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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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Agenda Item 6

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS,
INCLUDING POLICIES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION AND OF
APARTHEID, IN ALL COUNTRIES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL
AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE
SUB-COMMISSION UNDER COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION 8 (XXIII)

Written statement submitted by the International Federation of Human
Rights, a non-governmental organization in consultative status
(category II)

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

[24 August 1990]

1. The International Federation of Human Rights (IFHR) and its affiliated members, the Swiss League for Human Rights and the French League for Human Rights, wish to draw the Sub-Commission's attention to a particularly serious incident which occurred on 24 April last, some 20 km from the exact spot we are on today. On that day, Mr. Kazem Radjavi was assassinated. On reading this name, a great many people present at this session, whether experts or members of governmental or non-governmental delegations, will recall the face of a man who was present so often within these walls, and will hear the voice which he raised with strength and courage against human rights violations perpetrated in Iran. He had devoted his life to the campaign for human rights in Iran, and we heard him here, once again, at the previous session of the Commission on Human Rights last March, vigorously criticizing Mr. Galindo Pohl's report, which he considered too lenient towards his country, whose practices in violation of human rights are well known to us and were well known to him. His tenacity and his stubbornness in going around the

world stating and reiterating how many men and women suffered repression, disappeared in prison, died under torture or were summarily executed in Iran, were the cause of his death. A representative of the Iranian resistance, he acted unflaggingly as the voice of the unheard, and journalists accredited to this forum know how much precise and reliable information Kazem Radjavi possessed concerning the situation in Iran and the fate of those who resisted. This man, a member of the Swiss League of Human Rights, was particularly well aware of what he spoke about: he had campaigned, under the Shah, against the death sentence against his brother, Massoud Radjavi, imprisoned for eight years and today President of the National Resistance Council of Iran and leader of the Mojahedin; his brother-in-law and sister were executed by the Khomeiny régime. Because of his struggle for human dignity and his refusal to compromise, he himself had been, in turn, a political refugee in Switzerland, then ambassador here, to the United Nations, of the first Government of the Republic of Iran, and then once more a political refugee in Switzerland. He knew that he was threatened, but his latest bitter denunciations of Mr. Galindo Pohl's report will have hastened his execution. Indignation and condemnation of that terrorist act against a man of justice appeared in the entire world press. The voice of Kazem Radjavi has been silenced but, true to the cause he upheld, the cause of human rights common to us all here, we denounce his murder, a barbarous act if ever there was one, which runs completely counter to international human rights law.

2. The International Federation of Human Rights and several of its affiliated leagues, numerous non-governmental organizations, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the United States Congress have condemned this political assassination perpetrated on the order of the Iranian Government. The report by the police of the canton of Vaud (Switzerland) enables us to hold the Iranian Government responsible for this wrongful death; moreover, the press release of 22 June 1990 issued by the examining magistrate of the canton of Vaud, Mr. Chatelain, states:

"Although the investigation is not complete, it has been shown that several persons are closely implicated in this affair. It was initially established that the persons named Yadollah Samadi and Mohammad Said Rezvani were suspected of this murder, but investigations have revealed that 13 persons were involved (...).

3. The 13 persons involved were all issued with Iranian service passports, bearing the words "on mission". Some of these documents were issued on the same dates at Tehran. Most of these persons entered Switzerland together, by direct Iran Air flights from Tehran to Geneva, and were in possession of air tickets bearing consecutive serial numbers (...).

4. At the present stage, the police officers in charge of the investigation have assembled various data which make it possible to state that one or more official Iranian departments are directly implicated in the assassination of Mr. Kazem Radjavi (...).

5. Furthermore, Maître Henri Leclerc, one of the French lawyers of the Radjavi family and Vice-President of the French League for Human Rights, analyses some of the evidence of the case in a letter dated 30 July 1990 addressed to the President of the International Federation of Human Rights:

"It is true that arrest warrants were issued for all the perpetrators identified, both in Switzerland and abroad; but although it has been established that two Iranian diplomats accused by the Iranian resistance movements of having been entrusted with supervising this assassination were indeed in Geneva at the time of the crime, and that they had left Switzerland for Tehran on the day of the assassination by a direct Iran Air flight, it appears from the dossier that Interpol in Tehran ventured to affirm in reply to questions that the suspects were unknown to them, that their whereabouts were not known and that they had entered Switzerland not from Iran but from Iraq, since they were no doubt Mojahedin dissidents. This contradicts the entire dossier, and it is quite clear that the Swiss police will obtain no further information from Iran (...).

6. Another factor appears quite clear in the dossier: that those who came to carry out this assassination took practically no precautions, and in my view the Iranian agents behaved in Switzerland extremely casually as if they wanted the whole world to know that this assassination had been carried out by Iranian agents.

7. It is interesting to note that the crime was organized, and the service passports issued, in Iran just before two Swiss citizens were taken hostage in Lebanon.

8. It is also interesting to note that the assassins left long-peaked caps at the scene of the crime, as they had done previously when a deserting Iranian pilot, Moradi Talebi, was assassinated on 10 August 1987. Identical caps had likewise been found following the attack which cost the lives of three Iranians at Vienna, including Abdelrahman Ghassemelou, the head of the Iranian Kurdish resistance. The consequence of this veritable signature is that the Swiss State protests no more than the Austrian State against such State crimes organized on its territory."

9. Being aware of all these factors, we cannot let this session pass without denouncing this assassination and without requesting the Sub-Commission to take into consideration today the criticisms made by Kazem Radjavi about the report submitted by Mr. Galindo Pohl to the Commission on Human Rights at its previous session. His death is concrete proof that Iran is today not confining itself to internal repression but is exporting terrorism beyond its borders, in killing, not far away from this forum, one of its opponents, that indefatigable defender of human rights Kazem Radjavi, to whom we pay tribute.
