



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.4/1997/L.10/Add.17
7 April 1997

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 26

REPORT TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ON THE
FIFTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

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* Documents E/CN.4/1997/L.10 and addenda will contain the chapters of the report relating to the organization of the session and the various items on the agenda. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission, as well as draft resolutions and decisions for action by, and other matters of concern to, the Economic and Social Council, will be contained in documents E/CN.4/1997/L.11 and addenda.

XVII. RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL OR ETHNIC,
RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

1. The Commission considered agenda item 17 concurrently with items 11 and 19 (see chaps. XI and XIX) at its 19th to 23rd meetings, from 21 to 25 March, and at its 37th meeting, on 3 April 1997. 1/
2. For the documents issued under agenda item 17, see annex .. to the present report. For a list of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission, see annex .. to the present report.
3. In the general debate on agenda item 17, statements 2/ were made by the following members of the Commission: Austria (21st), Belarus (22nd), China (20th), India (22nd), Pakistan (22nd), Russian Federation (22nd), Sri Lanka (22nd), Ukraine (20th).
4. The Commission heard statements by the observers for: Azerbaijan (22nd), Finland (on behalf of the Nordic countries) (20th), Hungary (22nd), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (22nd), Slovakia (21st), Sudan (22nd), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (21st). A statement was also made by the observer for Switzerland (22nd).
5. The Commission also heard statements by the following non-governmental organizations: African Association of Education for Development (21st), Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (21st), Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations (21st), Franciscans International (21st), Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation (21st), International Association against Torture (23rd), International Association for the Defence of Religious Liberty (21st), International Educational Development, Inc. (23rd), International Falcon Movement (23rd), International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic and other Minorities (19th), International Institute for Peace (20th), International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations (23rd), International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (20th), International Organization for the Development of Freedom of Education (23rd), International Progress Organization (23rd), Liberation (20th), Minority Rights Group (19th), Pax Christi International (21st), Society for Threatened Peoples (21st), Transnational Radical Party (21st), United Towns Agency for North-South Cooperation (23rd).

6. Statements in exercise of the right of reply or its equivalent were made by the representative of Ethiopia (21st) and by the observers for Armenia (23rd), Azerbaijan (23rd), Greece (21st, 23rd) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (23rd).

7. At its 37th meeting, on 3 April, the Commission took up consideration of the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 17.

Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities

8. The representative of Austria introduced draft resolution E/CN.4/1997/L.31/Rev.1, sponsored by Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Hungary, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. Australia, Canada, Iceland, India, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, the Republic of Korea, Uruguay, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America subsequently joined the sponsors.

9. The draft resolution was orally revised by the representative of Austria as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 11, the words "and for the consideration of possible solutions to problems involving minorities" were deleted;

(b) In operative paragraph 12, at the end of the paragraph, the words "and that it will also take note of the Commission's deliberations under this item" were inserted.

10. A statement in connection with the draft resolution, as orally revised, was made by the representative of Bangladesh.

11. The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted without a vote. For the text of the resolution as adopted, see chapter II, section A, resolution 1997/16.

12. In view of the adoption of resolution 1997/16, the Commission took no action on decision 1 recommended by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities for adoption by the Commission (see E/CN.4/1997/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/41, chap. I).