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GENERAL

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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Seventh session

Item 3(c) of the Agenda

DRAFT INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND MEASURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Petitions before the Trusteeship Council

1. At the 209th meeting of the Commission, the Secretariat was asked by the representative of India whether any difficulties had been encountered in connection with petitions received by the Trusteeship Council.
2. At the 203rd meeting of the Commission, the Secretary of the Commission read out a cable on the subject from the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Trusteeship Department. The Commission at that meeting requested the Secretariat to circulate the text of the cable.
3. The following is the text of the cable:

The Trusteeship Council and the Secretariat have so far encountered no serious difficulties in handling petitions. About six hundred petitions have been processed since 1947. Communications are considered petitions if they concern one or more Trust Territories or relate to the operation of the Trusteeship system. Petitions are transmitted in extenso to the Trusteeship Council members unless they are manifestly inconsequential. Petitioners may address petitions directly to the Secretary-General for transmission to the

Trusteeship Council. The Secretariat receives, acknowledges, classifies, transmits, prepares summaries and background papers and informs petitioners of the decisions of the Trusteeship Council. Written petitions may be supported by oral presentations before the Trusteeship Council and this has been done on several occasions. The Trusteeship Council deals with petitions on the basis of the report of its ad hoc Committee on Petitions, which greatly expedites the work of the Council. The possibility of transforming the ad hoc Committee into a Standing Committee of the Council and other procedural improvements will be considered at the next session of the Trusteeship Council.