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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND  
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING: (a) QUESTION OF THE  
PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION;  
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND WAYS AND MEANS WITHIN THE  
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE  
ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Report prepared by the Secretary-General pursuant  
to resolution 26 (XXXIV), paragraph 3 (a), (b) and  
(c) (i), of the Commission on Human Rights

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## INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 26 (XXXIV), paragraph 3(a), of 8 March 1973, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Secretary-General to invite the specialized agencies concerned and the United Nations organs in the field of human rights to supply information on those measures, within their respective areas of competence, already taken or to be taken in the future, which would translate into practical terms the concepts of General Assembly resolution 32 entitled "Alternative approaches and ways and means within the United Nations for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms".
2. In paragraph 3(b) of the same resolution, the Secretary-General was also requested to circulate the report of the Commission on the work done on agenda item 11 at its thirty-fourth session to Member States, specialized agencies, other organs within the United Nations system and the relevant non-governmental organizations, and to invite their comments thereon, for submission by 31 October 1978.
3. In paragraph 3(c) of that resolution, the Secretary-General was requested, inter alia, to prepare, in time for the meeting of the working group referred to in paragraph 2 of the resolution, which would meet for a week immediately before the thirty-fifth session of the Commission, a report which would include the information supplied under paragraph 3(a) referred to above.
4. Several of the replies received include information which relates to both subparagraph (a) and subparagraph (b) of paragraph 3 of resolution 26 (XXXIV). For reasons of convenience, this information is reproduced in this report.
5. This report therefore reproduces the information supplied by Governments, the specialized agencies concerned, United Nations organs and the relevant non-governmental organizations.
6. The Governments of the following States have transmitted comments: Federal Republic of Germany, Burundi, India, Netherlands, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Sweden.
7. The following specialized agencies have transmitted information or comments: International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Health Organization and International Telecommunication Union.
8. The following United Nations organs have transmitted information or comments: Trusteeship Council, United Nations Industrial Development Organization and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
9. The following non-governmental organizations have transmitted comments: Friends World Committee for Consultation and Commission of the Churches on International Affairs.

I. INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BY MEMBER STATES

GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF

[Original: English]

[6 November 1978]

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany regards the realization of human rights as a major task of international politics and also as a particular concern of the United Nations. The United Nations have already achieved progress towards the comprehensive promotion and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, primarily through the adoption of international instruments. However, there remains a distinct contrast between the now extensive system of codifying human rights and the still modest and incomplete instruments for their implementation. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany hopes that an increasingly manifest awareness of human rights and their international relevance also in the United Nations will help to develop and ensure the better use of existing institutions for the realization of human rights and also to create worldwide institutions capable of securing the effective enjoyment of human rights.

The contributions to the discussion of this question set out in chapter IX of the report on the thirty-fourth session of the Commission serve, in the view of the Federal Government all in all, as a useful basis for efforts in this direction. Without claiming to deal exhaustively with the proposals made in the aforementioned report or to arrive at a final judgement thereon, the Federal Government would like to comment in more detail on a number of the suggestions made.

I.

The view expressed by all speakers according to paragraph 165 of the report on the thirty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights that all human rights are equal in importance, indivisible and interdependent deserves special attention in the view of the Federal Government. The equal importance of both civil and political rights and of economic, social and cultural rights is however not yet reflected in their implementation, as is evident from the different control systems provided for by the two human rights covenants of 1966. As far as the reporting systems of the two covenants are concerned, there is a need not only for co-ordination and simplification but also for the setting of standards appropriate to the two kinds of human rights for the preparation, consideration and appraisal of such reports. Realistic reports considered by the United Nations on state of economic and social rights could, for example, usefully promote and give direction to international co-operation in this field.

II.

As far as procedures for examining violations of human rights are concerned, public and confidential procedures (paragraph 155 of the report) should continue to exist. The Federal Government fully supports the proposals made in paragraphs 172 and 179 for the improvement of these procedures.

Consideration should also be given to the proposal (paragraphs 179 and 189 (5b)) to enable the chairman or the bureau of the Commission to act between sessions of the Commission when unusual and urgent situations call for prompt action

against mass violations of human rights. It is in principle in keeping with the views of the Federal Government to devote an essential part of the Commission's sessions to examining the implementation of human rights and situations involving gross violations of human rights (paragraph 172).

A reorganization of the Commission (paragraph 174) could be useful if the elevation of the Commission to the status of a council served to rationalize its work through the setting-up of a number of subcommissions: subcommissions could perform the commission's different functions (examination of violations of human rights, consideration of further international instruments, appraisal of reports from States) separately, giving more time to each one, and would thus deal more effectively with the various tasks in the human rights field.

A necessary condition for this is the now already indispensable increase in the percentage of the United Nations budget allocated to human rights activities (paragraph 173).

### III.

The Federal Government, in keeping with its long-held views on this question, supports the proposal (paragraph 181) to appoint a High Commissioner for Human Rights. It also regards favourably the various suggestions associated with this proposal such as the appointment of field officers and the setting-up of a permanent fact-finding machinery (paragraphs 184 and 180).

The role of non-governmental organizations could also under certain circumstances be enhanced (paragraph 188). They could, for example, without affecting the competences of the organs of the United Nations, be granted the right to submit written comments on reports of States or proof of violations of human rights.

Before new international instruments (paragraph 178) are developed to fill existing gaps in international law relating to human rights, the Federal Government feels that priority should be given to streamlining and co-ordinating the work of existing organs and improving implementation and control mechanisms.

### IV.

The improvement and heightening of awareness of the importance and substance of human rights is a further long-term and worldwide task. The Federal Government therefore supports the proposal to hold a seminar under the advisory services programme on the relationship between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights (paragraph 165). It is, however, above all important that young people in all types of schools and at all ages should be taught about human rights and that respect for human rights should have a special place in their education.

### V.

The Federal Republic of Germany regards the United Nations Commission on Human Rights as of the greatest importance for the development and protection of human rights. It will accordingly vigorously support proposals designed to increase the effectiveness of the Commission's work. During its new term of membership of the Commission starting on 1 January 1979 the Federal Republic will display the same determination as in the past to work unstintingly for the realization of human rights.

BURUNDI

[Original: French]

[19 June 1978]

Burundi will always and unreservedly associate itself with all positive initiatives aimed at guaranteeing absolute respect for human rights on the basis of the principles of international co-operation, the sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

In paragraph 157 of the report [on the Commission's thirty-fourth session], reference is made to the establishment of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. On this question it would be desirable to follow the recommendations made by the General Assembly at its thirty-second session.

Paragraph 165 of the report refers to "appropriate ... sanctions to prevent violations". This proposal would be acceptable only to the extent that such sanctions did not constitute interference in a State's internal affairs.

INDIA

[Original: English]

[12 September 1978]

We have no objection to reviewing the terms of reference of the Commission so as to facilitate the realization of the basic concepts contained in General Assembly resolution 32/130. We also have no objection to the membership of the Commission being increased while maintaining equitable geographical distribution. Suggestions for increasing the budget for human rights activities and extension of the Commission's annual session to six weeks, or provision for the Commission to split its annual session into two parts are also acceptable to us.

It is an order if the Bureau of the Commission on Human Rights or its Chairman is to be entrusted with certain functions between sessions.

Regarding the creation of the post of a High Commissioner for Human Rights or the creation of new office such as Under Secretary General for Human Rights etc., we do not subscribe to this as in our view, the Director of the Division has sufficient powers to discharge this mandate fully.

In general, we are not in favour of the creation of additional bodies of the Commission as it will complicate rather than simplify the working of the international organizations. We would prefer existing arrangements to continue. We fully endorse the proposal whereby governments of Member States themselves would be invited to take action at the national level through the setting up or strengthening of national institutions in the field of human rights.

We have no objection to any suggestions that would improve the functioning of existing organs concerned with human rights. We have no objection to the status of the Commission being elevated to that of a Council on Human Rights. However, the proposed Council should report through the ECOSOC and not directly to the General Assembly. The idea of establishing a permanent panel of experts should not be subscribed to as we feel that existing organs are adequate.

We do not feel that regional organizations for human rights should be imposed on regions without their consent. The initiative for such arrangement at regional level should come from States themselves. Regarding human rights field officers, their appointment would depend upon the countries concerned.

We agree with the suggestion that co-ordination of human rights activities should be stepped up and that consideration should be given to ways and means of avoiding any overlapping between the activities of the Commission and those related to the implementation of the international covenants on human rights. We fully agree with the suggestion that importance should be given to the role of non-governmental organizations and that the Commission should study ways and means of enhancing their role in assisting the Commission.

NETHERLANDS

[Original: English]

[2 November 1978]

1. By way of introduction, the Netherlands Government should like to make a few observations of a more general character. First, it wishes to reiterate the view (also reflected in para. 164 of the report under consideration) that the promotion and protection of human rights is a legitimate concern of the international community. It holds the opinion that the promotion of human rights is conducive to improving the international climate and fostering an atmosphere of détente and co-operation. The Netherlands Government subscribes to the concept (referred to in para. 165) that equal attention should be given to both economic, social and cultural rights. General Assembly resolution 32/130 rightly points at their indivisibility and interdependence. That resolution has, at the same time, clearly raised the various issues involved in the interrelationship between these rights. The Netherlands Government is ready to face the challenge of new thinking on human rights. It recognizes that the social and economic emancipation of developing countries and the realization of a new international economic order are indispensable elements for the effective promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in developing countries and elsewhere. One cannot urge respect for political rights, if one is not prepared to work for the realization of economic and social rights. The Netherlands will, therefore, pursue its active development co-operation policy. At the same time, the Government will continue to advocate respect for the essential rights of the individual, not only because of their intrinsic value, but also because, in accordance with article 28 of the Universal Declaration, political freedom is indispensable for human development in all other fields.

2. When considering the question of further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, one cannot overlook the body of codified standards that has come into being since 1948 (cf. para. 161 of the report). The process of standard-setting was not meant to be an academic exercise. Instead, the pertinent conventions and declarations, promulgated under United Nations auspices, should be made to serve as an effective basis for the promotion and protection of human rights.

As to human rights conventions, it is particularly important that they provide for procedures aimed at monitoring the observance by State Parties of the obligations laid down in these instruments. It is imperative that such conventions be ratified by as many States as possible and that the implementation machineries set up under these conventions be allowed to function on the broadest possible basis. Therefore, the Netherlands Government urges acceptance by all States Parties of the optional clauses relating to inter-State complaints and to petitions from individuals as contained in article 41 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in the Optional Protocol thereto, and articles 11 and 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Furthermore, it urges scrupulous compliance with reporting-requirements, if any, under human rights conventions.

As to declarations in the human rights field, they must be turned - as they were designed to be - into actual guidelines and frames of reference for government policy. Here, too, the United Nations has a monitoring function to fulfil. By means of questionnaires it could examine periodically whether the norms and principles expounded in these declarations are properly heeded by Member States. The reporting procedure established under ECOSOC resolution 1074 C (XXXIX) of 28 July 1965 in regard to the Universal Declaration provides a firm precedent.



Specifically, the United Nations could solicit information as to what steps governments had taken, including legislative and administrative measures, to convert the respective declarations into actual practice. This would apply also to declarations that were since followed by conventions, namely in relation to Member States not being a party to the latter.

3. Conventions and declarations on human rights do not direct themselves to governments alone. All people must be rendered conscious of the rights and duties contained in the various human rights instruments, in order to be able to assert and respect them. To this end, governments and non-governmental institutions and organizations have a vital role to play in providing information and education on human rights standards and procedures. Special care should be taken that all levels of society are reached, in particular the underprivileged. Consequently, utilization of channels directly in touch with the people will greatly enhance the effectiveness of the process of information and education. The important role of youth in the realization of human rights was aptly pointed out before the Commission (para. 167). Guidance at the primary and secondary levels of education is therefore of particular significance, besides teaching of human rights at the academic level.

The United Nations system as a whole has a responsibility with regard to the process of information and education concerning human rights. The United Nations should continuously provide stimuli helping along this process on the national levels. Meanwhile, it should continue and expand its own information and education activities on a regular basis. The advisory services programme in the field of human rights must be arranged (as was requested by ECOSOC in resolution 1978/14) as a part of the budget of the human rights programme of the United Nations. Funds allocated to it should at least cover the costs of two seminars, one training course and 25 fellowships per year. In regard of the role of the United Nations system, reference is also made here to the Commission's resolution 3 (XXXIII), in which it solicited the co-operation of UNESCO, and to the useful report issued by UNESCO on the seminar it held in Vienna, September last, on the teaching of human rights. Finally, the Netherlands Government would like to point in this connexion to the seminar organized by the United Nations in Geneva, in September 1978, on national and local institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. The guidelines formulated at this seminar are a valuable contribution and ought to be favourably considered by regular United Nations bodies.

4. As to the tasks of the Commission on Human Rights (referred to in para. 172), the Netherlands Government holds the opinion that the Commission should devote an essential part of its sessions to the implementation of human rights, including situations involving gross violations, but that, at the same time, it should maintain its central role in the field of standard-setting. Studies and preliminary work could be delegated to a subsidiary organ like the Sub-Commission, but the Commission itself should not avoid going into the substance of the preparation of new human rights standards. On the other hand, if the Commission is to remain the meaningful human rights body it was designed to be, it should refrain from treating in substance matters that have been apportioned primarily to other United Nations organs or bodies within the United Nations system, such as development, health care, protection of the environment, disarmament or international peace and security. Naturally, it should remain seized of their implications for the enjoyment of human rights.

5. Ever since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration a process of diversification has taken place, in the sense that various portions of the Declaration have been dealt with more comprehensively in separate instruments bringing different aspects and ramifications into light. Although the Netherlands Government recognizes that a major part of international standard-setting has

already been accomplished, it fully supports the view (reflected in para. 178) that remaining gaps in international law relating to human rights should be filled by additional standards adopted through international treaties, codes, model rules, bodies of principles and other similar instruments. On the other hand, for the reasons set out under 4 above, the Netherlands Government does not consider the right of peoples to live in conditions of international peace and security an appropriate topic for the setting of new standards. As to the second topic mentioned in para. 178, it is submitted that the International Labour Organisation is primarily competent to deal with the rights and freedoms of professional and labour organizations. The Netherlands Government appreciates the work now in progress in the Commission on several topics. It thinks that the Commission should give special attention to an early completion of the draft declaration against religious intolerance and to the question of conscientious objection to military service.

6. Next to its legislative role, the Commission must proceed to expand and improve its monitoring function with regard to implementation of human rights, capitalizing on its resolution 8 (XXIII) and ECOSOC resolutions 1235 (XLII) and 1503 (XLVIII). The procedures established under the latter, which only recently have begun to bear fruit, deserve to be streamlined in order to speed up the process of dealing with communications and making it more responsive to emergency situations. One way of achieving that aim would be taking up the suggestions made in para. 179 of the report, according to which the Chairman or the Bureau of the Commission should be able to act between sessions, particularly in response to reports of gross violations of human rights. In addition, the recent request by the Sub-Commission for two meetings a year with a limited number of agenda items also deserves positive consideration in this context.

7. Mainly due to the entry into force of various human rights conventions, the work-load of the Human Rights Division has multiplied, without a concomitant increase in man-power and facilities. Hence, at any rate the financial means allocated to the human rights programme must be reviewed accordingly. But apart from reinforcing the human rights substructure and enhancing the quality of existing human rights machineries, new institutional measures can be devised which are conducive to the promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Netherlands Government has long advocated a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and will continue to do so. Apart from the competence, objectivity and personal integrity that is to be expected from such an official, particular care should be taken that he be awarded a large measure of independence. Furthermore, the Netherlands Government can see no grounds for the contention (reported in para. 181) that the creation of that post would be contrary to the Charter and detrimental to international co-operation among States.

Equally valuable is the suggestion in para. 184 concerning the appointment of human rights field officers. Such officers might assist the Human Rights Division in general and United Nations fact-finding missions in particular. They might be posted at the seats of regional economic commissions of the United Nations.

The reports of the Commission's Ad Hoc Working Group on Chile demonstrate once again the usefulness of fact-finding activities. They are an important means toward securing compliance with human rights standards and more recourse should be sought to it. In para. 180 it is suggested that a permanent panel of experts be established from which one or more members could be drawn and entrusted with the ascertainment of facts. Although the idea certainly deserves serious consideration, it must not be overlooked that, if such experts are to be government nominees, their selection for particular missions would, by implication, be a political

decision. Therefore, if the selection were to be made by the Secretary-General, his discretion might be reduced rather than expanded, in particular if he were precluded from appointing persons not members of the panel.

Finally, there is the possibility of regional machinery for the protection of human rights (cf. para. 133). As a general rule, governments encountering charges levelled against them for violation of human rights may more readily be prepared to face such charges before members of the same region than vis-à-vis a worldbody as the United Nations. The regional human rights systems within the framework of the Council of Europe and of the Organization of American States provide fine examples of how such systems may be set up in order to operate effectively. However, regional machinery should be only encouraged if it will substantially contribute to a better promotion and protection of human rights. If regional organs would be set up without real and effective powers and such organs would at the same time claim precedence over the United Nations in dealing with violations occurring within their region, honouring such claims might lead to covering up situations that otherwise would not have escaped scrutiny by United Nations bodies. Moreover, care should be taken to avoid that regional organs apply standards and develop bodies of jurisprudence fundamentally different from those created in the context of the United Nations, since this would be a considerable set-back to a uniform application of human rights standards.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

[Original: English]

[3 November 1978]

The United Kingdom Government reaffirm the importance they attach to establishing alternative ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Although much has been achieved in the 30 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, there is still a gap between aspiration and performance. While there has been a considerable advance in the formulation of new international Conventions and other instruments there has been less progress in securing their implementation.

The United Kingdom Government have welcomed the progress made in the past 30 years in drawing up international instruments to safeguard human rights. The United Kingdom believe that the next significant advance in this field will come with the conclusion, signature and ratification of the proposed conventions relating to the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and especially that against Torture.

But the United Kingdom considers that it is also important to ensure implementation of existing norms. It attaches special importance to the procedure within ECOSOC resolution 1503 for this purpose. The International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural and on Civil and Political Rights contain the most considered and comprehensive human rights provisions which are strengthened by procedures for the examination of the way States parties fulfil their obligations. The Human Rights Committee is establishing a valuable, critical and detailed dialogue with representatives of States whose reports under the Civil and Political Covenant it has scrutinized. The United Kingdom Government hopes that the sessional working group of ECOSOC will soon be set up to look into the way in which States parties implement the Economic, Social and Cultural Covenant.

The United Kingdom Government have noted in recent years an increased vigour and determination in the Commission on Human Rights to tackle human rights abuses throughout the world. Though this progress depends partly on the political will of its members it could be enhanced by improvements in the Commission's methods of work. There would be advantage in the Commission's meeting twice a year, to give more continuity to its consideration of human rights problems and to enable it to react more quickly to events which occur after its annual meeting. The latter purpose might also be achieved by providing for ad hoc emergency sessions to be called at the discretion of the Chairman and the bureau. The United Kingdom Government's Note of 19 May 1978 suggested ways of strengthening the Commission's communications procedure, a vital part of its machinery. The United Kingdom Government consider that the Commission's present mandate is sufficiently comprehensive; what is necessary is the will to operate it fully and effectively.

The United Kingdom Government value highly the work of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and consider it might also usefully meet twice a year. They also support proposals that have recently been made for secret voting in the Sub-Commission.

The United Kingdom Government have long been convinced that the most important institutional improvement in the field of international protection of human rights would be the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights. Such an individual who would embody the good offices of the Secretary-General, would view matters in a wider perspective than any other person or organization can do at present. He could co-ordinate many strands of activity which are carried out by diverse groups and bodies. Being constantly on call, he could act more flexibly and speedily than any of them in an emergency. His activities, so long as they were based firmly on United Nations practices and principles, would not constitute an intrusion into the sovereignty of member states.

In view of the increased and welcome importance attached to human rights matters in the international community, the United Kingdom Government consider that the staff of the Secretariat in this area should be strengthened.

The United Kingdom Government have followed with interest debate on the desirability of regional and national institutions for the protection of human rights. The United Kingdom believes regional bodies can make a special contribution. Many Governments are more willing to allow investigation of human rights issues by immediate neighbours and more ready to implement their recommendations. Regional bodies can take more account of local social and cultural traditions. The human rights machinery already established in Western Europe and Latin America demonstrate the effective role such bodies can play among the countries of their region.

The United Kingdom Government hope that the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights, which will convene in February 1979 to examine alternative approaches and ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the promotion and protection of human rights, will present positive proposals on these lines to the thirty-fifth Commission.

SWEDEN

[Original: English]

[10 November 1978]

A starting-point, when dealing with this item ["Further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the question of the programme and methods of work of the Commission"], is General Assembly resolution 32/130 which, inter alia, concerns the relations between civil and political rights, on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights, on the other. These two groups are clearly interdependent. Equal attention should be given to both groups of rights, and neither of them should, as a group, be given priority before the other. This does not exclude, however, that certain individual rights, such as the right to life or the right to personal freedom, are of particular importance, since their enjoyment is a precondition for the enjoyment of all or many of the other human rights.

The problems of co-ordination require particular attention. In view of the interdependence of the two groups of rights and having regard also to the fact that work aimed at their more effective protection is undertaken by a large number of international organizations, it is essential to co-ordinate the different efforts that are being made.

It should also be observed that the two categories of human rights, while being interrelated, differ from one another as to their general legal character. The economic, social and cultural rights consist, to a large extent, in objectives and aims to be pursued by States in their economic, social and cultural policy (cf. article 2 para. 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: "undertakes to take steps ..., to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights ..."). The civil and political rights, on the other hand, reflect concrete commitments by States to guarantee to each individual certain minimum rights (as stipulated in article 2 para. 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The provisions on these rights therefore contain more precise norms and the system for their implementation is a crucial element in making the norms effective.

In the opinion of the Swedish Government, the Commission on Human Rights plays, and should continue to play, an important part in strengthening the protection of both categories of rights. It is essential, therefore, that the Commission should be given sufficient time and opportunity to carry out its task as efficiently as possible.

The Commission should act along two different lines. It should work out new rules and norms for the further protection of human rights, and it should also pay attention to concrete human rights situations which give rise to concern.

The Swedish Government has noted with satisfaction that, in the latter respect, the Commission has managed during the last years to increase and strengthen its performance. Some human rights situations have been dealt with under separate items of the agenda of the Commission. A considerable number of situations have also been examined on the basis of the procedure established by ECOSOC resolution 1503.

The capacity of the Commission to deal with concrete situations should be further increased. Since such situations often present an urgent character and the Commission is only in session for a few weeks per year, a procedure should be found which would make it possible to take action also between the sessions of the Commission. It would, for instance, be possible to give the Bureau of the Commission competence to act on behalf of the Commission in urgent situations which arise between the sessions. Similarly, it is desirable that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should, in appropriate cases, use his good offices in order to bring about improvements of specific situations involving violations of human rights. The Swedish Government has noted with satisfaction the assurance of the Secretary-General that he will continue his efforts in this regard whenever and wherever they best serve the welfare of the individuals concerned (Report to the General Assembly, doc. A/33/1). It may be added that if a United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights is appointed in the future - an idea which the Swedish Government supports - it may be possible to entrust similar functions to him.

The Commission on Human Rights has for a long time had a very full agenda and it has been difficult for the Commission to deal efficiently with all items entrusted to it. This situation calls for certain reforms as regards the methods of work of the Commission and the length of its sessions.

It is obvious that the Commission can more efficiently perform its work regarding a number of items if it receives concrete texts as the basis of its work. In fact, the Commission has frequently set up working groups to deal with various subjects and this appears to be a valuable system. The working groups, however, have usually only worked during the sessions of the Commission and they have often had insufficient time at their disposal. It should be possible, therefore, for working groups to be convened also between sessions, where this is necessary for their work. As an alternative to the system of working groups, it might be possible in some cases to appoint one of the members of the Commission as rapporteur with the task of presenting concrete proposals on a special subject. In other cases of a less urgent nature, where a thorough report is required, it might be preferable to refer the matter to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, which could be asked to collect and present the necessary material to the Commission.

It is also desirable that the Commission itself should have more time at its disposal. In this respect, it might be considered to allow the Commission, when necessary, to hold a second annual session in order to deal with those items which, for lack of time, have not been dealt with during the first session.

The suggestions which have been made in the preceding observations involve a certain increase of the responsibilities of the United Nations in the field of human rights. Moreover, the human rights activities of the United Nations have recently been extended through the setting up of new bodies such as the Human Rights Committee. It will therefore also be necessary to ensure that the Division of Human Rights is given sufficient staff and budgetary means to cope with the increased workload.



II. INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES CONCERNED

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

[Original: English]

[31 October 1978]

When this question [means within the United Nations system for improving the enjoyment of human rights] was under consideration pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3221 (XXIX), the International Labour Office submitted its comments by letter of 13 November 1975. A summary of these comments, which referred more particularly to the main features of ILO procedures for supervising the implementation of international labour standards and to the need for co-ordination of standard-setting activities within the United Nations system so as to avoid duplication of effort and conflicting interpretations, appeared in the report which the Secretary-General presented to the General Assembly at its 32nd session (A/32/178). They retain their validity. I should however like to provide certain further indications on the manner in which ILO activities take account of ideas expressed in General Assembly resolution 32/130.

The General Assembly emphasized that human rights are indivisible and interdependent and that equal attention must therefore be given to the implementation of civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. By reason of its competence, the International Labour Organisation has been concerned more particularly with activities directed to the realization of economic and social rights. However, it has also taken action on various questions related to civil liberties, such as the elimination of discrimination, freedom of association and the abolition of forced labour. Moreover, ILO bodies have repeatedly stressed the importance of the enjoyment of civil liberties in general for the effective application of ILO standards such as those mentioned above. Reference may be made, by way of illustration, to the resolution adopted by the Conference in 1970 concerning trade union rights and their relation to civil liberties. This link has also been stressed by various commissions of inquiry which have examined complaints of violation of Conventions in the field of freedom of association and discrimination in employment.

The General Assembly stressed the importance of standard-setting within the United Nations system in the field of human rights and of the acceptance and implementation of the relevant international instruments. Almost all ILO Conventions and Recommendations are related to the realization of rights enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights. Among instruments adopted in recent years, reference may be made to two important sets of instruments relating to freedom of association, namely, the Rural Workers' Organizations Convention (No. 141) and Recommendation (No. 149), 1975, and the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention (No. 151) and Recommendation (No. 159), 1978, to new standards for safeguarding the rights and welfare of migrants, namely, the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No. 143) and the Migrant Workers Recommendation (No. 151), 1975, and to a series of instruments directed to the maintenance of safe working conditions. As a basis for a more systematic approach to standard-setting, the ILO Governing Body is currently engaged in a comprehensive review of ILO standards, with the aim of identifying instruments the ratification and application of which should be promoted on a priority basis, instruments in need of revision, and subjects on which new standards might be adopted.

ILO Conventions continue to receive a considerable number of ratifications. The number of ratifications registered in 1977 was 148; the total to date in 1978 is 193. Most of these ratifications have come from developing countries. The total number of ratifications of ILO Conventions stands at over 4,600.

The question of co-ordination of standard-setting activities within the United Nations system has acquired additional importance with the entry into force in 1976 of the International Covenants on Human Rights and the coming into operation of the supervisory procedures provided for in them. Because of the close relation between ILO standards and a number of rights enunciated in the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the ILO Governing Body, in response to a request from the Economic and Social Council made in accordance with Article 13 of this Covenant, decided to entrust the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations - a body of independent experts responsible for assessing compliance with obligations under ILO Conventions - with the task of examining reports from States Parties and other available information on the implementation of provisions of the Covenant falling within the scope of the ILO's activities and reporting to the Economic and Social Council on the progress made in achieving observance of these provisions. The first report by the Committee of Experts under these arrangements was presented to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session in 1978. The ILO has also offered its assistance to the Human Rights Committee established under the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the provision of information on two matters dealt with in the Covenant which fall within the scope of the ILO's activities (the prohibition of forced labour and the right to form and join trade unions). The Human Rights Committee has not so far availed itself of this possibility. It has invited the specialized agencies to attend its public meetings, with the possibility, with the Committee's permission, of addressing it on any matter on which it might require information.

The continuing concern of the ILO with human rights problems is reflected in two resolutions adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1977, relating respectively to the promotion, protection and strengthening of freedom of association, trade union and other human rights and to the strengthening of tripartism in ILO supervisory procedures of international standards and technical co-operation programmes.

Within the framework of its regular programme, the ILO is pursuing action to combat apartheid and discrimination in areas within its competence. Summaries of ILO recent action in this field were provided to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities at its last session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/402) and also to the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/CONF.92/25).

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

[Original: English]

[2 October 1978]

The entire programme of the Organization is a contribution to the advancement of certain fundamental human rights and in particular of the right to food. By increasing food production, improving nutritional standards, and helping the rural poor, FAO is contributing to a fuller enjoyment of economic and social rights for the world's most deprived people.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

[Original: English]

[31 October 1978]

As defined by its Constitution, the objective of the World Health Organization is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health, the enjoyment of which is stated to be one of the fundamental rights of every human being. The Organization's activities are determined by this postulate and as such aim at improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. Those activities have to be seen in the context of the promotion of the full dignity of the human person and the development and well-being of the society.

The awareness of social justice and the rights of the individual motivates the Organization's constant search for new ways and means to achieve the greatest health benefit for the greatest number of people at the lowest cost. The programmes outlined below highlight some of the most far-reaching efforts of WHO towards achieving this objective.

In 1977 the Thirtieth World Health Assembly indicated the Organization's new direction when it decided that the principal social target of Member States and WHO in health should be the attainment by all citizens of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead socially and economically productive lives. Emphasis is thus given to those priority programmes that are most likely to lead to the attainment of this target.

Among these programmes, primary health care is the key to achieving an acceptable level of health throughout the world in the foreseeable future as part of social development and in the spirit of social justice. This new approach to health and health care was prompted by the recognition that the health status of hundreds of millions of people in the world today is unacceptable, particularly in developing countries. More than half the population of the world do not have the benefit of proper health care. Primary health care represents a framework or approach for delivering a range of vital health programmes so that benefits could reach the widest possible number of people. It includes at least the following elements: promotion of proper nutrition and an adequate supply of safe water; basic sanitation; maternal and child care, including family planning; immunization against the major infectious diseases; prevention and control of locally endemic diseases; education concerning prevailing health problems and the methods of preventing and controlling them; and appropriate treatment for common diseases and injuries.

Primary health care goes a long way towards establishing a more equitable and adequate distribution of health resources, particularly for the benefit of the least served, the social periphery. It also emphasizes the right and duty of all persons to participate individually and collectively in the planning and implementation of their health care.

Large segments of the world's population do not have access to the most necessary drugs and vaccines that are indispensable to ensure effective health care. Pharmaceutical expenditure is far too high to be compatible with other health care needs in most developing countries. The Thirty-first World Health Assembly, recognizing that an innovative approach and urgent international action was required if the goal of health for all was to be attained, launched in 1978 an action programme on essential drugs aimed at strengthening the national capabilities of developing countries in the field of selection and proper use of essential drugs to meet their real needs. It was realized that the extension of basic health care to the greatest number of people cannot be successful without an adequate supply of the most essential drugs.

The short-term objective of this action programme is to facilitate access to indispensable drugs by developing countries, whereas the long-term objective is the establishment or improvement of facilities for the local production of essential drugs.

The search for alternative action necessary for reducing the extent and severity of malnutrition and undernutrition in the world has resulted in a reorientation of WHO's nutrition programme. Priority is being given to the introduction of nutritional objectives in national development plans, and the development and implementation of multisectoral food and nutrition policies and programmes, as well as to integration of nutritional activities within health sector responsibilities, especially at the community level.

A food and nutrition policy has to deal with the implications for nutrition of governmental actions affecting the ability of the population, particularly the less privileged, to obtain the food they need. To make health services more effective in nutrition, new approaches, based on community participation, such as the primary health care approach, and more efficient use of local resources are required.

The various components of the Organization's nutrition programme aim at:

- (a) testing at the community level how locally available foods can best meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable groups;
- (b) identifying, developing and evaluating different types of appropriate methods for food preparation in the home or community, and educational techniques that can be utilized for local community action and in health care systems for improving dietary practices.

Another WHO programme which is closely concerned with the achievement of the highest possible level of health is the improvement of environmental health which must be seen as part of a total health and development effort. The Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly has defined a number of principles for orientation of the Organization's future programme in this field. Among the main shifts of emphasis in objectives and approaches, the following are noteworthy:

- (a) the programme will aim at the largest possible population coverage by basic sanitary measures as a key to improving health; and
- (b) the programme will be based on analysis of the social, cultural and behavioural aspects involved, particular attention being given to community participation, the utilization of local resources and the development of self-reliance.

In the area of community water supply and sanitation which are integral parts of primary health care, the emphasis is on meeting the basic human needs for water and sanitation and on providing these services to the most underserved populations, particularly those scattered in rural areas and crowded in urban slums and fringe areas.

The unprecedented growth rate of population, the surge of rural populations into urban areas, and the continued lack of tangible improvements in rural areas, particularly in developing countries, which are exacerbating the health and environmental problems of human settlements, have led the Organization to give a new emphasis to the health aspects of housing and human settlements.

The above-mentioned programmes are examples of how WHO translates the concepts of General Assembly resolution 32/130 into practical terms. They represent some of the essential health promoting elements which should contribute to the attainment of the health for all.

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

[Original: English]

[31 May 1978]

The thirty-third session of the Administrative Council of the ITU has taken note of General Assembly resolution 32/130.

The activities of the ITU in this area continue to be controlled by the provisions of the International Telecommunication Convention.

III. INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BY UNITED NATIONS ORGANS IN THE FIELD OF  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER ORGANS WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

[Original: English]

[19 October 1978]

The text of resolution 26 (XXXIV), together with its attachments, has already been brought to the attention of the President of the Trusteeship Council.

The Trusteeship Council at its forty-third session in 1976 considered the question of co-operation between itself and the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. The record containing the discussions leading to its decision on the subject appears in the annual report of the Trusteeship Council for that year. The text of the pertinent paragraphs (S/12214, 39-50, 64-76) is herewith enclosed for your reference.

Further, the Trusteeship Council at its forty-fifth session had the following two items on its agenda: "Co-operation with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination", and "Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination". Following the consideration of these items, the Council at its 1479th meeting on 30 May 1978, decided, without objection, to take note of the statements which had been made at that meeting. Enclosed herewith are the record of the meeting which contains the discussions and decisions on the subject. 1/

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1/ (T/PV.1479) of 30 May 1978.

UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

[Original: English]

[15 September 1978]

UNIDO's work focuses on the promotion of industrial development, and as a direct consequence of this, the enhancement of the social conditions in developing countries. In that sense, its activities concern also the provisions on economic and social rights and fundamental freedoms as contained in the respective International Covenants on Human Rights, even if no specific reference is made to particular legal norms.

If desired, however, UNIDO might consider a paper (or a joint paper) on the significance of its work programme in the perspective of human rights issues.



OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

[Original: English]

[7 November 1978]

UNHCR action in the field of dissemination of human rights of refugees

1. Pursuant to Article 3 of the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the High Commissioner has been called upon to "provide for the protection of refugees falling under the competence of his Office by (a) Promoting the conclusion and ratification of international conventions for the protection of refugees, supervising their application and proposing amendments thereto". Thus the international community has entrusted the High Commissioner with the task of promoting those instruments - be they conventions, treaties, agreements, etc. - dealing with the protection of refugees, e.g. with their human rights and fundamental freedoms.
2. In this connexion, the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees emerge as the basic international instruments dealing with the protection of refugees as well as their fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the right of movement and residence, owning property, gainful employment, practising religion, entering into associations, social security and education. Article 35 of the Convention calls for the co-operation of Contracting States with UNHCR "in the exercise of its functions, and shall in particular facilitate its duty of supervising the application of the provisions of this Convention". Furthermore, in order to enable UNHCR to make reports to the competent bodies of the United Nations, the Contracting States undertake to provide them in the appropriate form with information and statistical data requested concerning:
  - (a) the condition of refugees,
  - (b) the implementation of this Convention, and
  - (c) laws, regulations and decrees which are, or may hereafter be, in force relating to refugees.
3. The adequate and effective protection of refugees presupposes not only the elaboration of instruments setting out their fundamental rights and freedoms but also a concerted action aimed at securing the full compliance of the standards spelt out in the municipal legislation in force. In this context, UNHCR's role of dissemination of instruments which safeguard the basic human rights of refugees both at the international and national levels is of paramount importance. UNHCR carries out this very important task by resorting to different means, such as information, publications, education and teaching.
4. Within the framework of the United States system, UNHCR is likewise called upon to co-operate with all competent United Nations bodies in the field of dissemination of Human Rights instruments which concern, inter alia, refugees. In this connexion, special reference is made to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and to both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which undoubtedly are important instruments for the international protection of refugees.

5. It is worth while to point out that the human rights pertaining to refugees are also to be found in some international instruments which fall within the sphere of International Humanitarian Law applicable in armed conflicts, namely, the four 1949 Geneva Conventions for the protection of victims of war and the two Additional Protocols drawn up in 1977. It is also the task of UNHCR to disseminate these humanitarian instruments in so far as they contain specific provisions applicable to the protection of refugees and dealing with the reunification of dispersed families in armed conflicts.

6. It should be emphasized that UNHCR co-operates very closely with specialized agencies such as UNESCO, ILO, etc. in the field of promotion and dissemination of international instruments of concern to refugees. Thus, for example, UNHCR has participated in the elaboration of multilateral treaties on education at conferences organized by UNESCO in different regions of the world. In this regard it would be useful to mention the meeting of the Special Committee of Governmental Experts held at Rabat from 9 to 13 January which adopted a Draft Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Arab States. Mention should also be made of the Draft Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in African States, as well as of an analogous instrument on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and European States bordering the Mediterranean already entered into force. These instruments contain important provisions on refugees.

7. A salient feature of UNHCR's co-operation with UNESCO is the teaching of human rights. Within the framework of UNESCO's activities in the field of dissemination of human rights, UNHCR supported the elaboration of a manual on Human Rights, which contains a special section on refugees, prepared for submission to the International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights held in Vienna from 12 to 16 September 1978. Moreover, UNHCR presented to the Congress a working paper entitled "Teaching and Dissemination of Human Rights Instruments on the Protection of Refugees". In the Final Document, the Congress proposed the preparation of a six-year plan for the development of human rights teaching and education. Amongst the recommendations concerning programmes, teaching materials, methods and structures, the Final Document contains one of special interest for UNHCR in so far as it specifically provides as a subject to be introduced within the different programmes on the teaching of human rights "the fundamental rights of refugees".

8. UNHCR co-operates as well with certain academic institutions working in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms such as the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, which have organized and incorporated in their programmes special meetings and lectures on the international protection of refugees. The Round Table on some current problems of Refugee Law, organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (San Remo, 8-11 May 1978), amongst other recommendations and conclusions adopted a special recommendation on the dissemination and teaching of fundamental human rights of refugees.

9. At its twenty-ninth session the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme adopted a conclusion by which "it recognized the value of efforts to secure a wider dissemination of the principles of refugee law through closer relations with educational and scientific institutions and more generally with circles concerned with humanitarian and refugee questions, and recommended that the High Commissioner pursue such efforts".

IV. INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BY RELEVANT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION

[Original: English]

[18 October 1978]

(Paragraph references are to the numbering in Chapter IX  
of the Commission's Report at its thirty-fourth Session)

- (1) The Establishment of the Office of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (paragraph 157)

We keenly support this proposal. Such an appointment could be helpful in safeguarding and promoting human rights. Much of the work of the High Commissioner could proceed on a private or confidential level.

- (2) The Frequency of Meetings of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (paragraphs 176 and 171)

We believe the Commission needs to meet more frequently in view of the length and importance of the agenda. At least two sessions a year seem necessary although, as the report suggests "extraordinary sessions devoted to specific topics could be held when needed".

- (3) The Status of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (paragraph 174)

We feel that considerable priority should be given to the status of the Commission. Perhaps it should be raised to the level of a body like the Economic and Social Order Council (ECOSOC) and, like the Security Council, could be convened at short notice to consider violations of human rights.

- (4) Human Rights as a Concern of the International Community (paragraph 164)

We endorse the first sentence of paragraph 164 - "The view was expressed that the promotion and protection of human rights was a legitimate fundamental concern of the international community".

In this connexion, we should also like to draw attention to the words of the United Nations Secretary-General, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, in his opening remarks at the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination held in Geneva 14-25 August 1978. He said "There is an inescapable link between respect for human rights and the maintenance of international peace and security, and no nation can justifiably claim immunity under Article 2 (7) of the Charter from international scrutiny and expression of concern about flagrant and systematic abuse of the human rights of its citizens".

- (5) Improving the Procedures of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (especially paragraphs 179 and 180)

We attach great importance to the recommendations made in paragraphs 179 and 180 for improving the procedure established by Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) that the Chairman or Bureau "should be able to act between sessions of the Commission particularly in response to reports of gross violations of human rights".

- (6) Role of the Secretary-General (paragraph 182)

We warmly support the view that the role of the Secretary-General in providing "good offices in the field of humanitarian problems" should be strengthened.

COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

[Original: English]

[24 October 1978]

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with ECOSOC (category II) is grateful for the invitation to comment on the report of the Commission on the work done at its thirty-fourth session on item 11 entitled "Further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the question of the programme and methods of work of the Commission".

As an organization which has attached considerable importance to the work of the Commission on Human Rights, and which has attempted over the years to strengthen both through work with its own international constituency and through concrete contributions to the Commission and its subsidiary organs in a variety of fields, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs welcomes the serious consideration being given to this item.

The CCIA/WCC considers that General Assembly resolution 32/130 establishes a useful framework for the present review. We would emphasize the need to give "equal attention and urgent consideration ... to the implementation, promotion and protection of both civil and political, and economic, social and cultural rights" (para.1 (a); the need to examine human rights questions "taking into account both the over-all context of the various societies in which they present themselves as well as the need for the promotion of the full dignity of the human person and the development and well-being of the society" (para.1 (d); the interrelationship which exists between the realization of the new international economic order and the effective promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms (para.1 (f); the importance of further standard setting in this field and the imperative need for all States to accede to or ratify existing international instruments (para.1 (g); and the need to take into account the positive experiences and contributions of many countries in this field (para.1 (h).

The CCIA/WCC further welcomes the growing awareness of human rights in the contemporary world, and is convinced that the work of the Commission on Human Rights has contributed significantly to the promotion of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations". It is, however, appropriate, in the light of the interrelatedness of the various critical world problems underscored by the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly, of the growing complexity and urgency of human rights questions, and of the attention being given to human rights in various parts of the United Nations, that attention be given to ways in which the role of the United Nations in the promotion and defence of human rights can be strengthened and rationalized.

The CCIA/WCC considers that the report of the discussion on this item during the thirty-fourth session of the Commission contains many innovative and useful ideas, and is a useful basis for the further consideration of this item. The CCIA/WCC would draw attention, in particular, to the following:

1. The need seen in paragraph 165 to "analyse the causes of violations of human rights and (to) take measures to eliminate them" as well as that to "develop appropriate procedures and sanctions to prevent violations" is imperative. This, together with the interrelatedness seen in paragraph 166 between individual human rights and the rights of peoples, could contribute to actions by the Commission which would have lasting effect rather than offering palliatives.

2. Teaching of human rights at primary and secondary levels is important. Closer co-operation, in our view, needs to be established between the Commission and UNESCO in the development of appropriate teaching materials. (cf. para.167)
3. The ideas contained in paragraph 168 are particularly important. National sovereignty and the interdependence of nations with its accompanying internationalization of problems must be seen together. The replacement of "exploitation, confrontation and relationships based on force" with "assistance, understanding and co-operation" is essential to the effective realization of peace and human rights. Further consideration might well be given, in this connexion, to the positive language of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe where it speaks of the need to develop greater trust, co-operation and mutual confidence among the signatory States. In its future work, the Commission would do well to consider other deliberations on the "peaceful resolution of conflict" in the United Nations system.
4. The various suggestions contained in paragraphs 179-184 and 189 merit further consideration. The CCIA/WCC feels that the procedure established under resolution 1503 needs to be strengthened through an organization of the work of the Commission which would allow for more detailed and careful examination of complaints. The monitoring functions suggested in paragraph 179 could well contribute to the effectiveness and agility of this procedure. While the good offices of the Secretary-General have been used effectively in the field of humanitarian problems, consideration might well be given to the more effective use of the good offices of the Director of the Division of Human Rights. In this regard, an expanded function of the Chairman and Bureau of the Commission in the period between meetings could be especially useful.
5. The promotion of regional commissions on human rights needs to be pursued with more insistence, especially in light of the need expressed in resolution 32/130 to take "into account both the over-all context of the various societies in which (human rights questions) present themselves".
6. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches welcomes the importance attached in paragraph 188 of the report "to the role of non-governmental organizations ..." and to "ways and means of enhancing their role in assisting the Commission".

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this way to the efforts of the Commission to become a still more effective instrument for the implementation of human rights in a world in dire need of greater justice.