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FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Letter dated 7 December 1988 from the Permanent Representative of
Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text, in English and in French, of a declaration made by the Twelve States members of the European Community for the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I should be grateful if you could arrange to have the present letter and the attached declaration circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 38.

(Signed) Constantine D. ZEPOS
Ambassador

ANNEX

Declaration made by the Twelve States members of the European Community on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Community and its member States wish to join with the world community today in celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Twelve States members of the European Community reaffirm their deep commitment to the respect, protection and further promotion of human rights, which they consider a corner-stone of European co-operation and security and an essential element in their relations with third countries, as the Foreign Ministers of the Twelve pointed out in their joint statement of 21 July 1986.

On this occasion, the Twelve States members of the European Community, while rejoicing at the noteworthy progress made in this field during these 40 years, cannot but regret the persistent world-wide violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Regarding this question the Twelve expressed their concern, in unequivocal terms, in their recent statement in the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-third session. Today we reconfirm that recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. We reaffirm that, with the adoption of the Universal Declaration and the subsequent human rights treaties, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms has become an essential duty of the international community, as well as of each of its members, which exceeds national boundaries and surpasses the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs. We firmly believe that the implementation of the universally accepted standards of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and made binding to States parties by the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, as well as by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, of 1966, should be a primary task of all States. We avail ourselves of this opportunity to reiterate our devotion to the concept of human rights, which defines the relationship between the State and the individual where the latter is the beneficiary. The Twelve States members of the European Community urge all Governments to become party to the international treaties on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and stress the importance of efficient international supervisory bodies that are established to ensure effective monitoring of implementation and respect for the commitments undertaken by the States parties.
