
in general.

However, the current phase of our collective history is also marked by
another, more insidious reality, which is that of the threat of war, and especially
the threat of a nuclear catastrophe. In our opinion, this situation must be
denounced, for it constitutes a limitation of human rights and of the rights of
peoples.

The aggravation of international tensions is destroying the spirit of détente
and eliminating security and confidence among peoples. The arms race, beyond any
rationality, is now becoming demented. The sophistication of weapons systems, the
proliferation of massive means of destruction, the growing use of human and
material resources for military ends and the continual growth of the world arms
trade amount to a dangerous militarization of societies themselves, as well as
a militarization of international relations. This danger is all the greater in
that it is accompanied by a general economic crisis; and history has shown the
association between recession and war.

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The consequences are already grave for the rights of peoples. The intimidation effect produced by a feeling of threat is considerably reducing the capacity of peoples to determine their own destiny. The right of self-determination is thus being limited. The options available to peoples, even in matters of internal policy, are increasingly conditioned by external pressures. The threat of war substantially diminishes our collective freedom.

The major decisions concerning the defence and the very existence of peoples are being taken without any democratic participation, often under the pressure of major economic groups and in the absence of any popular control.

Moreover, strategic decisions concerning a nation are frequently in the hands of a foreign power. National sovereignty itself, with respect to war and peace, is thus often seriously limited, if not abolished.

This is why the International League, which seeks to defend human rights and the rights of peoples at all costs, suggests that consideration be given to this permanent state of violation of these rights. One cannot condemn war and remain indifferent to the situation of a threat of war. The diffuse and generic character of this risk is no excuse. On the contrary, the matter of peace among peoples is too serious to be left in the hands of a small number. It is the responsibility of the international community to insist on abolition of the threat of war, to condemn those causing it and to promote respect for any human rights which are impaired by this threat.

The current international situation demands, therefore, that a principle should be stated and defended, namely that everyone and every people has the right to assume responsibility for collective security and to work for peace for the future of mankind.