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INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Future meetings of the Human Rights Committee

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its eighth session, held at Geneva in October 1979, the Human Rights Committee considered the question of its future meetings in the context of publicity to be given to its activities under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and expressed the wish to hold one of its forthcoming sessions in a developing country if it could be ensured that it did not involve too much expenditure for the host country. The Committee requested the Secretary-General to bring this question to the attention of the General Assembly in connexion with the consideration of its annual report by the Third Committee.
2. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly by its resolution 34/45 of 23 November 1979, inter alia, noted with due attention the recommendation of the Human Rights Committee regarding the holding of future meetings of the Committee in developing countries and requested the Secretary-General to explore this possibility, taking into account the recommendation of the Committee, and to submit a report in this regard to the General Assembly at its thirty fifth session.
3. The present report is submitted by the Secretary General in response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 34/45.
4. In this connexion, the Secretary-General wishes to recall the relevant provision of General Assembly resolution 31/140 of 17 December 1976, by which the Assembly decided that:

"... United Nations bodies may hold sessions away from their established headquarters when a Government issuing an invitation for a session to be held within its territory has agreed to defray, after consultation with the Secretary-General as to their nature and possible extent, the actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved".

\* A/35/150.

5. At present, the above-mentioned provision of resolution 31/140 governs the action which may be taken by the Secretary-General in determining the actual additional costs of meetings to be borne by Governments issuing invitation to the Human Rights Committee to hold sessions in their territories. The resolution makes no distinction between the Governments of developing countries and those of developed countries which may extend such invitations to the Committee.

6. It is the understanding of the Secretary-General that the General Assembly by its request contained in resolution 34/45 did not intend to suggest any departure from the application of the relevant provisions of resolution 31/140.

7. In view of the above, the General Assembly may wish to consider the possibility of establishing a special trust fund for the holding of the meetings of the Human Rights Committee in developing countries and invite the Governments of States parties to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to make contributions to the trust fund, whose resources would be utilized to cover the actual additional costs which would arise by holding the Committee's meetings in developing countries. If this proposal is opted for, the Secretary-General would accept to supervise the administration of the trust fund, and the Committee, in consultation with the Secretary-General and subject to the availability of funds, would be able to accept the invitations from the developing countries to hold sessions in their territories.