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Agenda item 84

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Miss Ana RICHTER (Argentina)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with article 45 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966, annex), under which the Human Rights Committee is required to submit an annual report on its activities to the Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, and in accordance also with Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966, paragraph 3, the Assembly included in the provisional agenda of its thirty-third session the item entitled:

"International Covenants on Human Rights:

- (a) Report of the Human Rights Committee;
- (b) Status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: report of the Secretary-General."

2. At its 4th and 5th plenary meetings, on 22 September 1978, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

3. The Committee considered this item at its 69th and 73rd meetings, held on 6 and 8 December. The views expressed by representatives of Member States on this item are contained in the summary records of those meetings (A/C.3/33/SR.69 and 73).

4. In connexion with item 84, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Human Rights Committee; 1/

(b) Status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: report of the Secretary-General (A/33/149 and Corr.1 and Add.1).

5. The Director of the Division of Human Rights introduced the item at the 69th meeting, on 6 December (see A/C.3/33/SR.69, paras.).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/33/L.72

6. At the 73rd meeting, on 8 December, the representative of Denmark introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/33/L.72) sponsored by Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Norway and Sweden.

7. At the same meeting, the representative of Denmark revised operative paragraph 12, after the word "Protocol", to read as follows: "and being informed of the shortage of staff and resources of the Division of Human Rights, to make appropriate suggestions in the budget for the next biennium with regard to adequate staff and resources needed for servicing the above-mentioned instruments, taking into account General Assembly resolutions 3534 (XXX) of 17 December 1975 and 31/93 of 14 December 1976".

8. The Committee subsequently adopted the revised draft resolution without a vote (see para. 9 below).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

9. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

International Covenants on Human Rights

The General Assembly,

Mindful that the International Covenants on Human Rights 2/ constitute the first all-embracing and legally binding international treaties in the field of

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/33/40).

2/ Resolution 2200 (XXI), annex.

human rights, and, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 3/ form the heart of the International Bill of Human Rights, 4/

Recalling its resolutions 31/86 of 13 December 1976 and 32/66 of 8 December 1977,

Having noted the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 5/

Noting with appreciation that, following its appeal more Member States have acceded to the international covenants on human rights,

Bearing in mind the important responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council in relation to the international covenants on human rights,

Recognizing the important role of the Human Rights Committee in the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto,

1. Reaffirms the importance of the International Covenants on Human Rights as major parts of international efforts to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. Notes with appreciation the report of the Human Rights Committee 6/ on its third to fifth sessions and expresses satisfaction at the serious manner in which the Committee is continuing to undertake its functions;

3. Expresses its appreciation to States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which have extended their co-operation to the Human Rights Committee and urges States parties which have not yet done so to submit their reports to the Committee as speedily as possible;

4. Urges States parties which have been requested by the Human Rights Committee to provide additional information to comply with this request by providing such information;

5. Expresses the hope that the consideration of reports submitted under the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will be undertaken by the Economic and Social Council without further delay;

3/ Resolution 217 A (III).

4/ Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments of the United Nations (United Nations publication, Sales No. 73.XIV.2), sect. I.

5/ A/33/149

6/ Official Documents of the General Assembly, Thirty-third session, Supplement No. 40 (A/33/40).

6. Again invites all States which have not yet done so to become parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as to consider acceding to the Optional Protocol thereto;

7. Invites the States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to consider making the declaration provided for in article 41 of that Covenant;

8. Appreciates that the Human Rights Committee continues to strive for uniform standards in the implementation of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and of the Optional Protocol thereto and emphasizes the importance of the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the Covenant;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to keep the Human Rights Committee informed of the activities of the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and also to transmit the annual reports of the Human Rights Committee to these bodies;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a report on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

11. Emphasizes the duty of the Secretary-General under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the Human Rights Committee;

12. Requests the Secretary-General, bearing in mind the request of the Human Rights Committee for adequate secretarial assistance, having regard to the over-all needs for servicing the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocol, and being informed of the shortage of staff and resources of the Division of Human Rights, to make appropriate suggestions in the budget for the next biennium with regard to adequate staff and resources needed for servicing the above-mentioned instruments, taking into account General Assembly resolutions 3534 (XXX) of 17 December 1975 and 31/93 of 14 December 1976.
