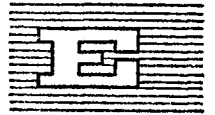


UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1368  
15 December 1979

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Thirty-sixth session  
Item 11 of the provisional agenda

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF  
THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION;  
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND WAYS AND MEANS WITHIN THE  
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE  
ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to  
paragraph 2 of Commission on Human Rights  
resolution 23 (XXXV)

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION .....	1 - 2	3
<u>Chapters</u>		
I. EXISTING ACTIVITIES .....	3 - 27	4
A. Department of Public Information .....	3 - 24	4
1. Radio and Visual Services .....	3 - 6	4
(a) Visual Service .....	3 - 4	4
(b) Radio Service .....	5 - 6	4
2. External Relations Division .....	7 - 18	5
(a) Information Centres Service .....	7 - 8	5
(b) Information Support Section .....	9 - 11	5
(c) Education Information Programme Section .....	12	6
(d) Visitors' Section and Public Inquiries Unit .....	13	6
(e) Special Projects Unit .....	14 - 16	6
(f) Non-governmental Organizations Section .....	17 - 18	7

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
3. Press and Publications Division .....	19 - 23	7
4. Division for Economic and Social Information .....	24	8
B. Division of Human Rights .....	25 - 27	8
II. FUTURE ACTIVITIES INCLUDING PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT .....	28 - 50	10
A. Department of Public Information .....	28 - 50	10
1. Radio and Visual Services Division .....	28 - 30	10
(a) Visual Service .....	28	10
(b) Radio Service .....	29 - 30	10
2. External Relations Division .....	31 - 40	10
(a) Information Centres Services .....	31 - 32	10
(b) Information Support Section .....	33	11
(c) Education Information Programme Section .....	34	11
(d) Visitors' Section and Public Inquiries Unit .....	35 - 36	11
(e) Special Projects Unit .....	37	11
(f) Non-governmental Organizations Section .....	38 - 40	11
3. Press and Publications Division .....	41 - 44	12
4. Division for Economic and Social Information .....	45	12
B. Division of Human Rights .....	46 - 50	12

## INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 23 (XXXV) adopted on 14 March 1979, the Commission on Human Rights, believing that progress in the promotion of respect for and protection of human rights is assisted by a favourable world public opinion and bearing in mind its work on the question of further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, urged all Governments to consider action to give publicity to United Nations activities in the field of human rights, with particular reference to the work of the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission also requested the Secretary-General to take all appropriate measures further to develop public information activities in the field of human rights and, with this purpose in mind, to present a report to the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights containing a summary of the existing public information activities in the field of human rights and proposals for their further development. In its resolution 34/45 on the International Covenants on Human Rights adopted on 23 November 1979, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in preparing the report mentioned in resolution 23 (XXXV) of the Commission on Human Rights concerning the development of public information activities in the field of human rights, to bear in mind the question of improving the publicity for the work of the Human Rights Committee.

2. Pursuant to the above-mentioned request of the Commission, the Secretary-General organized inter-Secretariat consultations, as well as informal consultations with representatives of non-governmental organizations and the media. In accordance with the request of the Commission and in the light of the above-mentioned consultations, the Secretary-General submits the following report to the Commission on Human Rights.

## I. EXISTING ACTIVITIES

### A. Department of Public Information

#### 1. Radio and Visual Services

##### (a) Visual Service

3. The Visual Service covers United Nations-related developments in the field of human rights on video, film and photos. This coverage usually consists of highlights of meetings of the Commission on Human Rights and related deliberations in other organs, including the General Assembly, with respect to human rights issues such as racial discrimination, apartheid, rights of the child, women's rights, and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. This material is made available to regular news syndicators; the archival material is stored in the film library.

4. Human rights issues are also covered regularly in feature productions, vignette series and one-minute television spots for special occasions to commemorate historic days or events. Two recent films were: Generations of Resistance (the Black Liberation Struggle in South Africa) and The Palestinian People Do Have Rights. Films are under production on the situation of refugees in South-East Asia, the status of women, and on a comparative study of crime prevention in developing and developed countries. Possibilities are being explored for the co-production of a film on the women's anti-pass law campaign in southern Africa.

##### (b) Radio Service

5. The Radio Service engages in continuous and sustained coverage of United Nations-related developments in the field of human rights. This coverage takes the form of daily and weekly broadcast copy issued by the Radio News Desk and made available to correspondents; regular daily and weekly news summaries and news programmes in 16 languages. The subject matter of this coverage includes the work of the Commission on Human Rights and the related deliberations of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly as well as the activities of the United Nations with respect to various aspects of human rights, such as racial discrimination, apartheid, the rights of the child, women's rights, and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

6. Human rights issues are regularly featured in other productions of the Radio Service as well. A special quarter-hour programme is produced annually in a number of languages broadcast on or around Human Rights Day. Perspective, a weekly analytical programme in English, devoted five issues during the past year to United Nations developments related to human rights. A similar pattern was true of regional radio programmes for Africa (UN-Africa, L'Afrique à l'ONU), Asia (Asian Spotlight), the Middle East (Afak Alamiyah), Latin America (Zona Internacional Puntos Cardinales, Perspectiva Internacional) and the Caribbean (Caribbean Echo). In addition, the Radio Service is engaged in a number of special productions bearing on human rights themes. In 1979, a series of six special programmes was produced in several languages in the context of the International Year of the Child. In the second half of 1979, production was initiated on a series of weekly programmes

concerning women. Throughout the year, daily quarter-hour anti-apartheid programmes were produced in six languages and placed at the disposal of radio organizations whose broadcasts are heard in southern Africa.

## 2. External Relations Division

### (a) Information Centres Service

7. The question of human rights constitutes a major theme in the work programmes undertaken by the global network of 60 United Nations Information Centres and Offices serving nearly 140 Member States. The Information Centres Service at Headquarters maintains frequent contact with the Information Centres by providing them with operational guidelines, instructions and substantive materials relating to new and recurrent mandates in the field of human rights. The Information Centres are urged to disseminate, display and utilize all the materials at their disposal, to publicize the significance of specific events and observances on human rights mandated by the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs, especially in co-operation with Governments, educational institutes, non-governmental organizations and the information media. The Information Centres are also requested to submit full reports, together with press clippings and other locally produced materials, on the scope of their activities and results. These reports are evaluated and summarized by the Information Centres Service and distributed to the substantive offices.

8. During 1979, the Information Centres Service also issued instructive circulars, briefing notes and reminders to Information Centres concerning the following mandates for observances in the field of human rights: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Week of Solidarity with the Colonial Peoples of southern Africa fighting for Freedom, Independence and Equal Rights, the United Nations Decade for Women, the International Day of Solidarity with southern Africa political prisoners, the Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, the Week of Solidarity with the People of Namibia, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the United Nations Day observance with emphasis on the International Year of the Child, the observance between 20 November to 10 December of Solidarity with Children under Apartheid and the Human Rights Day observance. In all instances, the Information Centres have been provided with standard as well as special materials. Feedback in the form of special reports has been requested from all Information Centres.

### (b) Information Support Section

9. The Information Centres and many other United Nations field offices are being supplied with a continuous flow of materials -- sent by pouch, mail or cable -- on human rights issues for redissemination. Most of the material was in English, but they also included publications, documents and statements in other official languages.

10. Most of the materials sent by the Information Support Section to the United Nations field establishments for public information purposes deal with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the work of the main bodies directly concerned with human rights subjects, such as the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights.

They also include messages and statements made by the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

11. Issues relating to human rights, such as the struggle against racism and apartheid and the violation of human rights by racist régimes are also covered in the materials distributed for redissemination in the field.

(c) Education Information Programme Section

12. The Section, in 1978, organized seminars in Geneva and Paris focussed on human rights, including the question of human rights in the occupied Arab territories. Participants were curriculum and policy development officials from the Ministries of Education of 13 Member States in Africa, Europe, the Middle East and North America. A student leaflet on the International Year of the Child was printed and distributed in 140,000 copies in English, French and Spanish. A student leaflet on decolonization and one on Apartheid, both in 140,000 copies in English, French and Spanish, are under preparation and will be released by the end of 1979. About 5,000 sets of colour slides (20 each) with teachers' guides on decolonization are being prepared for distribution during 1979 and 1980.

(d) Visitors' Section and Public Inquiries Unit

13. The Visitors' Section and the Public Inquiries Unit continue to treat information activities in the field of human rights as one of the priority items in the public service activities. The Visitors' Section deals with information concerning the work of the Commission on Human Rights and other related issues in guided tours, special briefings and film screenings to promote better understanding and to acquaint the public with United Nations activities in this field. A concise explanation of the subject is included in the one-hour lecture tour for visitors to Headquarters. The number of visitors to Headquarters totalled 613,000 in 1978. Relevant films are screened when appropriate at briefings both at Headquarters and away from Headquarters. The Public Inquiries Unit responds extensively to questions from the public on this subject. In response to requests from educators, researchers, students and the general public, the Unit makes available information materials such as press releases issued by the Department of Public Information including those on various aspects of human rights such as racial discrimination, apartheid, on the work of the Commission on Human Rights, the General Assembly and other relevant bodies.

(e) Special Projects Unit

14. The booklet, UN Today: Suggestions for Speakers which is published by the Unit annually in English, French and Spanish, devotes a special chapter to human rights. The booklet is widely used by speakers during celebrations of various international days and observances, and also for reference by national and international organizations, school and universities throughout the world.

15. The Graduate Student Intern Programme has been an effective instrument in providing information about the United Nations for young people. During the 1978 and 1979 programmes, special briefings were devoted to the question of human rights.

16. The Special Projects Unit also co-ordinates the activities concerning the world-wide observance of Human Rights Day. Suggestions for publicizing the observance and related materials are sent to the Information Centres and Offices. Feedback reports received from the Information Centres are analysed and a summary report is prepared and distributed to all Information Centres and other substantive offices throughout the United Nations.

(f) Non-Governmental Organizations Section

17. The Non-Governmental Organization Section has always considered human rights in all of its aspects as one of the three major themes, along with development and disarmament, that should be stressed as part of United Nations programmes and objectives. The Section devotes approximately one third of its 48 weekly briefings to various aspects of human rights, such as women's rights, anti-apartheid, decolonization, etc. These briefings are held from September through May and are addressed by senior Secretariat members, committee chairmen, or knowledgeable delegates. Briefing summaries are written of every briefing and are circulated to the 326 non-governmental organizations which are associated with the section in New York, and to all Information Centres.

18. Human rights was also one of the programme elements at the European Regional Conference for non-governmental organizations attended by over 400 representatives of national and international organizations in Geneva in October 1979. The Section is presently preparing a pamphlet, Women Helping Women about non-governmental organization activities to foster women's rights in both developed and developing countries.

3. Press and Publications Division

19. The proceedings of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies and the discussions on their reports, are given full coverage in press releases. The resolutions adopted and the relevant documents concerned are made available to the information media. Attention is also drawn at DPI press briefings to reports and other activities of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, and press conferences are arranged as needed.

20. When requested, Department of Public Information coverage officers are provided for human rights missions, so that cables on their activities can be sent to New York and Geneva for issuance to information media. The coverage officers also arrange press conferences locally, handle press liaison with local correspondents, and seek to stimulate interest in the activities of the body concerned.

21. Human rights activities -- the work of the Human Rights Commission, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and ad hoc and expert bodies -- are reported on a continuing basis in the United Nations Chronicle and in the Yearbook of the United Nations. Human rights topics were also featured in several issues of the quarterly magazine Objective: Justice. In particular, the issue of Spring 1978 featured the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the Programme for the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The Autumn 1978 issue featured the decisions taken at the World Conference. The ninth edition of Everyone's United Nations published in December 1979 also has extensive coverage of the human rights activities of the Organization.

22. The publications programme during 1978-1979 included many titles relating to human rights. Reprints of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were made in 17 languages: English, French, Spanish, Bengali, Esperanto, Finnish, Gujarati, Gurmukhi, Japanese, Kannada, Marathi, Nepali, Norwegian, Oriya, Telegu, Turkish, Urdu; the International Bill of Human Rights was reprinted in French and the Covenants reprinted in English and Spanish (stocks remain available in French). Also reprinted were the following: the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (English), the Crime of Genocide (English), the Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (French) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (English).

23. New titles published, with the languages were: XXX Anniversary, The United Nations and Human Rights (English, French, Spanish, Russian); Declaration on the Rights of the Child (English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Bengali, Dutch, German, Gurmukhi, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Malayalam, Marathi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu); Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian); Towards a World Without Racism (English, French, Spanish, Russian); World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (preprinted in English from the Chronicle); Declaration and Programme of Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (English, French and Spanish); International Anti-Apartheid Year (text of General Assembly resolution in English, French, Spanish); Under-Secretary-General's Message for Student Anti-Apartheid leaflet (English, French, Spanish); International Declaration against Apartheid in Sports (reprinted from the Chronicle in English and French). A new pamphlet, 50 Questions and Answers about Human Rights was completed and scheduled for publication in January 1980.

#### 4. Division for Economic and Social Information

24. The Press and Production Section of the Division for Economic and Social Information has been covering various aspects of human rights, such as the economic and social aspects of apartheid, the International Year of the Child and Women's rights, in their press releases and feature articles. A brochure entitled Women and Science was recently produced in English. The French and Spanish versions will be available shortly.

#### B. Division of Human Rights\*

25. Public information for the human rights programme is handled as part of the activities of the Department of Public Information. The Division of Human Rights has no information unit of its own. Co-operation and co-ordination between DPI and the Division of Human Rights is undertaken by joint Task Forces both at Headquarters and at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

\* This part of the report is excerpted from paragraphs 107-110 of the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations public information policies and activities, submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A/34/574).



26. In addition to the activities of DPI, the Division of Human Rights assists in the field of public information in the following four main ways:

(a) By publications, such as the Human Rights Bulletin (published quarterly) and the Yearbook on Human Rights (to be published annually from 1979);

(b) By its advisory services programme wherein it holds annually seminars and/or training courses in the field of human rights;

(c) By helping to disseminate information material prepared by DPI;

(d) By holding press briefings and briefings for the representatives of specialized agencies and non-governmental organisations and by addresses to academic and other institutions by members of the Division.

27. The Division performs the activities in the four areas described above within its existing resources.

II. FUTURE ACTIVITIES INCLUDING PROPOSALS FOR  
FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

A. Department of Public Information

1. Radio and Visual Services Division

(a) Visual Service

28. The Visual Service coverage of meetings and events will continue at the current level. Additional coverage of any special conference or occasion will require extra budgetary appropriations. The idea of producing a basic film on human rights will be explored further in terms of an animated or stylised presentation suitable for use in schools and educational institutions. The idea of a human rights poster with illustrations will also be pursued. For both the film and poster, extra budgetary allocations might be needed to undertake these productions in various languages.

(b) Radio Service

29. The amount of coverage that can be given to human rights questions depends on the amount of coverage given by the Radio Service to the totality of United Nations developments. As that over-all amount of coverage expands (for example, by the introduction of additional news programmes or further languages), the coverage of human rights issues increases proportionately.

30. The Radio Service proposes to produce annually a series of six quarter-hour programmes on a selected human rights topic. Such programmes might initially be produced in English, French, Spanish and Arabic and placed with radio organizations which broadcast in those languages. The estimated cost of this project (research, collection of material, writing, production, distribution) is \$5,000 per series per language.

2. External Relations Division

(a) Information Centres Services

31. Coverage and feedback analysis may be expected to continue at present levels, on the understanding that both substantive information material and financial resources for production and distribution of local language materials are made available to Information Centres. In this connexion, the Information Centres will be encouraged to explore, where possible, the opportunity for co-production not only with governmental and non-governmental organizations but also with UNDP, UNICEF, other organs and agencies of the United Nations system.

32. Efforts will be made to expand feature services such as backgrounders and curtain raisers for special days and events on the question of human rights which are very much desired for use by Information Centres. Such materials greatly facilitate the Information Centres in organizing publicity as well as in maximizing coverage and impact through news media.

(b) Information Support Section

33. This section, in order to facilitate the Information Centres' activities in the field of human rights, will contribute to an increased distribution of all relevant United Nations materials. In co-operation with other substantive Divisions, including the Division of Human Rights, the Information Support Section will supply Information Centres with backgrounders and other materials for redissemination.

(c) Education Information Programme Section

34. At the 1979 Triangular Fellowship Programme in Mexico City held from 22 November to 12 December, the question of human rights was discussed extensively by Spanish-speaking curriculum development specialists from the Ministries of Education from 14 Latin American countries and Spain. The insights carried from this meeting will be followed up in the future.

(d) Visitors' Section and Public Inquiries Unit

35. The extensive coverage of information on the question of human rights will continue to be covered in the activities of the Visitors' Section and the Public Inquiries Unit. The Public Inquiries Unit will continue to pass on to the Division of Human Rights all individual human rights complaints which are received by the Unit.

36. A regular information circular on recent developments in the field of human rights would be most useful for the Unit; so would posters and kits on human rights for children.

(e) Special Projects Unit

37. Consideration will be given to the production of the publication UN Today: Suggestion for Speakers in additional languages (presently produced in English, French and Spanish) and in larger quantities. The Graduate Student Internship Programme will continue to cover the various aspects of human rights questions in-depth every year.

(f) Non-Governmental Organizations Section

38. This Section proposes to explore with the sub-committee on human rights of its NGO Executive Committee, a proposal to hold a special meeting on solidarity with the Peoples of Namibia in conjunction with the Namibia Day observance at Headquarters.

39. Human rights and specifically the rights of the peoples of southern Africa will be a main topic in the projected NGO Conference in Africa tentatively scheduled for September 1980.

40. Information Centres will be encouraged to hold special briefings for non-governmental organizations on the question of human rights. In this regard, consideration will be given to the production of special materials on human rights, published for NGOs written for the lay public, attractively illustrated and available in quantity and in as many languages as possible.

3. Press and Publications Division

41. Coverage in press releases of the activities of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies will continue and, in some cases, may be augmented as a result of the decision of the Economic and Social Council in 1979 to discontinue for two years the provision of summary records for 15 of its subsidiary bodies. This decision has made the press releases the main source of information, on a timely basis, about the meetings of those bodies for the information media and delegations.

42. Human rights topics will continue to be featured in such publications as the Yearbook of the United Nations, Basic Facts About the United Nations, Everyone's United Nations and other reference publications and in the two magazines, the Chronicle and Objective: Justice. Reprints will be issued as required of basic human rights instruments, the Declaration, the Covenants and others.

43. Increased use is planned of the articles section of the Chronicle. A new series of signed articles on the Decade for Action to Combat Racial Discrimination is scheduled, with a view to subsequent publication in a pamphlet. Wider circulation and placement of feature articles is also being arranged. In co-operation with the Division of Human Rights, an information circular on recent developments in the field of human rights will be issued on a regular basis.

44. New publications on human rights will be scheduled in the Department's programmes as the need arises and as budgetary resources permit. It may be noted that there are a significant number of priority claims on the resources of the publications budget and each proposal is necessarily considered within the framework of the over-all work programme.

4. Division for Economic and Social Information

45. Coverage of economic and social aspects of human rights will be intensified in feature articles. The Division for Economic and Social Information would appreciate guidance from the Commission on Human Rights on the themes which should be emphasized.

B. Division of Human Rights

46. The Task Forces on human rights at Headquarters and at the United Nations at Geneva will continue to keep under close attention the needs for public information activities in the field of human rights, with a view to intensifying and enhancing these activities. Contact Officers have recently been designated at the United Nations in Geneva by DPI and the Division of Human Rights, who are expected to work closely in the future on relations with the public, the press and non-governmental organizations as well as on other public information projects in the field of human rights.

47. Every effort will be made, bearing in mind the availability of staff and resources, to widen the circle of distribution of the Human Rights Bulletin and to produce it promptly every quarter.

48. Beginning with the 1979 edition, the Yearbook on Human Rights will be published annually in accordance with the guide lines for the contents and format decided upon by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1979/37.

49. The Division will collaborate with the Department of Public Information in the production of human rights kits for children, youths and adults, bearing in mind possible use of those kits as teaching aids. The idea of producing kits on various human rights themes in the future will also be examined in collaboration with the Department of Public Information.

50. In order to bring about greater public awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Division will collaborate with the Department of Public Information to highlight special themes on selected topics in the public information activities of the United Nations. The Commission on Human Rights may wish to indicate themes for such emphasis.

51. The Division will continue to undertake the activities described in paragraphs 25 and 26 above.