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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF  
DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION  
OF MINORITIES

Fifteenth session  
Agenda item 8

REVIEW OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELDS WHICH  
HAVE ALREADY BEEN THE SUBJECT OF STUDY OR INQUIRY  
INITIATED BY THE SUB-COMMISSION

Statement submitted by the Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, Friends World Committee for Consultation, International Catholic Child Bureau, International League for the Rights of Man, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, World Union for Progressive Judaism, and the International Humanist and Ethical Union, non-governmental organizations in consultative status.

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We commend the decision taken by the Sub-Commission at its last session in 1962 to review further developments in the fields which have already been the subject of study or inquiry, and to place this item regularly on its agenda. We are pleased to note that at the present session a number of documents have been made available relating to this item, especially information prepared by the ILO and UNESCO. These do not, however, constitute a review of the fields covered by previous studies.

We therefore suggest that the Sub-Commission undertake review activities of a much more comprehensive character. Comments and information on further developments in the fields covered by the completed studies could be obtained annually from the same sources as those originally used by the special rapporteurs, including the non-governmental organizations which are in a position to supply factual information as to developments in practice. The data could then be compiled by the Secretary-General and made available to the Sub-Commission for discussion.

Precedents for procedures of this kind exist in other United Nations bodies in relation to such subjects, for example, as the status of women and freedom of information. We note also in document E/CN.4/228, paragraph 4, submitted by UNESCO in connexion with item 8, that the Director General of UNESCO is preparing a plan whereby Member States can submit reports on developments in the field of discrimination in education. Judge Ingles, the Special Rapporteur of the study of the right of everyone to leave any country, made a similar suggestion in paragraph 285 of his study, when he says in part: "All the materials collected by the Secretary-General could be submitted to the appropriate organs of the United Nations at regular intervals for examination, comment and recommendation for further action".

We believe that such a procedure can be adopted without necessarily awaiting the final approval of draft principles and their incorporation in declarations or conventions. The adoption of such a review procedure by the Sub-Commission would, we feel, greatly enhance the usefulness of the studies it has already completed, especially studies in such fields as discrimination in religious rights, political rights, and the right to leave a country, which are not related to the work of any of the specialized agencies. There is always the risk that the impact of completed studies which are not related to the work of one of the specialized agencies will not be sustained. Through the kind of review we suggest the studies would become continuously living documents to stimulate action in combatting discrimination.

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