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**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND REPORTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH
COMMISSIONER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**ENHANCEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN
THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

Addendum

* Late submission.

Responses from Governments

1. Algeria

[Original: French]

[3 February 2009]

(a) The Government of Algeria has always worked for the promotion of international cooperation in the field of human rights, and advocates for dialogue and the respect of the sovereignty and cultural specificity of each country. On the basis of such beliefs, Algeria acts to strengthen international cooperation in human rights in the following areas: the ratification of international treaties, which is the legal accomplishment of international cooperation; traditional cooperation with regional and international institutions dealing with human rights; and active presence within human rights forums.

Ratification of international treaties

(b) The Government of Algeria listed treaties it has ratified, including the four Geneva Conventions, which were ratified during the national war of liberation and thus reflected the State's commitment to international cooperation in human rights. This commitment was further reinforced after independence with support for adhesion to the principal international human rights instruments. Article 132 of the Constitution acknowledges the primacy of the conventions ratified by Algeria in its domestic law.

Main instruments

(c) Algeria has ratified the following international human rights instruments: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(d) Algeria has ratified the following regional human rights instruments: African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the protocol thereto on the Establishment of an African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights; Protocol of the Court of Justice of the African Union; Arab Charter on Human Rights.

Algeria has also ratified the following specific instruments:

(e) **Instruments relating to genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity and torture:** Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; African Union Convention for the Elimination of Mercenaries in Africa;

(f) **Instruments relating to the fight against discrimination:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid; UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education; ILO Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (Convention No. 111); International Convention against Apartheid in Sports; Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;

(g) **Instruments relating to women and children:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; Convention on the Rights of the Child; Convention on the Political Rights of Women, ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Convention No. 182), supplemented by ILO Recommendation No. 190, adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1999; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child; Arab Convention on the Establishment of the Arab Woman Organization;

(h) **Instruments relating to humanitarian law and refugees:** Convention relating to the Status of Refugees; Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons; Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa;

(i) **Instruments relating to slavery and the slave trade:** Slavery Convention and its amending Protocol of 1953; Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery; Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others; ILO Convention concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour (Convention No. 105); United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and Protocols thereto (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air);

(j) In addition to the above-mentioned ratified treaties, Algeria has also signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto.

Traditional cooperation with regional and international institutions dealing with human rights

(k) In addition to its statutory and voluntary contribution allowing international organizations to fulfil their mandate, the Government of Algeria has participated in the activities of the following institutions:

A. International instances

(l) With regard to the Human Rights Council, Algeria was a founding member and has always maintained that the transition of the Commission on Human Rights to the Human Rights Council represents an opportunity to overcome the past practice of politicization, selectivity and politics of double standards in human rights matters. It is only through dialogue and cooperation that human rights in the world can progress and Algeria has expended efforts supporting the negotiating phase to clear the way to reach the largest consensus for the establishment of the Council. In the Council, Algeria has advocated for equal treatment for all States, prioritizing dialogue and cooperation for the realization of universal human rights objectives;

(m) In the past few years, the Government of Algeria has received visits from several special procedures mandate-holders: in September 2002 by the Special Rapporteur on freedom

of religion or belief, Adbelfattach Amor, and in January 2007, by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Yakin Ertürk. In addition, Algeria has agreed in principle to a visit by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression;

(n) From 31 March to 6 April 2008, Algeria received a visit from the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, Craig Johnson, who had discussions with Algerian officials;

(o) In 2008, Algeria hosted a visit from the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Jakob Kellenberger, who from 13 to 15 March 2008 had a high-level dialogue with Algerian officials;

(p) In order to have constructive exchanges with non-governmental organizations in the area of the protection and promotion of human rights, the Government of Algeria has invited representatives from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Reporters without Borders and the International Federation of Human Rights League for discussions;

(q) Algeria is part of the first group reviewed under the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, initiated by General Assembly resolution 60/251 and Council resolution 5/1. In the report submitted, Algeria faithfully depicted its achievements in the area of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. The report reconstructed the historical, sociological and environmental context of difficulties and constraints for rights and freedoms and referred to future actions the State proposes to promote rights to its full extent. The Government has pledged to cooperate with universal periodic review in good faith and regarded this mechanism as an instrument that adds a spirit of dialogue and communication to the field of human rights. Algeria has agreed to a great majority of recommendations formulated individually by 17 States and will take the necessary steps to implement them. On 19 and 20 November 2008, Algeria took part in a meeting in Bahrain, organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the evaluation of and follow-up to the universal periodic review mechanism and lessons learned and best practices of the different recommendations formulated by States in the review framework;

(r) The country's relations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) date back to the Algerian war of liberation. Since 1959 and on the basis of a General Assembly resolution, UNHCR has intervened to help Algerian refugees, who found asylum in Morocco and Tunisia. The country's cooperation with UNHCR had been strengthened in the framework of assistance to Saharoui refugees. On 27 September 1984, an agreement was signed for the opening of a United Nations presence in the country and a delegation has been present in Algeria since;

(s) Algeria and the World Food Programme (WFP) have had relations since 1963, when WFP delivered aid to hundreds of displaced persons in and outside of the country after the war of liberation. Since 1986, the presence of WFP in Algeria has been even more significant with regard to the matter of Saharoui refugees, following the signing of an assistance agreement in 1986.

B. Regional instances

(t) In respect of its cooperation with the African Union, in addition to the ratification of African Union legal instruments on human rights, Algeria was one of the first African countries to volunteer to undergo review by the African Mechanism of Peer Evaluation, which inspired the creation of the universal periodic review mechanism. Also, Algeria submitted its third and fourth consolidated periodic reports to the African Commission of Human and People's Rights at its forty-second session in November 2007 in Brazzaville. Algeria brought clarifications pertaining to certain questions from Commission members during the meeting held in May 2008 in Ezulwini (Swaziland);

(u) Participation and cooperation in the League of Arab States: Algeria is one of seven Arab States to have ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights. It regularly participates in work of the Permanent Arab Committee for Human Rights. In March 2008, Algeria hosted a meeting of the Arab national institution for human rights on the theme "human rights and development, the role of national human rights institutions". Algeria has also contributed to the strategic plan of the Arab League for the promotion and protection of human rights for the period 2008-2013, which envisages the development of financial resources dedicated to human rights, to ensure better application of resolutions and the reviving of human rights mechanisms of the League of Arab States.

Active presence in human rights forums

(v) The Government of Algeria also provided information on its active presence at the various human rights forums. It took part in the first Arab Conference on Human Rights, in December 2008, in Doha; the third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, in November 2008, in Rio de Janeiro; the Regional Seminar on Human Rights and Terrorism organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for Middle-East and North African countries, in October 2008, in Amman; the Manila Forum on Migration, in October 2008; the Regional Conference for the Durban Review, in August 2008, in Abuja; the Beijing Forum on Development, Security and Human Rights; the ministerial conference on human rights and cultural diversity, organized by Non-Aligned Movement countries, in September 2007, in Teheran; the seminar as a bilateral plan between Algeria and Norway; the Dialogue of Civilizations, in November 2008, in New York; and an international seminar on reform of criminal sanctions in Algeria and the fulfilment of the United Nations resolution calling for a moratorium on the death penalty organized by the National Consultative Commission in January in Algiers.

2. Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[19 January 2009]

(a) The Government of Mexico is convinced that active participation in the international human rights system and international cooperation in this field will lead to the strengthening of the domestic juridical and institutional framework for the promotion and protection of human rights. The foreign policy of Mexico on human rights is therefore based on three areas: openness

to and cooperation with human rights agencies and bodies and international human rights mechanisms; participation and leadership in international human rights forums; and implementation of international human rights standards at the national level;

(b) The Government of Mexico provided information on its commitment to international cooperation in the following areas:

- (i) Cooperation with bodies and international human rights mechanisms. As a State party to all international human rights instruments, Mexico recognizes the competence of all the existing monitoring bodies, including the function to receive individual communications. Mexico submits periodic reports to those treaty bodies and actively participates and follows recommendations issued by them. Since 2001, Mexico has issued an open and standing invitation to relevant international human rights mechanisms to visit the country; to date it has received 21 visits from these mechanisms, including 14 from the United Nations system and 7 from the inter-American system;
- (ii) Cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Since 2002, Mexico has hosted a representative office of OHCHR as established with the invitation of the Government. Collaboration with OHCHR has resulted in significant contributions to the improvement of the human rights situation in Mexico, including the evaluation of the human rights situation in 2003 as well as assessment for the elaboration of a national programme of human rights for the period 2008-2012. The Office maintains agreements and close relationship with the executive, legislative and judicial branches, academic institutions and civil society. In February 2008, the Government of Mexico and OHCHR signed an agreement on ongoing OHCHR activities in the country, allowing OHCHR to monitor the human rights situation in the country, provide technical advice to the Government on human rights matters and advise other actors at their request;
- (iii) International cooperation in initiatives in multilateral human rights forums. In this regard, Mexico has implemented several initiatives relating to the human rights of women, indigenous peoples, migrants, people with disabilities and human rights in the fight against terrorism, for which it holds extensive negotiations and has an open dialogue with all countries. Some of these initiatives are presented jointly with other countries in the region, such as the resolution on human rights and indigenous peoples with Guatemala. Other initiatives are presented together with countries of other regions, such as the joint resolution by Mexico and New Zealand on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session and the resolution on human rights of persons with disabilities, adopted by the Human Rights Council at its seventh session. Mexico also joined the sponsors for the resolution on the rights of the child traditionally presented in the General Assembly by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the European Union;

- (iv) International cooperation in the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council. Mexico participates actively and constructively in the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review to identify cooperation needs in the promotion and protection of human rights in each country. Mexico also elaborated its national report for this mechanism through dialogue which involved various stakeholders, including its executive, legislative and judicial branches, academic institutions, civil society and national and State human rights institutions;
- (v) Participation in bilateral and trilateral dialogues and mechanisms on human rights matters. Mexico maintains institutionalized and periodic mechanisms of consultation and dialogue on human rights matters with Canada and the United States of America. In recent months, Mexico has held dialogues on human rights matters with Belgium, China, Cuba, France, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- (vi) Mexico-European Union cooperation programme in the field of human rights. In May 2008, a financing agreement was signed for the second phase of the human rights programme between the European Union and Mexico for the period 2008-2010, the aim of which is to concretize, through horizontal cooperation, actions that promote the implementation of measures, public policy and legislative harmonization in issues related principally to gender equality, the pursuit of justice for indigenous peoples, reforms to the justice system and human rights training for public officials. The signing of the second phase of the cooperation programme reiterates the importance that the Government of Mexico accords to the expansion and strengthening of cooperation in human rights that it has with the European Union since 2001.

(c) The Government of Mexico also proposed ways and means to enhance international cooperation and dialogue in United Nations human rights mechanisms, including in the Human Rights Council, including:

- (i) Universal periodic review mechanism: Mexico considers that it would be very positive if more countries from all regions participated actively in the Working Group of Universal Periodic Review. Recalling the objectives of the review mechanisms, especially the reinforcement of State capacity and technical assistance in consultation with the State concerned and with their consent, and that the content of the final report of the review contains, inter alia, provision of technical assistance and capacity-building in consultation with the country concerned and with their consent. Mexico believes that it would be a significant advance that OHCHR systematize technical assistance requests, as well as the requests to hold bilateral consultations on human rights, made within the framework of the universal periodic review;
- (ii) Multilateral human rights initiatives: Mexico supports greater promotion of joint and transregional human rights initiatives to strengthen dialogue between countries and regions, reconcile positions and strengthen international

cooperation. This includes promotion of interaction between countries and regions, and it is a better way to share experiences, good practices and common objectives in the field of human rights. It would also be desirable to promote cooperation of the concerned State in the drafting and adoption of multilateral initiatives related to national human rights situations, in order to make them a balanced and objective way of addressing the prevalent situation in this field and lead to specific cooperation actions to improve the situation in the country;

- (iii) Mechanisms of cooperation in human rights: it would be very useful if OHCHR conducted a general survey on the current situation of human rights cooperation mechanisms throughout the world. It would also be positive to continue to strengthen the practice of dialogue between different bodies and regional mechanisms, as well as between these and global mechanisms, including treaty bodies, special procedures, quasi judicial mechanisms and judicial bodies.
