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FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Medium-Term Plan for the Period 1992-1997

Note by the Secretariat

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Introduction

1. In accordance with the relevant parts of the regulations and rules governing the programme planning, the programme aspects of the budget, the monitoring of implementation and the methods of evaluation (ST/SGB/PPBME Rules 1 (1987)), the note by the Secretariat regarding the draft programme on the promotion and protection of human rights of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 is attached for review and comments by the Commission on Human Rights.

2. It should be recalled that upon the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, the General Assembly, in its resolution 42/215, extended the current (i.e. 1984-1989) medium-term plan until 1991, on the condition that the next medium-term plan be improved in its format, content and presentation. Following further recommendations by the Committee in 1988, in the context of its review of the draft introduction to the next medium-term plan (A/43/329) and of the proposed calendar of consultations for the preparation of that plan (A/43/329/Add.1), the General Assembly, in its resolution 43/219 of 21 December 1988, took, inter alia, the following relevant decisions: the next medium-term plan of the United Nations shall cover the period 1992-1997; the intergovernmental bodies are invited, when considering in 1989 the pertinent portions of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, to give due attention to the most appropriate structure for the major programme or major programmes, programmes and sub-programmes submitted for their consideration, as compared with the current structure and in the light of an analysis of the objectives, trends and general orientations derived from the mandates of the intergovernmental bodies, to be provided by the Secretary-General.

3. The draft programme on promotion and protection of human rights of the next medium-term plan submitted in this document is divided into two main parts. The first part is entitled "General orientation" and is a proposed framework for the medium-term plan. The second part presents the programme "Promotion and protection of human rights" in terms of four sub-programmes, namely:

- (1) Implementation of international instruments and procedures;
- (2) Elimination and prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities and vulnerable groups;
- (3) Advisory services, technical co-operation, external relations and publications;
- (4) Research, studies and standard-setting.

After a review of the major programme on human rights of the current medium-term plan, the Secretariat has decided, at this juncture, to keep the four sub-programmes used currently. Depending, however, on the comments and proposals to be made by the Commission and on the policy decisions to be made by the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board in January-February 1990 during its central review of the submissions by all Secretariat units, the number of sub-programmes might be modified in the proposed medium-term plan for the

period 1992-1997 which will be submitted by the Secretary-General, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session (1990) for final consideration and approval.

4. The current medium-term plan does not include designation of priorities among the four sub-programmes of the programme. In accordance with the regulations and rules on programme planning, the Commission is to recommend priorities among the proposed sub-programmes for the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. The Commission may consider that among the four sub-programmes proposed for the forthcoming plan, sub-programme (1) "implementation of international instruments and procedures" be given priority. It should be noted that the objectives and strategies of the Secretariat outlined in all the proposed sub-programmes are interdependent and fully integrated in concept and implementation. In considering this issue of priority setting among sub-programmes, it should also be borne in mind that the medium-term plan can be revised every other year. Consequently the Commission will have the opportunity to revise the content and structure of the programme on promotion and protection of human rights as well as the priorities among sub-programmes every other year. In this connection, the attention of the Commission is drawn to the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on human rights (E/AC.51/1989/2) which was submitted to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-ninth session. The report of the Secretary-General as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination will be submitted to the Commission at its forth-sixth session for further action, in particular in revising the content of the programme on the promotion and protection of human rights.

5. Recommendations for changes made by the Commission on Human Rights will be taken into account by the Secretary-General in revising the final draft of the plan to be submitted to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in 1990. Such revision might also affect the formal presentation of the narrative within each sub-programme. As is the case with the programme budget, the approval of the medium-term plan is a prerogative of the General Assembly.

6. Bearing in mind the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 43/219, the Commission may wish to provide comments and proposals on:

(a) The objectives and strategies proposed for the forthcoming medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 as well as the sub-programme structure;

(b) The priority among the proposed new sub-programmes in accordance with Regulations 3.15 and 3.16 of the PPBME Regulations and Rules and in the light of the relevant parts of the Secretary-General's draft introduction to the next medium-term plan (A/43/329);

(c) The new activities and the curtailments proposed for the forthcoming medium-term plan.

I. PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: GENERAL ORIENTATION OF
THE PROGRAMME

7. The Charter of the United Nations includes among the purposes of the Organization the achievement of international co-operation in solving problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. Article 13 of the Charter provides for the General Assembly to initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of promoting international co-operation in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields, and to assist in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

8. With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, Article 55 of the Charter entrusts the United Nations with the task of promoting:

(a) Higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development;

(b) Solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems; and international cultural and educational co-operation; and

(c) Universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

All members pledge themselves, under Article 56, to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55.

9. The aforementioned Articles of the Charter, together with policies and procedures subsequently established by United Nations organs and with the provisions of the human rights instruments promulgated by the United Nations, provide the essential framework for the human rights programme of the United Nations. In this way, international concern for human rights has been enlarged in its scope and entrenched in modern international law. Today, such concern has come to be shared throughout the international community and no State can avoid being held internationally accountable for the way it treats human beings, tested by reference to internationally proclaimed norms contained in human rights instruments.

10. The Charter's conception of the interrelationship between human rights, peace and development has been borne out by experience and will continue to guide the United Nations in its approach to human rights in the decade of the 1990s. There can be no lasting security or sustained economic and social progress without respect for human rights. The lessons of history have shown that numerous situations of tension and conflict have been rooted in disregard for the human rights of individuals, minorities, groups or entire peoples. Conversely, the steady advance of meaningful economic, social and technological development will not be assured, nor its fruits equitably shared, if it is not securely anchored in respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

11. In the coming decade, with the renewal of confidence in multilateralism and the lessening of divisive ideological conflicts which we are witnessing, the international community can be expected increasingly to turn to United Nations human rights organs such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities for peaceful and constructive solutions to human rights problems which might otherwise give rise to tensions. These organs can be expected to become more and more the focal point of international efforts to act to prevent violations of human rights and their consequences, to carry out research into emerging problems and to develop new international standards and means of implementation which merit the confidence of all. They can also be expected to raise basic questions about the achievements of the last 40 years, and how the challenges ahead can best be met, both in relation to the general human rights programme and in relation to specific subjects such as the fight against racism and racial discrimination.

12. The experience of the past few years has shown the immense range and complexity of the often interrelated issues brought to United Nations human rights organs for consideration and study. One of the main tasks of the United Nations in the coming years will be to bring into sharper focus the intrinsic connection between the determined pursuit of peace, the steady advance of development and the enhanced protection of human dignity. Our success in this matter will depend in large measure on the capacity of the Secretariat to play its role of constructive partner with Member States, as well as with non-governmental organizations.

13. It has also become increasingly clear that the main task before the international community in the coming years will be to make the rights and freedoms already laid down in the body of international human rights law a reality for everyone everywhere on earth. Thus, in parallel with its continuing efforts in the field of standard-setting and the priority attention devoted to the international implementation process, greater emphasis than ever before will be given to the requirements of national institution building and information/education.

14. Through the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights launched by the General Assembly on 10 December 1988, the Centre for Human Rights will strive to increase world-wide public understanding and awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms and will engage the complementary activities of concerned agencies in the United Nations system, Member States and non-governmental organizations. The centre will co-ordinate the activities for the Campaign within the United Nations system and will liaise with Governments, regional and national institutions, NGOs and concerned individuals.

15. At the same time, the human rights flowing from the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Civil and Political Rights and other international human rights treaties must be stressed. Emphasis will continue to be placed upon the universal ratification and implementation of the norms proclaimed by the United Nations and already agreed upon in principle. In this respect, Governments that evince a profound concern to meet the human rights aspirations of their citizens should be in a position to be able to count upon the international support and solidarity of the United Nations in setting up or strengthening national infrastructures for the promotion and protection of human rights. Such arrangements, provided within the context of

the revitalized programme of advisory services and technical assistance, will vary from country to country and would include training of government officials and administrators of justice, expert advice, and technical assistance, for instance, in the building up of law libraries and law faculties and in the drafting of legal texts in conformity with international standards.

16. The challenge that now faces the Organization is to pass from words to deeds, from the elaboration of rights to their realization. It will also be essential to develop national institutions and systems for the protection of human rights in every Member State. The overall objective for the 1990s, therefore, will be to endeavour to forge a truly universal culture of human rights comprising a framework for international law, national systems backed by advice and technical assistance, and an informed and well-balanced base of public opinion.

II. PROGRAMME: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

A. Sub-programmes

1. Sub-programme 1: The implementation of international instruments and procedures

(a) Legislative authority

17. The legislative authority for this sub-programme is Articles 1, 13, 55, 56 and 62 of the Charter of the United Nations. For regular supervisory procedures the authority is General Assembly resolutions: 2106 A (XX), 2200 A (XXI), 3068 (XXVIII), 39/46 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1985/17 and 1988/4.

18. For procedures concerning alleged violations of human rights, the authority is Economic and Social Council resolutions 277 (X) and 474 A (XV), 728 F (XXVIII), 1235 (XLII) and 1503 (XLVIII), Commission on Human Rights resolution 8 (XXIII) and General Assembly resolutions 2106 A (XX), 2200 A (XXI) and 39/46.

19. For fact-finding procedures on country situations, phenomena of serious violations and other related mechanisms, the authority is General Assembly resolutions 33/173, Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I), 9 (II), 1235 (XLII), and Commission on Human Rights resolutions 8 (XXIII) and 20 (XXXVI).

(b) Objective

20. The objective of this sub-programme is:

(i) To ensure continuing implementation of international norms and treaties in the field of human rights including:

(a) the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto;

(b) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

- (c) the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid;
 - (d) the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
 - (e) such other conventions dealing with human rights as may be adopted by the United Nations, including in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families.
- (ii) To respond positively to petitions or appeals received by the United Nations.
- (iii) To provide policy-making organs with the pertinent facts and analyses in order to assist in the consideration of situations of alleged violations of human rights, in the review of world-wide phenomena of especially serious violations and, in connection with the latter task, to respond to appeals regarding individual cases.

(c) Problems addressed

21. The United Nations has promulgated a veritable international code of human rights, including the conventions enumerated previously. It is widely recognized, however, that there remains a gap between these internationally recognized norms and their application in practice. The reasons for this are diverse. Many States have not yet subscribed to such internationally recognized norms. Where Governments have done so, they may not have the personnel or the expertise needed to integrate the provisions of conventions into their respective national systems; resources may be lacking. In some situations the rule of law is fragile. For these and other reasons, the need to promote the application of existing international norms remains an urgent one.

22. Individuals and groups often find need to address themselves to the United Nations to draw attention to problems they are encountering or to request the intercession of the United Nations so as to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is important that the United Nations reacts adequately, promptly and effectively to such appeals.

23. Policy-making organs, when considering situations of alleged violations of human rights in certain countries or territories, require factual information and an analysis of the human rights aspect of the situation. This is also true with regard to widespread phenomena of serious violations. In these situations, the policy-making organs have found it necessary to respond to appeals regarding individual cases. Accordingly, procedures and mechanisms dealing with alleged violations of human rights to be applied by individual experts, committees or working groups mandated by policy-making organs have been a regular feature of the human rights programme and continue to be further developed.

(d) Strategies for the period 1992-1997

24. The strategies to be pursued are, in the first place, provided for within the relevant conventions themselves, particularly the procedures for examination of reports. Other strategies include the encouragement of further ratifications or accessions to the international instruments on human rights; the enhancement and deepening of the dialogue between the States parties to these instruments and the relevant monitoring bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee against Torture or the Committee on the Rights of the Child; the promotion of further exchanges of experience among Governments on the application of international instruments and standards; and the improvement of United Nations procedures for monitoring States' compliance with their treaty obligations, particularly through the utilization of consolidated reporting guidelines and the computerization of the work relating to reporting of the treaty monitoring bodies. New treaties coming into force, such as that on the rights of the child, migrant workers or the optional protocol against the death penalty will require that new approaches be adopted.

25. The implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will pose a new and in some ways different challenge to the United Nations. Information and expert advice will have to be mobilized from many different sources to support the work of the Committee which will, for the first time in the annals of the United Nations, be charged with promoting all the human rights of a specific group - the children of the world - and will assist in bringing about real changes in the way they live. New and imaginative methods of turning international norms into national realities will have to be developed.

26. The consideration of petitions is carried out in accordance with the procedure established by the competent organs, notably the Economic and Social Council resolutions 728 F, 1235 and 1503. Petitions are also handled in accordance with the procedures established under relevant international conventions such as the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination or the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

27. The strategies applied under procedures or mechanisms dealing with alleged violations of human rights or in the pursuit of contacts with Governments follow the specific mandate decided upon in each instance by the authorizing organ.

28. This sub-programme is assigned the highest priority.

2. Sub-programme 2: Elimination and prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities and vulnerable groups

(a) Legislative authority

29. The legislative authority for this sub-programme is Articles 1, 13, 55, 56 and 62 of the Charter of the United Nations; the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (Assembly resolution 38/14); the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Assembly resolution 2106 A (XX));

International Covenant on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (Assembly resolution 3068 (XXVIII)); United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Assembly resolution 1904 (XVIII)); Declaration on Social Progress and Development (Assembly resolution 2543 (XXIV)); Declaration on the Right to Development (Assembly resolution 41/128); and the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (Assembly resolution 36/55); Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I) and 9 (II) and the Report of the Fifth Session of the Commission on Human Rights, paragraph 13.

(b) Objective

30. The objective of this sub-programme is to contribute to the realization of the Charter's commitments to the dignity and worth of the human person and to its undertaking to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

(c) The problem addressed

31. The commitment to human dignity and equality and to non-discrimination is one of the pillars of United Nations human rights policy as contained in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Civil and Political Rights and the various specific treaties against discrimination and resolutions of the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights. Nevertheless, many are denied effective enjoyment of basic human rights through discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, language, or religion or because they belong to particularly disadvantaged groups. In some cases discrimination is overt. The apartheid régime, in which discrimination is a blatant component of law and social policy, is the most notorious example. In other cases discrimination is covert, often constituting an invidious part of society that can even go unnoticed by many. Finally, many are denied full enjoyment of their human rights because they belong to particularly disadvantaged groups or sectors of society which are the objects of discrimination or exclusion. Threats of tensions, conflicts and strife are present in all these instances as human beings demand respect for their inherent dignity. The very existence of discrimination preventing the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a serious threat to the universal enjoyment of human rights and to the objectives of the United Nations in promoting economic and social development and international peace and security.

(d) Strategies for the period 1992-1997

32. The expansion and vigorous implementation of United Nations programmes and plans of action against discrimination and for tolerance will constitute the principal strategy. This includes the application of the Programme of Action of the Second Decade against Racism and Racial Discrimination, activities aimed at bringing an end to apartheid, efforts concerning the rights of migrant workers and their families and work regarding the rights of indigenous populations.

33. The causes and conditions leading to racism and intolerance will increasingly be the focus of research, as will new and emerging forms of discrimination. This will lead to the development of legislative and social tools better adapted to the fight against discrimination. Attention will be centred on developing models for the establishment of national institutions promoting tolerance and fighting discrimination and on preparing model national laws against discrimination. Efforts will be made to promote the establishment of national institutions and the adoption of model laws where needed to facilitate the exchange of experiences gained on the national level.

34. An effort of reflection can be anticipated designed to review more than 45 years of experience in the fight against racism and racial discrimination, and in particular apartheid, as well as the First and Second Decades against Racism and Racial Discrimination, to identify achievements and failures, to set guidelines for the future and to develop new techniques.

35. In implementing the programme against racism, substantive contributions will be called for from agencies and programmes, high level focal points in each agency will be identified, and the capacity and experience of non-governmental organizations utilized through activities of outreach and mobilization.

36. Efforts will continue to improve the methods and results of the activities against discrimination dealt with in the past and new efforts will be undertaken regarding emerging forms of discrimination.

37. As a follow-up to the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, research will continue into the situation, problems and means to promote respect for the rights of this especially vulnerable group. In addition, an expanded effort can be expected with regard to the rights of minorities, in particular with a view to identifying measures designed to bring peaceful solutions to minority problems. Furthermore, practical as well as theoretical efforts may be expected to address discrimination or intolerance based on religion or belief.

38. Growing attention will be paid to the human rights situation of such vulnerable groups as children (sale of children, child prostitution, exploitation of children, imprisoned children), and women subjected to prostitution or traffic of their persons. The implementation of existing international instruments will be strengthened and new ways will be sought to gather reliable information, identify problems and propose effective remedies both nationally and internationally. Similarly, the situation of indigenous populations, the basic standards needed to protect their rights as well as the appropriate mechanisms for doing so, will receive continued attention following the remarkable advances already made in this field.

39. Finally, more attention will be focused on discrimination against members of particularly disadvantaged and marginalized groups such as the extremely poor. The involvement of members of disadvantaged groups in identifying the conditions and factors, including respect for civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights, affecting their enjoyment of human rights and in developing programmes designated to enable them to overcome those factors will be essential.

40. In approaching these efforts on behalf of vulnerable groups, emphasis will be placed on opening and maintaining channels of substantive communication and exchange between each secretariat unit and between the various policy-making organs - for example, by establishing reciprocal observer status for representatives of organs dealing with similar issues. Similar efforts will be made to strengthen substantive communications and exchange between the United Nations and regional intergovernmental bodies dealing with human rights issues.

3. Sub-programme 3: Advisory services, technical co-operation, external relations and publications

(a) Legislative authority

41. The legislative authority for this sub-programme is Articles 1, 13, 55 and 56 of the Charter. In particular, for Advisory Services and Technical Assistance, General Assembly resolutions 217 D (III), paragraph 2; 795 (VIII), paragraph 2; 926 (X); 1905 (XVIII), paragraph 3; 3068 (XXVIII), paragraph 4; 32/123, paragraphs 2 and 6; 32/127, paragraph 2; 41/154 and 43/90; Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I), 9 (II), 1793 (LIV), paragraphs 2, 3, 5 and 6; 1923 (LVIII), paragraphs 1 and 2; and decisions 146 (IX), paragraph (b); and Commission on Human Rights resolutions 17 (XXIII), paragraph 5 (b); 7 (XXXII), paragraph 2; 1987/37; 1987/38. For External Relations, Publications and Documentation and the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights, General Assembly resolutions 41/130; 42/118; 43/128 and Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1986/54; 1987/39; 1988/74 and 1989/53.

(b) Objective

42. The objectives of this sub-programme are: to provide practical training and opportunities for exchange of information and experience to government officials or other persons whose functions are related to the promotion and protection of human rights; to provide expert and technical assistance in the field of human rights to Governments which request such assistance; to increase public information and awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms; to co-ordinate the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights and, to that end, to engage the complementary activities of concerned agencies in the United Nations system. Member States and NGOs; to liaise, in the development and implementation of the campaign, with Governments, regional and national institutions, NGOs and concerned individuals; to disseminate the international instruments and standards on human rights to people throughout the world; and to publicize the activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights.

(c) Problem addressed

43. Government officials dealing with human rights questions, administrators of justice and law-enforcement officials are often in need of further training. For such persons training courses, expert advice or opportunities for the exchange of information or experiences through national, regional or international workshops may be needed. Governments wishing to set up or strengthen national infrastructures for the promotion and protection of human rights may require technical assistance.

44. It is frequently the case that international instruments and standards promulgated by the United Nations for the promotion and protection of human rights are not known to the people whose rights they are intended to protect. Knowledge of human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people is essential to ensure the ultimate success of the efforts of the United Nations towards the universal implementation of international human rights standards. Thus, the World Campaign of Public Information for Human Rights provides the United Nations and the international community with a unique opportunity to reach out to the people of the world with a human rights message and make known the international machinery available for the promotion and protection of those rights and freedoms.

45. Without adequate public understanding or support, the activities of the United Nations for the promotion and protection of human rights cannot realize the potential expected of them. The dissemination of information by all means available, including workshops, publications, etc. is therefore indispensable.

(d) Strategies for the period 1992-1997

46. During the period covered by the medium-term plan, efforts will be further enhanced to provide Governments, at their request, with technical assistance, for instance in developing national laws in keeping with international standards and strengthening national institutions, systems and infrastructures for the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as in incorporating the human rights component in an integrated approach to development strategies. Special attention will be given to requests for assistance in the field of human rights in countries which have experienced problems in the implementation of human rights standards, also in view of the priority attention that human rights organs, such as the Commission on Human Rights, and the General Assembly, have attached to such assistance. In this connection, specific training courses for government officials dealing with preparation and presentation of national reports to human rights supervisory bodies will be provided.

47. In this connection, it may be expected that during the medium-term period more national, regional and subregional workshops and training courses will be organized for administrators of justice and government officials engaged in the implementation of international conventions on human rights and that more countries in all regions of the world will develop forms of co-operation and assistance with the Centre for Human Rights, in keeping with their specific needs. It must also be reiterated that advisory services and technical assistance activities can be complementary to, but never a substitute for, investigations into allegations of human rights violations called upon by the competent legislative bodies.

48. In the field of external relations and within the framework of the activities for the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights, efforts will be made to strengthen relations and co-operation with the United Nations agencies concerned and with the media, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions, so as to inform people world-wide of the goals and activities of the United Nations in this sector and also to draw upon their support and their assistance for the universal realization of human rights. The Centre will co-ordinate a programme of activities, including the holding of workshops, the publication and distribution of information and reference materials, etc., in all regions of the world and in a balanced, factual and

objective manner, in order to inform, educate and generate public understanding and support for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of human rights. This will be done in close co-operation with agencies of the United Nations system and the wider human rights community referred to above.

49. The dissemination of information on human rights will continue to place emphasis on the reproduction of the texts of international instruments, norms and standards on human rights in as many languages as possible and on making the translated texts widely available.

50. During the medium-term period new and more readable information materials (such as the Fact Sheet series, Newsletter and Bulletin), will continue to be issued in addition to the regular publications such as the Yearbook on Human Rights, the Official Records of the Human Rights Committee, and the Selected Decisions of the Human Rights Committee under the Optional Protocol. They treat specific human rights themes of topical interest in a practical and direct fashion and are intended for the public at large. Certain studies and reports to United Nations human rights bodies which might be of particular interest to the public will continue to be re-issued also in a more attractive form than the original mimeographed document.

51. Thus, through the World Public Information Campaign the United Nations will try to create and promote a universal culture of human rights. It will do so by increasing understanding and awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms world-wide, as well as of the international machinery available for the promotion and protection of those rights and freedoms and the role of the United Nations to that end.

4. Sub-programme 4: Research, studies and standard-setting

(a) Legislative authority

52. The legislative authority for this sub-programme is Articles 13, paragraph 1 (a), (b) and 62 of the Charter, General Assembly resolutions 3218 (XXIX) and 41/120, Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I) and 9 (II), Commission on Human Rights decision at its fifth session (E/1371, para. 13), Commission resolutions 13 (XXXIII) and 17 (XXXVII).

(b) Objective

53. The objectives of this sub-programme are to study and carry out research on human rights issues for United Nations human rights organs, to elaborate international human rights standards for adoption by these organs and to review the implementation of certain standards.

(c) Problem addressed

54. Society constantly presents new problems whose human rights aspects need to be studied or dealt with on the international level. United Nations policy-making organs thus constantly mandate new areas for research. These can be on specific aspects of already well established rights, or on emerging problems with relatively unexplored human rights dimensions. In a rapidly evolving world, problems are often no sooner discovered on the national level than Governments, organizations and various sectors of society turn to the

United Nations for advice and guidance on their human rights aspects. In addition, in an increasingly interconnected world, events in areas not at first thought of as relevant to human rights are seen to directly affect the enjoyment of basic rights; research into these areas thus becomes necessary.

55. In addition, United Nations human rights organs review periodically the achievements of the human rights programme and areas in need of strengthening, and discuss directives for future activities. In this regard, they require the preparation of reports and the analysis and evaluation of information.

56. Finally, certain areas of priority are identified by policy-making organs for continuous review in order to ascertain whether international standards are being respected, to identify emerging problems and to determine if new standards or mechanisms are needed. In this regard, the collection and analysis of information and the establishment of dialogues with Governments are mandated. The international community requires that the standards set be the highest attainable and in accord with existing norms.

57. When human rights problems have been identified, the international community's response is to aim to develop standards laying down basic international norms guaranteeing respect for human rights or to develop new machinery to implement basic rights. These standards or mechanisms can deal with one particular problem or right or with the human rights of an entire social group.

(d) Strategies for the period 1992-1997

58. In the area of research and studies, basic research into such human rights as the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, the interrelated nature of respect for the various human rights, freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to a fair trial will continue. Research can be expected to expand into new areas such as the human rights aspect of bio-medical technology, discrimination against HIV-infected persons or people with AIDS, into areas having an impact on the enjoyment of human rights such as the external debt and readjustment policies, toxic waste and chemical weapons, and into such questions as the interrelationship between peace and human rights.

59. In addition, the gathering and analysis and the establishment of dialogues with Governments with regard to human rights in the administration of justice and respect for human rights during states of emergency will receive continued emphasis.

60. A concerted effort of reflection by Governments, non-governmental organizations, experts and the academic community into more than 45 years of effort at promoting respect for human rights can be anticipated with the objective of strengthening existing activities and identifying directions for future developments.

61. Research and studies will continue to be action-oriented rather than abstract. Planning and co-ordination will be improved so as to avoid duplication. Research and reference facilities of the Centre for Human Rights will be built up gradually in co-operation with the library and documentation services of the Secretariat.

62. Standard-setting will continue as mandated by policy-making organs. Such subjects as enforced or involuntary disappearances and the right to leave any country and to return to one's own country can be expected to be addressed. In addition, in the area of states of emergency and human rights, new standards will emerge relating to the declaration and to the application of states of emergency and respect for human rights, in particular, with regard to non-derogable rights.

63. Other topics for standard-setting will doubtless emerge from the research work currently being carried out or undertaken during the beginning of the period 1992-1997. New areas of standard-setting will evolve from the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development and the Commission on Human Rights search for criteria for identifying progress in the realization of the right to development.

64. The basic challenge to the Organization in the field of research, studies and standard-setting in human rights in the next decade will be to deal successfully with a growing range of interrelated and complex human rights issues touching almost all areas of human rights activities. This presupposes the availability of the specific types of resources, both human and material, needed to deal with such issues.

65. The effective use of staff resources often confronted with research tasks relating to the activities of the United Nations in human rights over the past 40 years, as well as into the detailed and extensive information submitted to the United Nations, make imperative the establishment of a computerized United Nations human rights data base. This data base would be updated continuously and access made available, as appropriate, to staff, Governments, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, the media and the public. This would contribute to a better understanding of United Nations work in human rights and make possible more efficient use of existing resources.

B. Organization

66. Intergovernmental review. The work of the Secretariat in this programme is reviewed by the Commission on Human Rights, which meets every year. The preliminary draft of this plan was reviewed at its forty-fifth session, in 1989.

67. Secretariat. The Secretariat unit responsible for this programme is the Centre for Human Rights, in which there were 45 professional posts authorized as at 1 January 1990.
