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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND WAYS AND MEANS WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Letter dated 4 March 1985 from the Permanent Representative of the
United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to write you with reference to the letter dated 26 February 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba (A/40/152). Ambassador Oramas' letter is replete with misstatements, fabrications and even slander. It clearly deserves a response setting the record straight.

The United States Mission to the United Nations held a press conference on 25 February 1985 using United Nations facilities as is customarily done by many other delegations. I personally hosted that conference and had the rare privilege of introducing to the members of the press three Cuban former political prisoners who have cumulatively endured 63 years of indescribable suffering in Cuban prisons. In addition, at the conclusion of the press conference, a United States Information Agency (USIA) publication, "In a Place Without a Soul", which describes through first-hand experiences the inhuman conditions to which political prisoners are subjected in Cuba, was distributed to the foreign press. A number of other former political prisoners whose personal experiences in Cuban prisons are included in the USIA publication also attended the press conference.

* A/40/50 and Corr.1.

The holding of this press conference was prompted by the United States' abiding interest in the worldwide furthering of the cause of human rights and, particularly, by our desire to bring to the attention of the United Nations the undeniable evidence of widespread violations of human rights in Cuba which is systematically ignored by the General Assembly and its relevant bodies. Delegations interested in obtaining copies of this USIA publication can do so by calling the US Mission's Office of Public Affairs at 415-4050.

In closing, let me note that Ambassador Oramas' letter does not in any way dispute, much less refute, the evidence presented in the course of the press conference or that contained in the USIA publication. He chooses, instead, to evade the issue of the violations of human rights in Cuba by accusing these valiant former political prisoners of being traitors to Cuba. The facts indicate, however, that it is precisely those responsible for violating human rights in Cuba who have really betrayed the aspirations of the Cuban people.

I would appreciate having this note circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 12, 104 and 107 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Jeane J. KIRKPATRICK
