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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
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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;  
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND WAYS AND MEANS WITHIN THE  
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE  
ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Development of public information activities in the field of human rights

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction .....	1 - 3	3
I. Implementation of existing programmes .....	4 - 45	4
A. Activities carried out at United Nations Headquarters by the Department of Public Information .....	4 - 32	4
1. Coverage of meetings .....	4 - 5	4
2. Publications .....	6 - 10	4
3. Audio activities .....	11 - 14	5
4. Visual activities .....	15 - 23	5
5. National activities .....	24 - 25	6
6. Special briefings, meetings and seminars .....	26 - 30	7
7. Other activities .....	31 - 32	8
B. Activities carried out at United Nations Office at Geneva by the Department of Public Information .....	33 - 39	8
1. Coverage of meetings .....	33	8
2. Publications .....	34	8
3. Seminars and briefings .....	35 - 37	8
4. Exhibit .....	38	8
5. Special events and days .....	39	8

## CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
C. Activities carried out at the United Nations Office at Geneva by the Centre for Human Rights .....	40 - 41	9
D. Implementation of the Programme for the Dissemination of International Instruments on Human Rights .....	42 - 43	9
II. Thirty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights .....	44 - 49	9
III. Reference Libraries .....	50	10

## INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 1982/42, of 11 March 1982, the Commission on Human Rights invited the Secretary-General "to give increased attention to ways of facilitating the stimulation of public interest in the promotion and protection of human rights, particularly in the light of the commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to report thereon to the Commission at its thirty-ninth session".
2. In paragraphs 5 and 6 of the same resolution, the Commission requested the Secretary-General "to consider establishing small reference libraries containing material of scholarly and public interest in the field of human rights in United Nations offices, giving priority to establishing such libraries in developing countries," and "to keep the Commission informed on the elaboration and implementation of the programmes referred to in his reports, as well as his response to the request in paragraph 5 of the present resolution."
3. In accordance with these requests, the present report is divided into three sections dealing successively with the implementation of existing programmes, with the additional ways and means of facilitating the stimulation of public interest in human rights through the commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with the proposed establishment of small reference libraries.

## I. IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMMES

### A Activities carried out at United Nations Headquarters by the Department of Public Information

#### 1. Coverage of meetings

4. Coverage of debates on human rights in the General Assembly and other organs was provided by the Department of Public Information (DPI) through press releases, radio and television programmes. Resolutions and other documents on the subject were made available to information media and attention was drawn to developments in the human rights field at DPI press briefings.

5. Human Rights topics were also covered in the Yearbook of the United Nations, Basic Facts About the United Nations, the UN Chronicle and the booklet United Nations Today (suggestions for speakers). The publication, Objective: Justice carried material on racial discrimination in southern Africa. In addition, special chapters devoted exclusively to teaching about human rights, as well as the problems of racism and apartheid, were included in Collection of Model Teaching Units on the United Nations and World Concerns, a 200-page guide for teachers in primary and secondary schools, which is currently under preparation for printing. Development Forum published an article entitled "Tool for Liberation of Wider Community: Human Rights and Education".

#### 2. Publications

6. A revised and updated edition of the booklet A Crime Against Humanity: Questions and Answers on Apartheid in South Africa was issued in English, French, Japanese and Spanish.

7. A new 92-page booklet entitled Human Rights and Scientific and Technological Developments was issued in English, and is scheduled to be issued in French and Spanish.

8. The Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief was issued in English, French and Spanish. Plans are underway to issue it in several other official and non-official languages.

9. Funds were allocated to the United Nations Information Centres in Rome and Kabul for the production of the International Bill of Human Rights in local languages, and to the United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro for the production in Portuguese of the booklet, 50 questions and answers about human rights and United Nations activities to promote them.

10. The booklet, The Plight of Black Women in Apartheid South Africa, and the leaflet, The Oppression of Black Women in Apartheid South Africa, were reprinted in three languages. An updated version of the leaflet, UN Activities against Apartheid, was published in English and French. The Spanish version is expected to be out shortly.

### 3. Audio Activities

11. In addition to the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the activities of the United Nations with respect to other aspects of human rights such as racial discrimination, apartheid and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people (including the relevant deliberations in the Security Council and the General Assembly) was given radio coverage. Further, the subject of human rights was also dealt with in the news desk daily broadcast copy and the weekly news summaries.

12. Human rights was also featured in full or in part in such radio programmes as "Scene", "Women", "Perspective", "UN Calling Asia", "Perspectives", "Puntos Cardinales", "Afakon Alamiya", "L'Afrique à l'Onu", "A Vitrina do Mundo" and the daily anti-apartheid programmes.

13. On the occasion of Human Rights Day, 1982, an edition of the weekly programme "Perspectives" was devoted to the subject of human rights and scientific and technological development.

14. These activities were undertaken to a varying extent in the following 20 languages: Afrikaans, Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Greek, Hebrew, Indonesian, Japanese, Filipino, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tswana, Turkish, Urdu, Xhosa and Zulu.

### 4. Visual activities

15. Human rights issues featured in the following films:

In the mind of men - Film on the horrors of war from the distant past to the present, carrying the message of the right of people to live in peace;

Threescore and ten - Film on aging emphasizing the right of elderly people to continue their lives in the mainstream of society; and

From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe - The story of Zimbabwe's struggle for independence.

16. The "World Chronicle" television programme featured a number of senior officials of the United Nations and its specialized agencies on various human rights issues, namely: Apartheid; Refugees; ILO's role in the rights of labour unions; and Aging.

17. Human rights issues were also featured in the following TV spots, which were produced and released in Arabic, English, French and Spanish:

The elimination of racial discrimination (sixty-second spot);

Namibia's struggle for independence (thirty-second spot); and

The significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (sixty-second spot).

18. The exhibit of 30 woodcuts depicting the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was presented at Headquarters and in Vienna. A set of colour transparencies of the woodcuts was redistributed to selected United Nations information centres.

19. The wall sheet photograph One world one human family was reprinted.

20. A major exhibition of photographs on the "Age of Aging" was presented in New York, Vienna and Tokyo and display sets in five languages, in microfiche and black and white prints, on the same subject were distributed.

21. Three full-size colour exhibits and 90 half-size black and white prints were produced for the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Women.

22. An exhibit of the Palestine massacre was mounted in New York and at Geneva.

23. The sheet photograph entitled You think you've got problems? on the least developed countries was reprinted and distributed to United Nations information centres.

#### 5. National activities

24. All information centres and services were kept abreast of all events and activities relating to human rights. In this connection, information centre Directors were instructed to undertake special programmes to draw the attention of national communities to the following observances: the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women of South Africa and Namibia (9 August), the Week of Solidarity with the Colonial Peoples of southern Africa Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Equal Rights (25-31 May), the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggling People of South Africa (16 June), Namibia Day (26 August), the Day of Solidarity with South African Political Prisoners (11 October), the Week of Solidarity with the People of Namibia and its Liberation Movement (beginning 27 October), and the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (29 November). Special guidelines were also sent to the information centres to obtain international community participation in United Nations Day, Human Rights Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The various declarations and other documents relating to human rights, including all statements by the Secretary-General and other United Nations officials were extensively distributed through the United Nations Information Centres during the above-mentioned events. Reports from the centres following each of these observances indicate a satisfactory degree of interest and support on the part of most national communities. These reports have been analysed and summary reports about the observances around the world have been prepared and distributed to all United Nations information centres and the relevant units of the United Nations Secretariat as well as to some non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

25. Some 350 information cables on such subjects as the work of the Commission on Human Rights and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, etc., were sent to United Nations information centres. In addition, 600 information cables to information centres dealt with the question of apartheid and 80 cables relating to

Palestinians' rights were sent to the field (not including coverage of the General Assembly's seventh resumed and ninth emergency special sessions). Distribution patterns for 13,000 copies of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in English, French and Spanish and 22,500 copies of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, also in English, French and Spanish, were prepared. In addition, distribution patterns for 21,080 copies of United Nations publications relating to the rights of Palestinians and 32,090 copies of United Nations publications dealing with the question of apartheid were also prepared.

#### 6. Special briefings, meetings and seminars

26. Full coverage of various aspects of human rights were given in the XXI United Nations fellowship programme for policy-makers in the field of education coming from 13 countries, which was organized in November 1981 at Addis Ababa. Particular attention was given to South Africa's policy of apartheid, to the problem of racism and racial discrimination, to the liberation struggle in South Africa and Namibia, to the rights of the Palestinian people, the rights of women, children and the thirty-third anniversary of the General Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Several lectures were presented and seven films on the subject were screened, followed by pedagogical discussions on ways of introducing these subjects in school curricula.

27. Various aspects of human rights were made known through numerous briefings and distribution of related information to 80 graduate students from 53 countries participating in the Department's 1982 four-week graduate student intern programme.

28. Special meetings for representatives of over 350 NGOs associated with the Department of Public Information were organized. All relevant documentation and publications featuring various aspects of human rights were made available to the NGOs through special facilities. Full coverage of United Nations activities in the field of equality of women, rights of children, the Palestinian people, the liberation struggle in South Africa and Namibia, as well as the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was given in nine lectures for the NGO community. Two special meetings were held on the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination and on the Week of Solidarity with the Colonial Peoples of southern Africa Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Equal Rights. Specially prepared notes on those briefings were produced and circulated among the 61 United Nations Information Centres and Services covering 142 Member States to assist them in developing activities in the field of human rights.

29. Three seminars in the series on the role of transnational corporations in South Africa and Namibia and their collaboration with the racist minority regime of South Africa were held in Sheffield (November 1982), Geneva (November 1982) and Montreal (December 1982).

30. During 1982, 10 special briefings on the organization's role in fostering human rights were held at Headquarters by senior officials of the Secretariat before an audience of approximately 700 persons consisting of high school and college students, as well as adults. Nine of the briefings concerned apartheid.

7. Other activities

31. Over 1,500 inquiries on the question of human rights have been answered. Special office displays in observance of Human Rights Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Liberation Struggle in Namibia and South Africa, the Struggle of Women in South Africa and Namibia were also held.

32. The non-governmental liaison service assisted the African Research and Publication Project in putting together a two-part educational series on racism for secondary schools and colleges.

B. Activities carried out at United Nations Office at Geneva by the Department of Public Information

1. Coverage of meetings

33. Full coverage in English and French press releases was given to the proceedings of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies which received regional and world-wide distribution. Coverage was given to all human rights meetings through radio and TV programmes and photographs.

2. Publications

34. Ten issues of the monthly publication Notice, produced in co-operation with the Centre for Human Rights, informed the media and NGOs of human rights activities, publications and studies.

3. Seminars and briefings

35. Special briefings were organized throughout the year for the 200 journalists accredited to the Palais des Nations.

36. Various aspects of human rights were made known to the 80 post-graduate university students from 60 countries participating in the 1982 Geneva graduate study programme.

37. Throughout the year, 40 information seminars and briefing programmes, including human rights activities, were also organized for diplomats, journalists, parliamentarians and university groups.

4. Exhibits

38. An exhibit of 30 woodcuts depicting the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was organized on 10 December 1981 at the Palais des Nations.

5. Special events and days

39. Special events and commemorative days such as Human Rights Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Liberation Struggle in Namibia and South Africa, the Struggle of Women in South Africa and Namibia, were highlighted and brought to the attention of the public.



C. Activities carried out at the United Nations Office at Geneva by the Centre for Human Rights

40. The Centre for Human Rights continues to complement the activities of the United Nations Information Service in Geneva by: answering public inquiries on human rights; providing members of the public with information materials on the activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights; conducting briefings for groups, non-governmental organizations, and members of diplomatic missions; preparing the newsletter "Notice", and arranging press-briefings for rapporteurs or members of working groups of United Nations organs in the field of human rights.

41. The Yearbook on Human Rights is published by the Centre on an annual basis and during the current year the volumes corresponding to 1979 and 1980 are scheduled for publication. The Bulletin of Human Rights is a quarterly publication of the Centre; a growing number of requests for the Bulletin is being received by the Centre.

D. Implementation of the Programme for the Dissemination of International Instruments on Human Rights

42. A revised version of the publication, Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments,<sup>1/</sup> is being prepared. The first language versions of the revised publication will appear in summer 1983. In addition, in 1982, a revised version of the booklet Human Rights International Instruments <sup>2/</sup> was issued - containing, for the first time, the texts of the reservations and declarations made by States parties in connection with those international instruments.

43. In 1982 the text of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, with a brief introduction, was printed in English, French and Spanish and plans were made to issue in 1983 the text of the Declaration in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Tamil and Urdu. United Nations information centres around the world would make arrangements for translations in the non-official languages.

II. THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

44. In regard to the celebration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a public information programme has been prepared.

45. In that regard, the publications The United Nations and Human Rights and 50 questions and answers about human rights and United Nations activities to promote them will be up-dated. The publication The International Bill of Human Rights will be reprinted and reissued.

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1/ ST/HR/1/Rev.2.

2/ ST/HR/4/Rev.4.

46. A special radio programme will be produced by the United Nations in English and adapted in several other languages on the theme of the thirty-fifth anniversary.

47. A set of slides of a Brazilian artist's interpretation of the various articles of the Universal Declaration will be reissued in time for the anniversary. Prints of these slides may also be included in a pamphlet.

48. As a further means of commemorating the anniversary, the production of a film on the subject of human rights is now in the planning stage.

49. A further proposal - the holding of an essay competition with a human rights theme - is also being investigated with the thirty-fifth anniversary in mind.

### III. REFERENCE LIBRARIES

50. Consideration is also being given to the possibilities available for the implementation of paragraph 5 of resolution 1982/42 of the Commission on Human Rights which calls for consideration to be given to the establishment of small reference libraries containing material of scholarly and public interest in the field of human rights in United Nations offices, giving priority to establishing such libraries in developing countries. As a first step, preparations are being made to establish the basis for a reference facility in the Centre for Human Rights. It is also hoped that a section of the reference facilities of United Nations information centres around the world would be allocated to human rights material, where this is not already the case, and that such sections would be progressively strengthened.