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FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE
PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION:

HUMAN RIGHTS, MASS EXODUSES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

Human rights and mass exoduses

Report of the Secretary-General

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Introduction

1. The Commission on Human Rights, at its fiftieth session, adopted resolution 1994/66 entitled "Human rights and mass exoduses" without a vote. It requested the Secretary-General to invite Governments, intergovernmental organizations, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide information and to prepare, within existing resources, and submit to the Commission at its fifty-first session a report containing information and views on solutions that they have found to be effective in the area of mass exoduses, a compilation of information and recommendations from human rights mechanisms on problems resulting in mass exoduses of populations or impeding their voluntary return home and his views on the matters referred to in his report.
2. In compliance with the resolution, notes verbales and letters were sent to all Governments and concerned organizations drawing their attention to the request mentioned above and asking that any information and views relating to these matters be sent to the Centre for Human Rights by 30 September 1994.
3. Information was received from the following Member States: Belarus, Czech Republic, Guyana, Iraq, Netherlands and Saudi Arabia. Slovenia sent a report on "Temporary Refugees in Slovenia". Replies were also received from the following United Nations entities and specialized agencies: Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNHCS), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The following intergovernmental organizations also replied: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), European Commission of Human Rights. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights sent copies of its reports on Guatemala, Colombia and Haiti, as well as a copy of its 1993 Annual Report. The European Commission on Human Rights sent its decisions Nos. 6742/74, 6780/74, 6950/75, 7011/75, 8007/77, 14209/88, 16137/90 and 22325/93 and the Committee of Ministers resolution of 20 January 1979. Replies were received from the following non-governmental organizations: International Federation Terre des Hommes, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCTV) and Amnesty International, which also sent its recent reports on Algeria, Colombia, India (Jammu and Kashmir), Mali, Tunisia and Turkey.
4. In compliance with the above-mentioned resolution, requests for information from human rights mechanisms were also made and information was received from the following mechanisms: the Special Rapporteurs on the human rights situations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Rwanda, the Sudan, the territory of the former Yugoslavia and Zaire; the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women; the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee and the Working Group on the Right to Development.

5. Chapter I of the present report provides an overview of the solutions that have been found to be effective; chapter II contains a compilation of information received from human rights mechanisms; chapter III discusses issues of early warning, human rights and mass exoduses, while chapter IV contains the views of the Secretary-General on these matters.

I. VIEWS ON SOLUTIONS IN THE AREA OF MASS EXODUSES

A. Commission, Sub-Commission and General Assembly resolutions

6. The Commission on Human Rights, the General Assembly and the Sub-Commission have been examining the nexus between human rights violations and mass exoduses since 1980. Additionally, these bodies have established a number of different mandates that deal with human rights issues relating to displacement.

7. Since 1980, in its resolutions on human rights and mass exoduses, the Commission has invited all Governments and intergovernmental and humanitarian organizations concerned to intensify their cooperation and assistance in efforts to address the serious problems resulting from mass exoduses of refugees and displaced persons and the causes of such exoduses, most recently in its resolution 1994/66. Specifically, the Commission has called upon all States to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms and to refrain from denying these to individuals in their population because of nationality, ethnicity, race, religion or language. This has been endorsed by the General Assembly, in its resolution 41/70 of 3 December 1986. The Commission has also deplored ethnic and other forms of intolerance as one of the major causes of forced migratory movements, and has urged all States to take all necessary steps to ensure respect for human rights, especially of persons belonging to minorities.

8. The Commission has also requested all United Nations bodies, including the United Nations human rights treaty bodies, the specialized agencies and governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to cooperate fully with all mechanisms of the Commission and to provide them with all relevant and accurate information in their possession on the human rights situations creating or affecting refugees and displaced persons within their mandates.

9. The Commission specifically has noted that the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had acknowledged the direct relationship between observance of human rights standards, refugee movements and problems of protection and solutions and has welcomed the High Commissioner's contributions to the deliberations of international human rights bodies.

10. Apart from the mandate on human rights and mass exoduses which has been entrusted to the Secretary-General, in the past few years there have been new developments in the area of human rights and forced population movements, particularly on the issues of internally displaced persons, forced evictions, population transfers and freedom of movement.

11. The Commission, in its resolution 1991/25, requested the Secretary-General to prepare an analytical report on internally displaced persons (E/CN.4/1992/23); in its resolution 1992/73 it requested the Secretary-General to appoint a representative to examine the human rights issues related to internally displaced persons; the Commission extended the mandate of the representative for two additional years in 1993. The Representative of the Secretary-General has undertaken a number of missions, consultations and other activities to increase awareness of the problem and sharpen understanding of the issues involved.
12. In its resolution 1993/77 of 10 March 1993 the Commission requested the Secretary-General to compile an analytical report on the practice of forced evictions. The analytical report (E/CN.4/1994/20) was submitted to the Commission at its fiftieth session.
13. In another development the Sub-Commission, in its resolution 1990/17 decided to consider the matter of the human rights dimensions of population transfer, including the implantation of settlers and settlements, and in its resolution 1992/28 entrusted two of its members as Special Rapporteurs with preparing a preliminary study on the human rights dimensions of population transfer. Two reports have been submitted to the Sub-Commission by the Rapporteurs (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/17 and Corr.1 and E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/18 and Corr.1). The first sought to review the phenomenon of forcible population transfer in a comprehensive manner. The second concentrated on specific areas with the aim of appraising the normative structure applicable to population transfer. It argued that human rights standards are useful in defining the conduct of States in the protection of populations against arbitrary displacement as well as in the course of displacement. It suggested that international law generally prohibits the transfer of persons and the implantation of settlers and also described permissive standards of international law that would justify population transfer. It also submitted that the non-realization of economic, social and cultural rights may provoke mass population movements. It stated further that the general standards applicable to conflicts of both an internal and an international character prohibit the forced relocation of civilians. It finally discussed the subject of State responsibility and population transfer.
14. Other mandates of the Commission and the Sub-Commission, such as those of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment (appointed by Sub-Commission decision 1989/108), the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing (appointed by Sub-Commission resolution 1992/26), have also a direct bearing on the mandate of human rights and mass exoduses. Activities of the human rights treaty bodies have often addressed this issue as well.
15. Further, the Sub-Commission at its forty-sixth session adopted resolution 1994/24 entitled "The right to freedom of movement", in which it affirmed the right of persons to remain in peace in their own homes, on their own lands and in their own countries; it also affirmed the right of refugees and displaced persons to return, in safety and dignity, to their country of origin and/or within it, to their place of origin or choice; it urged all Governments and other actors involved to do everything possible in order to cease at once all practices of forced displacement, population transfer and

ethnic cleansing in violation of international legal standards; and it decided to include under its agenda item entitled "Freedom of movement" a sub-item relating to questions of displacement entitled "Population displacement" and to keep under constant review respect for the right to freedom of movement, including the right to remain and to return.

16. From the above it can be concluded that the Commission, the General Assembly and the Sub-Commission view human rights violations as a major cause of mass exodus, that an improvement of the situation of human rights would lead to fewer incidents of mass exodus and would constitute an effective solution to the problem of mass exodus, and that all measures should be taken to improve the situation of human rights, including information gathering by United Nations agencies and other organizations.

B. Views included in the replies to the note verbale

17. In their replies to the above-mentioned note verbale, Governments and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations noted generally that the following could constitute effective solutions in the area of mass exoduses: the improvement of the human rights situation, the prevention of wars and conflicts and the addressing of their root causes, such as economic inequalities and political instability. Measures to these ends were considered to include: comprehensive strategies, human rights activities, conflict resolution, intergovernmental activities, regulation of migratory pressures and promotion of solutions. Promotion of specific human rights, such as the right to housing, the right to a healthy environment, the right to food and the right to reproductive health were also mentioned in some replies.

1. Comprehensive strategies

18. UNHCR in its reply stressed the importance of following a three-point strategy of prevention of the circumstances which force people to flee, preparedness to provide effective protection and assistance, and solutions, particularly through voluntary repatriation.

19. Awareness building, early warning and preparedness as well as overall vulnerability reduction are considered in the reply of UNHCR as important elements of newly formulated United Nations post-disaster recovery strategies which link emergency measures with longer term sustainable development issues.

20. The same is noted in the reply of the Netherlands, which also points out that to this end it is making substantial contributions to efforts to address both the problems of mass exoduses of refugees and displaced persons and their underlying causes in order to enhance the prospects for solutions. This is also included in the reply received from Saudi Arabia.

2. Human rights activities: monitoring, prevention, promotion and coordination

21. Human rights monitoring is thought by the Czech Republic to be necessary in determining where preventive action is needed. UNHCR notes that cooperation with human rights bodies and mechanisms in order to focus attention on human rights situations which cause or threaten to cause

situations of coerced displacements or which undermine efforts to allow voluntary repatriation is an important element in a human rights-oriented strategy to prevent or solve problems of displacement. Amnesty International also emphasizes the importance of the action the Commission can take as a preventive measure in cases of human rights violations which threaten to cause forced displacement.

22. The reply received by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development notes that commitment by ACC members to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, including an assessment of the impact of strategies of ACC member organizations to the enjoyment of human rights, periodic discussions in ACC with a view to furthering a coordinated approach by the United Nations system to the protection of human rights, and support to and cooperation with the High Commissioner for Human Rights in his system-wide coordination responsibilities are also important steps in the overall protection and promotion of human rights.

23. The replies received by the European Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights indicate that the development of case law, for example by regional human rights bodies and courts, dealing with cases of mass exoduses, could further strengthen the human rights dimension of mass exoduses and displacement and promote return. The reply of UNESCO notes the importance of education in schools on human rights and humanitarian law.

24. The provision of residential stability and security of tenure are considered in the reply received from UNCHS as fundamental steps for promoting progress in the quality of life in human settlements and in preventing mass exoduses or in providing durable solutions to existing ones. In this regard the realization of the right of everybody to adequate housing can be enhanced through promoting security of tenure and through the prevention, or at least the reduction, of mass evictions from human settlements.

25. Another measure which would be effective towards solving a number of mass exoduses, according to the reply received from UNEP, would be the recognition of the existence of "environmental refugees" caused by the violation of the right to a healthy environment. This is considered as a step towards addressing the environmental causes and consequences of displacement.

26. Promotion of the right to food and freedom from hunger can be achieved through the monitoring of the food supply situation, according to FAO's reply. This is an important preventive step as well as a measure to promote solutions in cases of large scale population movements.

27. Assistance with regard to the reproductive rights of populations in crisis areas and to meet the need for reproductive health care and family planning during relief operations is considered in the reply of UNFPA as a central element in emergency assistance to refugees and displaced persons.

3. Human rights dimensions of displacement

28. The reply of the CSCE indicates that more emphasis, both in the field and in policy activities, has to be given to the issue of mass migration,

including displaced persons and refugees. To that end it held in 1993 a human dimension seminar on "Migration, including refugees and displaced persons", where the question of human rights and mass exoduses was addressed. The CSCE Rome Council Meeting (1 December 1993) has asked the main CSCE decision-making bodies, i.e. the Permanent Committee and the Committee of Senior Officials, to address on a regular basis the issue of mass migration, including displaced persons and refugees.

4. Conflict prevention and resolution

29. In the area of wars and conflicts one effective measure is thought by the Government of Iraq to be the respect for the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of States as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, as interference by third States can cause mass exoduses. Such interference is thought to occur when third States, for their own political reasons, encourage inhabitants of the State in question, particularly those living near borders, to migrate to their territory on the pretext that they will be protected from possible danger or will be granted economic privileges.

30. In the field of prevention, settlement and resolution of conflicts and mass exoduses through education and training, the reply of UNESCO notes the support and promotion of independent media in conflict zones which can contribute to the protection of human rights and the restoration of peace. It suggests that peace education and the creation of a culture of peace instead of a culture of war should be parts of reconstruction strategies. The training of government and non-government personnel in emergency management training programmes is suggested as an important preventive element. The importance of studies on conflict settlement as essential steps towards the prevention or solution of mass exoduses is also stressed.

5. Intergovernmental activities

31. Bilateral agreements with neighbouring and other countries on the employment and social protection of citizens and more generally on cooperation to address the serious problems arising from mass exoduses and coerced displacements and to eliminate the causes of involuntary movements are emphasized by the replies of the Czech Republic and Belarus.

6. Regulating migratory pressures

32. The Government of Belarus noted that it has set up a State Migration Service with a view to regulating migratory flows, protecting migrants' rights and interests and overcoming the negative consequences of spontaneous migration processes. This Service has benefited from close collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, UNHCR, the United Nations Development Programme, and the International Labour Organisation. The Government of Guyana in its reply stressed the importance of the cooperation of different governmental bodies, for example through task forces, towards the formation of a policy on issues of asylum.

33. Analysing the direct and indirect links between migration, cooperation and development and identifying under what conditions economic development based on job creation (especially in rural areas), trade liberalization,

freeing capital movements and economic integration could provide lasting alternatives to emigration, are stressed in the reply received from the OECD.

34. For transit States and countries of origin, it is suggested in the reply of Belarus that national migration legislation may have to be passed to regulate the migratory process.

7. Promotion of solutions

35. Attention to the social integration of refugees, as well as protection of their human rights, is thought to be an important step in finding solutions and preventing further mass exoduses. For this reason, as the replies of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development indicate, these issues are placed on the agenda of or discussed during international conferences such as the World Summit for Social Development and the International Conference on Population and Development.

36. Attention to the needs of women and children, including refugee and displaced women and children, affected by armed conflicts, foreign intervention, alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation and threats to peace including in the area of health care, is also considered as conducive to efforts to find solutions to these problems, according to the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

37. With regard to the return of the refugees to their homes, the IRCTV notes that it can be facilitated through the rehabilitation of torture victims since many of those uprooted in mass exoduses are survivors of torture. In the reply of the International Federation Terre des Hommes it is emphasized that anti-personnel mines are responsible for delaying or obstructing the return of displaced persons and refugees and that the only solution to curbing that problem is making the production, commercialization and use of mines illegal.

II. COMPILATION OF INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

38. The following paragraphs reflect the information received from human rights mechanisms in accordance with requests made pursuant to Commission resolution 1994/66. 1/

1/ In resolution 1994/66 the Commission called upon special rapporteurs, special representatives and working groups studying situations of violations of human rights to seek information on problems resulting in mass exoduses of populations or impeding their voluntary return home and to include such information, together with recommendations thereon, in their reports to the Commission. Resolution 1994/68 on internally displaced persons also called upon relevant rapporteurs, working groups and experts to seek information on situations which could lead to internal displacement and to include relevant information and recommendations thereon in their reports to the Commission.

A. Special procedures

1. Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan

39. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan reports that with regard to that country, the mass exodus of its population, both as refugees and internally displaced persons, began with the Soviet military intervention in December 1979. At the height of the conflict, 3.2 million Afghan refugees had fled to Pakistan while 2.8 million went to the Islamic Republic of Iran, out of a population of some 15 million. Some 900,000 are believed to have emigrated to Western Europe and North America. Since the withdrawal of Soviet troops in February 1989 and the establishment of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in April 1992, the subsequent significant mass exodus of the Afghan population followed the intensification on 1 January 1994 of the internal conflict, principally waged in the capital, Kabul, between armed groups belonging to coalitions grouping a number of political parties. As a result of incessant bombardment, rocketing and shelling, some 243,100 persons have fled to Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan while 27,280 persons fled to the northern part of the country. In addition to the camps, several hundred thousand persons have taken refuge in their home villages or have been moving from one neighbourhood of Kabul to another, avoiding the rocketing and shelling.

40. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan has recommended that in view of the fact that the current exodus has been caused by the security situation, an immediate halt in fighting and the urgent finding of a peaceful solution to the conflict in Afghanistan are required. The problem is also affected to a certain extent by the lack of specific national and international legislation concerning internally displaced persons.

2. Special Rapporteur on Iraq

41. The Special Rapporteur reports that in March 1991 popular uprisings in both southern and northern Iraq were followed by military actions by the Government of Iraq aimed at re-establishing government control over the territories. These events precipitated the exodus of almost 2 million persons to Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran, hundreds of thousands more persons to Jordan and some thousands to Saudi Arabia. A large and coordinated humanitarian response from United Nations agencies was bolstered by the Security Council's adoption on 5 April 1991 of resolution 688 (1991). Acting in apparent implementation of that resolution, a coalition of States instituted a "no-fly zone" north of 36° latitude and created a "safe haven" which facilitated the return of most refugees to large areas of Arbil, Dohuk and Suleymaniyah governorates. None the less, some 100,000 persons who fled remain in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and thousands more remain in Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Large numbers of Iraqis are also known to be still living in Jordan. Since 1991, flows of refugees have continued, principally into the Islamic Republic of Iran, mainly from the southern marsh area of Iraq. These persons join hundreds of thousands of other Iraqis who fled, or were exiled from Iraq during the past two decades.

42. In addition to the large numbers of persons who have been forced to leave Iraq by circumstances or by law, there are hundreds of thousands of internally displaced in Iraq. In the "safe haven" maintained in northern Iraq, there are tens of thousands of persons who are internally displaced from the areas which returned to government control, mainly from the Governorate of Tamim (Kirkuk). An unknown number of persons have also been internally displaced from the formerly marsh areas of southern Iraq. Further, there have been regular reports of internal deportations of Iraqi citizens from one part of the country to the other, usually Iraqi Kurds deported further north to the region outside government control or to the southern governorates. Recent reports also indicate that large numbers of persons resident in Baghdad have been required by law to return to the governorates of their ancestors in an effort to reduce the social pressures of a large population in the capital.

43. The economic and security situation in Iraq has deteriorated over the last several years. However, while these elements may constitute push factors in future exoduses, central control of the security apparatus and the introduction of extraordinarily high fees for exit visas make it unlikely that large numbers of persons will leave Iraq in the near future. However, a continuing situation of general instability in the country, possible new assaults by government forces against opposition groups believed to be in different parts of the country, and the possible break-down of law and order under the local administration of the "safe haven" region in the north may give rise to new mass exoduses at any time. In particular, the forcible re-establishment of government control in the northern "safe haven" may very likely cause mass outflows as in the spring of 1991.

3. Special Rapporteur on Myanmar

44. Since the independence of Myanmar (then Burma) from British colonial rule in 1948, the country has suffered from unresolved conflicts between most of the ethnic minorities of the country and the central authorities. These conflicts precipitated insurgencies in several States of the Union which have caused outflows of refugees to neighbouring countries, including China, India and Thailand. At the present time, over 70,000 such persons are in camps skirting the Myanmar frontier on the Thai side. Aside from the long-standing problem of internal armed conflict within Myanmar causing refugee flows to Thailand in particular, there is the problem of some 250,000 persons of the Muslim faith who fled to Bangladesh from Rakhine State beginning in 1988 and as a mass exodus in 1991. These persons feared discriminatory treatment because of their Muslim faith and because they were not being accorded Myanmar citizenship under the new nationality law introduced by the Government of the Union of Myanmar. However, on 28 April 1992, an agreement was reached between the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh to repatriate the Myanmar residents who had fled to Bangladesh. Repatriation began on 22 September 1992 and has been facilitated by the Government of Myanmar's signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR on 5 November 1993. The process of repatriation is continuing.

45. In addition to the problems of outflows of refugees from Myanmar, there are also reports of large numbers of internally displaced persons inside Myanmar. The cause of such displacement is attributed to the armed insurgencies in the provinces and also major development projects undertaken

by the Government in the process of which large numbers of persons are removed from the lands designated for the projects without being relocated or appropriately compensated.

46. In the absence of peaceful settlement of the internal conflicts, followed by national reconciliation, the principal cause of past and potential mass exoduses remains. It has been argued that meaningful protection of minority rights, supported by the establishment of an administration of justice under an independent and impartial judiciary throughout the country, would contribute significantly to reducing the potential for mass exoduses from Myanmar.

4. Special Rapporteur on Rwanda

47. The Special Rapporteur on Rwanda reports that as a result of the civil war, approximately 3 million people have been displaced. In October 1994 some 1.5 million refugees were counted in Zaire (850,000 in North Kivu, 300,000 in Southern Kivu) and in the United Republic of Tanzania (460,000). At least 50,000 refugees died in refugee camps, most of them victims of the cholera epidemic. It is estimated that 1.5 million persons are internally displaced. The ongoing situation of insecurity in Rwanda, the fear of reprisals by the new Government and manipulation by the former political elite impede the return of many refugees. This manipulation consists of the spread of rumours that returnees will be killed or of threats that they will be the first to be punished when the old regime is restored.

48. One solution would be the separation of the refugees from the political leaders in the refugee camps, although such a separation would no doubt be difficult. Another would be the deployment of a force of 2,000 to 3,000 policemen. The repatriation of the refugees is the aim of the tripartite agreement between the Governments of Zaire and Rwanda and UNHCR, which was concluded on 24 October 1994.

5. Special Rapporteur on the Sudan

49. The Special Rapporteur reports that the mass exodus of the Sudan's population, both as refugees and internally displaced persons, is largely the result of an ongoing civil war in southern Sudan that has been waged for all but 11 of the 38 years of Sudanese independence. The civil war has intensified since the current Government came to power following a military coup d'état in 1989. UNHCR currently estimates that there are close to 600,000 southern Sudanese refugees in the neighbouring countries of Uganda, Zaire, Ethiopia and Kenya. There are further estimates of as many as 1 million Sudanese in Egypt, although most do not receive refugee status. There are also estimates of over 800,000 internally displaced located in camps outside of Khartoum, a majority of whom were displaced as a direct result of the conflict in southern Sudan. In August 1994 UNHCR field officers in Koboko, Uganda, near the Uganda-Sudan border reported that there was a weekly influx into the Koboko camps of as many as 5,000 Sudanese. Those refugees were fleeing the civil war in which all parties to the conflict have committed gross violations of human rights. Most seriously, the Government of the Sudan has resorted to the indiscriminate aerial bombardment of civilians.

50. In view of the fact that the current exodus is largely the result of the ongoing civil war in southern Sudan, it is necessary for the parties to halt fighting and to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. However, it is also necessary for the Government of the Sudan to respect its international human rights obligations in all regions of the country.

6. Special Rapporteur on the former Yugoslavia

51. The Special Rapporteur reports that by far the most outrageous displacement of persons in Europe during the past three years has occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the areas under the control of the de facto Bosnian Serb authorities. The scale of displacement of non-Serbs from the region has greatly increased since mid-July 1994, pursuant to campaigns of terrorization and fundamental violations of human rights. In recent months there have been two principal waves of displacement from the Banja Luka area into Croatia, and from the Bijeljina region to Tuzla. There has also been displacement from areas such as Rogatica to Sarajevo and from Bolanski Most to Turbe. In total, between mid-July and 19 September 1994, at least 7,000 people were displaced. Between mid-June and mid-September 1994, some 4,700 non-Serbs were displaced from the Bijeljina and Janja regions into government-controlled territory. The current wave of forced and fear-induced displacement in areas under the control of Bosnian Serb forces is the largest since the summer of 1992. Muslims, Bosnian Croats and Roma have all suffered killings, violence, including rape, theft of property and loss of jobs. They have also been deprived of access to educational and medical services.

52. In areas of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina the lifting of certain of the restrictions on freedom of movement has not led to any significant return of displaced persons. This is due, inter alia, to the still precarious human rights situation and the lack of adequate housing which has led to the insistence by local authorities on a reciprocal approach, i.e. to allow persons to return only when the people occupying the returnees' houses can be lodged elsewhere.

53. The situation of Bosnian Serbs in Zenica gives cause for concern. Although there is no evidence of any form of systematic campaign of terror, there is a strong perception of harassment and discrimination. In recent months there have been large displacements of women, children and non-military-age male Bosnian Serbs from Zenica to locations such as Ilidza in Sarajevo. Following the displacements, the Bosnian Serb population in Zenica had, by July 1994, declined from 8,000 to 5,000.

54. From 21 August 1994, with the collapse of the regime of the so-called Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia (APWB), an exodus of some 30,000 people took place from northern Bihac into the UNPA North. While some of these people left voluntarily, many would appear to have been impelled to move by the retreating forces of the APWB. Some 16,000 of the externally displaced took refuge in a former chicken farm near Batnoga, and the rest, eventually, at Turanj in the separation zone, south of Karlovac. The Croatian Government refused to allow them access to territory under its control. At the present time the plight of the displaced persons is difficult to ascertain given the ongoing war situation. The recent renewed hostilities in the Bihac pocket are known to have produced a large number of internally displaced persons.

55. The impasse in the peace-making efforts prolongs the situation in which violations of fundamental human rights take place. Any peace arrangement must ensure immediate cessation of human rights violations and the right to return of all displaced persons.

56. According to a July 1994 census of the Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees of the Republic of Croatia, there are 179,909 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croatia. The situation of some refugees who came from the territory of what is now the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is an area of concern. At the beginning of September 1994, the Croatian authorities decided not to continue to grant refugee status to Bosnians coming from areas under Federal control. Since then, in some instances regional authorities have refused the renewal of registration (refugee status) cards that entitle holders to assistance and protection. Because Bosnian Croats normally are able to enter and remain in Croatia, the effect of the denial of renewal is more serious for Bosnian Muslims, who not only lose their entitlement to humanitarian assistance, but who are also in danger of refoulement to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

57. According to UNHCR statistics, as of 22 July 1994 there was a total of 190,816 Croatian and other non-Serb displaced persons in Croatia having come from areas under the control of the so-called "Republic of Serbian Krajina" (RSK).

58. According to UNHCR statistics of 7 October 1993, there were 38,174 displaced persons and refugees in UNPA Sector South. A large number of inhabitants of UNPA Sector North are displaced persons and refugees. UNPA Sector North was until recently a sanctuary for up to 30,000 Bosnian Muslims externally displaced from the Bihac pocket. During the month of November 1994 a large number of draft-age men became combatants in the Bihac conflict, disqualifying themselves from international assistance. The women and children remained in the camps under precarious conditions. This situation posed a dilemma for the provision of international assistance as it is very difficult to ensure that the assistance given to this group does not reach the combatants. In UNPA Sector West there are some 12,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), as well as internally displaced persons from areas under the control of the Croatian and the so-called RSK authorities. Finally, in UNPA Sector East there are some 38,000 displaced persons and refugees. UNPA Sector North is also a sanctuary for up to 30,000 Bosnian Muslims externally displaced from the Bihac pocket. UNPA Sector West has 5,370 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in the areas under Croatian control. Finally, an unknown number of refugees of Serbian origin from Bosnia currently live in the Serbian part of UNPA Sector West. According to Croatian and Serbian statistics a total of 12,032 displaced persons were registered in UNPA Sector West as of 31 January 1994.

59. According to recent figures, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) currently hosts some 230,000 refugees. In May 1994 a Refugee Act was proposed, which, if enacted, could result in the revision of the refugee status of up to 100,000 people currently living as refugees in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). According to recent

reports, during the first half of 1994 the Serbian authorities continued their practice of mobilizing persons with refugee status for service in armed units operating in the Serb-controlled regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

60. According to UNHCR statistics, the number of refugees in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has decreased from more than 30,000 in the summer of 1992 to some 10,000 at present.

8. Special Rapporteur on Zaire

61. The Special Rapporteur in his report on his mission to Zaire focuses on the impact that the mass exoduses from Rwanda, both the one since June 1994 and the previous ones, have had on ethnic relations in Zaire.

62. In the region of North Kivu confrontations between people originating from Rwanda, referred to as Banyarwanda, who have been living in this region, and the Hunde and Nyanga indigenous ethnic groups have been reported since a large number of Hutu refugees fleeing from the armed conflict in Rwanda entered the region. For instance, according to information received, an indeterminate number of Rwandan Hutu refugees had left the camps of Kibumba, Mugunga, Katale, Kahindo, Tshondo and Kituko in order to join Hutu Banyarwanda living in Masisi, Bwito and Kalehe. Confrontations in Walikale, Masisi, Osso and Rutshuru erupted due to alleged fears of the Hunde ethnic group that the increased presence of Hutus could endanger their political and territorial power. Killings of an unspecified number of Hutus were also reported to have taken place in Katoyi. Oral and written testimonies indicate that the beginning of these new confrontations prompted the Hutu population to flee towards Ngungu, Kibabi, Ruki, Lukole, Katahandwa and Mashaki. It should be noted that, as of October 1994, some of the Hutu refugees who had abandoned the refugee camps started to return to the camps out of fear for their safety.

63. Furthermore, testimonies suggest that large numbers of Tutsi Banyarwanda were fleeing to Rwanda, fearing attacks. In this connection, various sources informed the Special Rapporteur that members of the Hunde ethnic group were stealing cattle from the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups in order to exchange them for arms in the locality of Tongo. It was not known, however, whether local authorities were involved in this arms traffic.

64. The Special Rapporteur also analysed the serious problem of internal displacement in Zaire. In the province of Shaba regional violence linked to the election of Etienne Tshisekedi as Prime Minister in August 1992 forced thousands of Kasaians to flee their homes. Two years after these incidents, 65,000 persons were still reportedly displaced in the region. According to information received, approximately half a million persons have died since the beginning of the conflict, either as a result of direct violence or conditions related to their displacement.

65. The Special Rapporteur has noted that there is a pressing need for the provision of transportation for the displaced Kasaians and for assistance with their reintegration, for instance through agricultural programmes. He has also expressed the hope that a solution will soon be found to the inter-ethnic tensions in North Kivu, noting that the problem cannot be addressed unless solutions to the mass exodus of Rwandan refugees have been found.

9. Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons

66. The Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, during his recent missions to Sri Lanka, Colombia and Burundi, as well as in his earlier missions to the Sudan, El Salvador, the former Yugoslavia, the Russian Federation and Somalia, noted that the most frequent cause of large-scale displacement, both internal and external was internal conflict and related human rights violations. Return has effectively not been possible in cases and areas where this conflict is still going on.

67. The Representative's reports on his missions to Sri Lanka, Colombia and Burundi contain detailed recommendations to the Governments and the international community for improving the situation of the internally displaced. In the case of Sri Lanka, for instance, the Representative focused on the need for improved security conditions and safety guarantees before the internally displaced could return to their home areas, for better shelter and sanitation for them, for intensified efforts to reach a peace settlement, and for measures to address discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion and language. In the case of Colombia, he focused on the need for a clearer definition of the "internally displaced" that could be used by both the authorities and the NGOs, for further work towards "depoliticization" of the issue of displacement so that the displaced are perceived and treated as victims and not as political pawns, for strengthening the protection of land and property rights, humanitarian law norms that prohibit displacement, and the right to life and physical integrity, especially during and immediately following displacement, and for closer cooperation between the authorities and the NGOs in the assistance and protection provided to the displaced. Following his mission to Burundi, the Representative called for more extensive services for the internally displaced, in particular the provision of more plastic sheeting and medicines as well as expertise with regard to camp organization, more human rights and peace education activities, increased coordination between the international humanitarian, political and human rights operations in the country, as well as the further development of comprehensive regional approaches.

10. Special Rapporteur on violence against women

68. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women reports that women and children constitute approximately 80 per cent of most refugee populations. In addition to the fears and problems which they share in common with all refugees, women and girls are vulnerable to gender-based discrimination and gender-specific violence and exploitation. They are at risk in the communities from which they are fleeing, at risk during flight and at risk in the refugee camps where they seek protection. The male perpetrators of the exploitation and violence against refugee and displaced women include military personnel, immigration personnel, bandit or pirate groups, other male refugees and rival ethnic groups. For instance, UNHCR data on Vietnamese boat people indicate that 39 per cent of the women among them have been abducted and/or raped by pirates while at sea. In one report it is alleged that for almost half of the Somali refugee women who reported in the Kenyan refugee camps that they had been raped, rape was a factor causing them to become refugees in the first instance. The use of rape as an instrument of persecution in the territory of the former Yugoslavia and piracy attacks involving rape in

South-East Asia are well documented. An Anti-Piracy Programme set up by the Thai Government and UNHCR between 1982 and 1991 in Thailand did lead to a decrease in the number of such attacks, but also led the pirates to intensify the attacks, killing everyone on board after raping the women to destroy eyewitness evidence against them.

69. Lack of access to health care and food is one of the main problems faced by refugee and internally displaced women. Several countries have used food as a weapon, impeding the assistance efforts of international humanitarian groups. In Angola, both government and rebel troops have deliberately starved displaced persons and planted mines in otherwise arable land. Similar strategies in Ethiopia, Mozambique and the Sudan have led to the death of hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, including women.

70. The Special Rapporteur has made the following recommendations: the security and design of refugee camps generally must be improved; trained female officers should be deployed at border checkpoints and detention centres, as well as in the refugee camps; more attention should be paid to the medical services available to refugee and displaced women and girls; States should actively investigate and prosecute all government and military personnel who are reported to have abused, physically or psychologically, refugee women and children; refugee women and girls should be allowed to exercise choice as to where they will remain, whether they will repatriate or whether they will move to a second asylum country.

11. Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions

71. In the framework of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, information on massive displacements of populations is received mainly in the context of communal violence and indiscriminate military attacks against areas inhabited by civilians during counter-insurgency operations. Government forces often do not intervene to halt violence between different groups of the population. In many instances, the government forces are even said to foment such confrontations and support one side. Often, those belonging to the less favoured group flee their areas of residence. This was reported, for example, in the case of the Jumma people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, many of whom have sought refuge in Tripura, India. Massive internal displacement and refugee flows followed the mass killings of October and November 1993 in Burundi. Similarly, members of the Afar ethnic group in Djibouti moved to the capital to escape violence in the north of the country. Indiscriminate bombing of civilian settlements as part of government counter-insurgency tactics have been reported over the years in Colombia, Guatemala and Turkey. There, too, massive displacements of populations was said to be the result. Armed conflicts such as those in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia or Rwanda, which cause the deaths not only of combatants but also numerous civilians, including children, women and elderly persons, also generate the exodus of large numbers of people. From the reports and allegations brought to the attention of the Special Rapporteur, it becomes clear that, as long as communal violence or armed conflicts continue, internally displaced persons and refugees do not dare to return to their home areas. Often, this situation persists after the cessation of armed confrontation, as the climate remains insecure and returnees are subjected to threats and harassment or even killed.

72. The Special Rapporteur is concerned at reports of violations of the right to life not only in the context of the hostilities creating the exodus of populations but also as a result of violence directed against displaced persons and refugees. Reports of extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and threats, allegedly by security forces, against displaced persons, for example, in urban areas in Colombia or Peru, where the displaced live in conditions of poverty and misery, or in Djibouti, are most disturbing. The Special Rapporteur has also learnt with deep concern of violence by Zairian security forces against refugees in camps along the border with Rwanda, and of killings within the camp housing several hundred thousand Rwandan refugees in Benaco, United Republic of Tanzania, or in the camps in northern Burundi, along the border with Rwanda. In addition, the Special Rapporteur repeatedly received reports of death threats against and extrajudicial killings, allegedly with the involvement of the security forces, of Guatemalans who had returned to their country after having been refugees in Mexico, and members of organizations providing them with assistance.

73. There is general awareness of the threat this situation poses to the right to life and security of those seeking refuge from violence in their countries or areas of origin. Once a person is accepted into the territory of a State, for example as a refugee or asylum seeker, it is the obligation of this State to protect them from violations of their human rights. Those responsible for violations of the right to life should be brought to justice before the national courts of the host countries. Where the receiving countries are unable to cope with the refugee flow, the international community should provide them with assistance to provide security within the camps and to strengthen their own criminal justice systems, as appropriate.

74. The Special Rapporteur calls on all Governments to do their utmost to avoid the massive exodus of populations. Reference is made to the sections in his current report to the Commission (E/CN.4/1995/61) containing recommendations aimed at preventing the outbreak of communal violence and abuses against the civilian population in counter-insurgency operations or during armed conflicts. The recent past has shown very clearly that the cost of prevention is relatively small when compared with the enormous amount of resources that have to be put into place to try and limit abuses and violations, including violations of the right to life, that accompany and follow mass exoduses.

B. Treaty bodies

1. Committee on the Rights of the Child

75. A number of observations adopted by the Committee reflect a particular concern and provide for specific recommendations with regard to the situation of refugee children.

76. On the report of the Sudan, in its preliminary observations the Committee expressed its concern at the situation of internally displaced and refugee children (see A/49/41, para. 122). In its concluding observations the Committee notes that it continues to be seriously alarmed at the effects of emergency situations on children, as well as at the problems faced by homeless

and internally displaced children. The Committee emphasizes the need for further urgent efforts to improve the protection and promotion of the rights of internally displaced children (A/49/41, paras. 197 and 207).

77. The Committee notes its alarm at the large number of children who have been displaced as a result of the armed conflict in El Salvador. The Committee recommends that urgent measures be taken for the protection of children belonging to vulnerable groups, including displaced and refugee children. Such measures should encompass social assistance and rehabilitation programmes oriented towards those groups of children and be undertaken with the cooperation and support of the relevant United Nations agencies and international organizations, in the spirit of article 45 (b) of the Convention (A/49/41, paras. 176 and 184).

78. Concerning France, in view of the fact that important legislation has recently been adopted, including in the field of refugees and asylum seekers, the Committee requested to receive, by 1 October 1994, additional information on the way in which such new legislative measures might affect the enjoyment of the rights of the child as recognized by the Convention, taking into due account the general principles of the Convention (see CRC/C/29, para. 103).

79. The Committee expresses concern about groups of refugee children in Jordan and the fact that they may not be given full protection in view of the fact that the Kingdom of Jordan has not yet ratified relevant international refugee treaties. In order to ensure that all refugee children or children seeking refugee status enjoy their rights under the Convention, the Committee recommends that the Kingdom of Jordan consider the possibility of ratifying the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (CRC/C/29, paras. 119 and 132).

80. With regard to Norway, the Committee is concerned about some aspects of the practical application of the law and policy concerning children seeking asylum. Furthermore, it is concerned that the police may not be instructed to delay the expulsion of some members of the family in order to ensure that the whole family remains together and that undue strain on the children is avoided. The Committee notes that all children who have had their asylum requests rejected but remain in the country have had their rights to health care and education provided *de facto* but not *de jure*. It is the view of the Committee that such services should be provided as a matter of principle according to the letter and spirit of articles 2 and 3 of the Convention. The Committee suggests that the State party consider undertaking another comprehensive review of the policy in relation to children seeking asylum in the light of the principles and provisions of the Convention. It is also suggested that the State party may wish to further discuss the provision of education and health services, including with respect to all children under its jurisdiction (CRC/C/29, paras. 164, 165, and 177).

81. With regard to Honduras, the Committee recommends that the Government undertake the necessary measures to introduce legislation for the protection of the rights of refugees, in line with the relevant international standards, including the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol. Technical assistance from UNHCR may be requested in this regard (CRC/C/34, para. 61).

82. With regard to Spain, the Committee is worried about one aspect of the treatment of unaccompanied minors seeking refuge which may contradict the principle that each case be dealt with on an individual basis and on its own merits. The practice of automatically informing the authorities of their country of origin may lead to their persecution or the persecution of their relatives for political reasons. The Committee recommends that the Government of Spain take all the necessary measures to guarantee that refugee children, children who are asylum seekers and unaccompanied children enjoy the rights recognized by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/34, paras. 138 and 151).

2. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

83. The Committee, in its decision on the human rights situation in Rwanda, "urges the rapid deployment of United Nations forces ... in order to ensure the protection of the life and human rights of all persons regardless of ethnic or religious background, including the right of all refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes under conditions of safety" (1045th meeting).

3. Human Rights Committee

84. In its comments on the most recent report of the Government of Burundi (CCPR/C/98) the Human Rights Committee notes that the recent unrest on an unprecedented scale in a neighbouring country (Rwanda), which has resulted in a massive influx of refugees into Burundi, is a further difficulty likely to have extremely negative effects on the application of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in that country.

C. Other human rights mechanisms

85. The Working Group on the Right to Development notes that one of the most important obstacles to implementations of the Declaration on the Right to Development is the existence of factors threatening international peace and security such as vast displacements of populations within or outside their country of origin (E/CN.4/1995/21, para. 91).

D. Preventive activities and urgent actions of the human rights mechanisms

86. Human rights implementation mechanisms have repeatedly reported about measures of prevention undertaken in the context of their respective mandates. Examples of such activities that could usefully be mentioned here are the urgent appeals procedures employed routinely by the Special Rapporteurs on torture and extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions and the Working Groups on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and Arbitrary Detention. Other thematic and country rapporteurs have also on occasion addressed such urgent appeals to Governments, acting on information from a variety of intergovernmental and non-governmental sources. These procedures have as their main objective the prevention of human rights violations. In order to ensure the timely flow of information for this purpose the High Commissioner decided to establish a "human rights hot line" through which complaints can be received and quickly dealt with. At the meeting of special rapporteurs,

representatives, experts and chairpersons of working groups in June 1994 the issue of speedy reaction in emergency situations and the need for adequate follow-up actions were also discussed.

87. Treaty bodies have also considered and employed preventive measures and other urgent actions. The chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies, at their fourth meeting, supported a suggestion made by the Secretary-General that ways to empower the Secretary-General and the expert human rights bodies to bring massive violations of human rights to the attention of the Security Council be explored (A/47/628, para. 37). The same meeting concluded that:

"... the treaty bodies have an important role in seeking to prevent as well as to respond to human rights violations. It is thus appropriate for each treaty body to undertake an urgent examination of all possible measures that it might take, within its competence, both to prevent human rights violations from occurring and to monitor more closely emergency situations of all kinds arising within the jurisdiction of States parties. Where procedural innovations are required for this purpose, they should be considered as soon as possible." (ibid., para. 44)

88. Such procedures have been adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (A/48/18, para. 7). Some of these bodies have also considered working papers on preventive action, including early warning and urgent procedures (ibid., para. 12). Human rights treaty bodies have also undertaken missions to countries, inter alia for preventive purposes.

III. EARLY WARNING, HUMAN RIGHTS AND MASS EXODUSES

89. Prevention and early reaction presuppose the existence and operation of an "early-warning" system. It will be recalled that the Special Rapporteur on the question of human rights and mass exoduses, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, in his report of December 1981 called for the establishment of an early-warning system through which all available information from within and outside the United Nations system would be evaluated to appreciate any possible developments in any particular country which might cause mass exoduses, including information on human rights. The result of this evaluation would enable the Secretary-General and other heads of competent international organizations to recommend or take appropriate action. The issue was further considered by the Group of Governmental Experts on International Cooperation to Avert New Flows of Refugees established in 1981 by the General Assembly. In addition, the Joint Inspection Unit prepared a study in 1990 on the basis of which the ACC set up in 1991 an Ad Hoc Working Group on Early Warning of New Flows of Refugees and Displaced Persons. As a result of this group's recommendations an Inter-Agency Working Group was established in 1990.

90. The Commission has welcomed the decision by the ACC to establish a regular United Nations inter-agency early-warning consultation and to designate the Department of Humanitarian Affairs as the focal point and facilitator of the consultation, and has urged the Secretary-General to attach a high priority and allocate the necessary resources to the consolidation and

strengthening of the system for undertaking early-warning activities in the humanitarian area for the purpose of ensuring, inter alia, that effective action is taken to identify all human rights abuses which contribute to mass outflows of persons. It also urged the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to take the necessary steps to function effectively as the focal point of the inter-agency early-warning consultation, and urged all bodies involved in the inter-agency consultation to cooperate fully in and devote the necessary resources to the successful operation of the consultation.

91. With regard to the United Nations system-wide early-warning activities, the General Assembly in resolution 48/139 requested the Secretary-General to provide information in his report on any further developments relating to the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on International Cooperation to Avert New Flows of Refugees and the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit. The General Assembly further requested that in the same report detailed information be included on the programmatic, institutional, administrative, financial and managerial efforts instituted to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to avert new flows of refugees and to tackle the root causes of such outflows. The Secretary-General will provide the information requested above to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

IV. VIEWS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

92. The problems of mass exoduses and their possible solutions transcend the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations system, as the replies summarized in chapter I of the present report make clear. This should not obscure the fact that important work is under way or has been completed in the context of the mandates created by the Commission and the Sub-Commission regarding human rights and mass exoduses or other related issues. This work needs a sharper focus. As the situation stands at the moment there is no single information-gathering system on the question of all the human rights aspects of forced displacement, nor is there a single mechanism on this issue reporting to the Commission or the Sub-Commission. While the adoption of a specific agenda sub-item on human rights, mass exoduses and displaced persons by the Commission, and an item on freedom of movement by the Sub-Commission are positive steps in streamlining the discussion on the question of forced displacement, the Commission may wish to examine the possibility of finding additional ways or mechanisms for the rationalization of the work on human rights-related issues of forced displacement. In this connection one should recall the mandate of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, which could be appropriately amplified, as well as the mandate of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who could coordinate all relevant work. One must be aware, however, that amplified mandates require commensurate resources.

93. Activities of the human rights mechanisms, with a view inter alia to preventing mass exoduses, such as the adoption of special procedures, urgent appeals and actions, missions and exceptional reporting requests by the treaty bodies, should be encouraged and further developed and coordinated. Priority should be given to the systematization of early-warning information collected in the Centre. It must be stressed, however, that for this to be effective, increased resources will be necessary. Information on human rights, which is

essential for the purposes of preventive activities, is available throughout the United Nations system. Its systematization will require a further sharpening of a human rights focus in the work of United Nations bodies and agencies. As indicated in many of the replies received from United Nations bodies and agencies for the purposes of the present report, there is increasing awareness and interest in those matters on the part of those bodies and agencies, which should be commended and encouraged. However, it should not be forgotten that genuine early-warning information can be made available to the Centre and the High Commissioner, as well as to the United Nations system, primarily through human rights field offices and operations.
