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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

Letter dated 19 December 1989 from the Permanent Representative of
Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the declaration adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary on 18 December 1989 concerning the case of László Tőkés (see annex).

I should also like to request you to have the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under the items entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council", "Implementation of the Programmes of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination", "International Covenants on Human Rights", "Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination" and "Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance".

(Signed) Ferenc ESZTERGÁLYOS
Ambassador

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ANNEX

Declaration adopted on 18 December 1989 by the National Assembly
of the Republic of Hungary concerning the case of László Tőkés

The National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary feels compelled, for the second time within a short period, to depart from its agenda and to take up the case of László Tőkés, a Calvinist pastor in the town of Temesvár. This has been made a matter of urgent concern by the fact that the Romanian authorities, violating basic human rights, flouting the country's international obligations, decided, by a court order bearing the semblance of legality, to evict László Tőkés from his office and home at the end of last week.

The unlawful action against the pastor, an unswerving and steadfast advocate of the free exercise of human, national and religious rights, his persecution and harassment for months by the authorities, have rightly aroused indignation not only in Hungarian public opinion, but also in broad circles of public life in Romania. Numerous social and political organizations, international church organizations and institutions, as well as public personalities, have protested and demanded that the arbitrary acts by the authorities against him be stopped.

According to available information, the eviction of László Tőkés did not take place until the date set in the court order, thanks mainly to the mass and open protests by thousands of inhabitants of Temesvár who protected the pastor and prevented his removal, envisaged for the end of last week. The events of recent days indicate that the perseverance of László Tőkés and his arduous struggle for the enjoyment of human rights in Romania command the broad support not only of the Hungarian national minority, but also of the Romanian national majority. At the same time, alarming news is being received about new retaliatory and repressive acts by the Romanian authorities.

The Government of the Republic of Hungary has, in an official note, called on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania to respect human rights and to fulfil its obligations undertaken in relevant international instruments. The President ad interim of the Republic of Hungary addressed a letter in defence of László Tőkés to Nicolae Ceausescu, the Head of State of Romania, which the Ambassador of Romania at Budapest refused to accept. Despite these steps and in defiance of growing international protests, the Government of Romania has ignored the official expressions of appeal and protest and has refused compliance with its commitment to provide information under the Concluding Document of the Vienna meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary notes that the Romanian Government has failed to stop its infringements on the rights of László Tőkés and his congregation, has arbitrarily interfered with the internal autonomy of the Reformer Church, has refused to co-operate in any way in the case of this pastor, who is of Hungarian ethnic origin, and has further aggravated the situation by its latest measures.

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The National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary expresses its deepest concern at the human rights situation in Romania and calls on the Romanian Government to honour its international obligations, to respect the basic principles embodied in its own constitution and to eliminate discrimination against its minority ethnic populations. It pledges support to and solidarity with László Tökés and strongly protests against the unlawful, arbitrary acts of the authorities of the Socialist Republic of Romania against him. It calls upon the Romanian authorities to end without delay the pastor's persecution, the harassment and intimidation of his family and congregation, as well as any other retaliatory measures, and to allow László Tökés to return to his office and to ensure that he can pursue pastoral activities.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary requests the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to take concrete steps in accordance with the generally accepted principles and norms of international relations, to protect the rights of László Tökés and his congregation and to have the Socialist Republic of Romania comply with its international obligations.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary invites the Hungarian Government to transmit this declaration to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the appropriate international forums and organizations.
