

Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly urged States to ensure that their constitutional and legal systems provided effective guarantees of freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, including the provision of effective remedies in cases where the right to freedom of religion or belief was violated; also urged States to ensure that, in the course of their official duties, members of law enforcement bodies, civil servants, educators and other public officials respected different religions and beliefs and did not discriminate against persons professing other religions or beliefs; called upon all States to recognize, as provided in the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, the right of all persons to worship or assembly in connection with a religion or belief and to establish and maintain places for those purposes; expressed its grave concern at any attack upon religious places, sites and shrines, and called upon all States, in accordance with their national legislation and in conformity with international human rights standards, to exert the utmost efforts to ensure that such places, sites and shrines were fully respected and protected; encouraged the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights to contribute effectively to the preparatory process for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance to be held in 2001 by transmitting to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights his recommendations on religious intolerance that had a bearing on the Conference; and requested the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/159).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur (resolution 54/159).

Human rights and cultural diversity

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on human rights and cultural diversity, taking into account the views of Member States, relevant United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, and to submit it to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/160).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/160).

¹⁸⁵ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 116 (b)):

- (a) Reports of the Secretary-General on:
 - (i) Strengthening United Nations action in the field of human rights through the promotion of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity: A/54/216;
 - (ii) Human rights and unilateral coercive measures: A/54/222 and Add.1;
 - (iii) The right to development: A/54/319;
 - (iv) Situation of human rights in Cambodia: A/54/353;
 - (v) United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, and public information activities in the field of human rights: A/54/399 and Add.1;
- (b) Notes by the Secretary-General:
 - (i) Transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief (A/54/386);
 - (ii) On the report of the independent expert on the right to development: A/54/401;
- (c) Report of the Third Committee: A/54/605/Add.2;
- (d) Resolutions 54/159 to 54/176 and 54/180 to 54/185;
- (e) Meetings of the Third Committee: A/C.3/53/SR.32-43, 45, 46, 48, 50 and 52-56;
- (f) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.83.

United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education and public information activities in the field of human rights

The General Assembly considered the question of a decade for human rights education at its forty-eighth session, in 1993 (resolution 48/127). At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly proclaimed the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 1995 the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) and welcomed the Plan of Action as contained in the report of the Secretary-General (resolution 49/184). The Assembly also considered the question at its fiftieth to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 50/177, 51/104, 52/127 and 53/153).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly urged all Governments to contribute further to the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Decade by establishing broadly representative national committees for human rights education responsible for the development of comprehensive, effective and sustainable national plans of action for human rights education and information, taking into consideration the guidelines developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; urged Governments to encourage, support and involve national and local non-governmental organizations in the implementation of such plans; called upon Governments, in accordance with their national conditions, to accord priority to the dissemination in their relevant national and local languages of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other human rights instruments, human rights materials and training manuals, as well as reports of States parties under the human rights treaties, and to provide information and education in those languages on the practical ways in which national and international institutions and procedures might be utilized to ensure the effective implementation of those instruments; encouraged Governments to support the education and public information efforts undertaken by the Office to contribute to the further development of the web site of the Office and of its publications and external relations programmes; requested the High Commissioner to continue to coordinate and harmonize human rights education and information strategies within the United Nations system, including the implementation of the Plan of Action; stressed the need for close collaboration between the Office and the Department of Public Information in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Decade and the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights and the need to harmonize their activities with those of other international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross and relevant non-governmental organizations; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session the mid-term global evaluation report of progress made towards the achievement of the objectives of the Decade (resolution 54/161).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights considered the question of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (Commission resolution 2000/71).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/161).

Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, taking into account the different views of Member States, to submit a comprehensive report on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/165).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/165).

Protection of migrants

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly strongly condemned all forms of racial discrimination and xenophobia with regard to access to employment, vocational training, housing, schooling, health services and social services, as well as services intended for use by the public, and welcomed the active role played by governmental and non-governmental organizations in combating racism and assisting individual victims of racist acts, including migrant victims; welcomed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to appoint a special rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution (resolution 54/166).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/166).

Respect for the right to universal freedom of travel and the vital importance of family reunification

The General Assembly considered this question at its forty-ninth to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 49/182, 50/175, 51/89, 52/121 and 53/143).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly once again called upon all States to guarantee the universally recognized freedom of travel to all foreign nationals legally residing in their territory and decided to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/169).

No advance documentation is expected.

Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The General Assembly considered this question at its fifty-third session, at which it adopted the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (resolution 53/144).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it a report on measures to implement the Declaration and decided to consider the question at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/170).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/170).

Situation of human rights in Cambodia

The General Assembly considered this question at its fort-eighth to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 48/154, 49/199, 50/178, 51/98, 52/135 and 53/145).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, through his special representative for human rights in Cambodia, in collaboration with the office in Cambodia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to assist the Government of Cambodia in ensuring the protection of the human rights of all people in Cambodia and to ensure adequate resources for the continued functioning in Cambodia of the Office of the High Commissioner and to enable the Special Representative to continue to fulfil his tasks expeditiously; encouraged the Government of Cambodia to continue to work with non-governmental organizations in efforts to strengthen and uphold human rights in Cambodia; noted with interest the activities undertaken by the governmental Cambodian Human Rights Committee, the National Assembly Commission

on Human Rights and Reception of Complaints and the Senate Commission on Human Rights and Reception of Complaints, and welcomed preliminary efforts to establish an independent national human rights commission; expressed grave concern at the devastating consequences and destabilizing effects of the use of anti-personnel landmines on Cambodian society and encouraged the Government of Cambodia to continue its support and efforts for their removal; welcomed the ratification by Cambodia of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the role and achievements of the Office of the High Commissioner in assisting the Government and the people of Cambodia in the promotion and protection of human rights and on the recommendations made by the Special Representative on matters within his mandate; and decided to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/171).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights appealed strongly to the Government of Cambodia to ensure that those most responsible for the most serious violations of human rights were brought to account in accordance with international standards of justice, fairness and due process of law (Commission resolution 2000/79).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/171).

Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

The General Assembly considered this question at its fifty-first to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 51/103, 52/120 and 53/141).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly urged the Commission on Human Rights to take fully into account the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures in its task concerning the implementation of the right to development; requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, bearing in mind the continuing impact of unilateral coercive measures on the population of developing countries, to give priority to the resolution in her annual report; requested the Secretary-General to bring the resolution to the attention of all Member States, to continue to collect their views and information on the implications and negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on their populations, highlighting the practical and preventive measures in this respect, and to submit an analytical report thereon at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/172).

Documents:

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/172);
- (b) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (resolution 54/172).

Strengthening of United Nations action in the field of human rights through the promotion of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity

The General Assembly considered this question at its forty-fifth to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 45/163, 46/129, 47/131, 48/125, 49/181, 50/174, 51/105, 52/131 and 53/149).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly reiterated that all peoples had the right freely to determine, without external interference, their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and that every State had the duty to respect that right within the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for territorial integrity; and requested the Secretary-General to ask Member States to present

practical proposals and ideas that should contribute to the strengthening of United Nations action in the field of human rights, including the promotion of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity, and to submit a comprehensive report on the question to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/174).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/174).

The right to development

The General Assembly has considered this question annually since its forty-first session, in 1986, at which it adopted the Declaration on the Right to Development (resolutions 41/128, 42/117, 43/127, 44/62, 45/97, 46/123, 47/123, 48/130, 49/183, 50/184, 51/99, 52/136 and 53/155).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-fifth session a comprehensive report on the right to development, including obstacles identified in the realization of the right (resolution 54/175).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/175).

Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights

The General Assembly considered this question at its fifty-first to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 51/100, 52/134 and 53/154).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁵ the General Assembly called upon Member States, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations to continue to carry out a constructive dialogue and consultations for the enhancement of understanding and the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and encouraged non-governmental organizations to contribute actively to that endeavour; welcomed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to continue to consider the enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights at its fifty-sixth session; and decided to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/181).

No advance documentation is expected.

(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives¹

Situation of human rights in Haiti

The General Assembly has considered this question annually since its forty-sixth session, in 1991 (resolutions 46/138, 47/143, 48/151, 49/201, 50/196, 51/110, 52/138 and 53/159).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly decided to continue its consideration of the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Haiti at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/187).

¹⁸⁶ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 116 (c)):

- (a) Reports of the Secretary-General: A/54/499;
- (b) Notes by the Secretary-General: A/54/359, A/54/361, A/54/365, A/54/366, A/54/396-S/1999/1000 and A/54/396/Add.1-S/1999/1000/Add.1, A/54/422, A/54/440, A/54/466 and A/54/467;
- (c) Report of the Third Committee: A/54/605/Add.3;
- (d) Resolutions 54/177 to 54/179 and 54/182 to 54/188;
- (e) Meetings of the Third Committee: A/C.3/54/SR.32-43, 46, 48, 50-52 and 54-56;
- (f) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.83.

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights invited the independent expert on Haiti to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session on developments in the human rights situation in Haiti (Commission resolution 2000/78).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the independent expert (Commission resolution 2000/78).

The situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

At its fortieth session, in 1984, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Chairman to appoint a Special Representative of the Commission whose mandate would be to establish contacts with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to make a thorough study of the human rights situation in that country and to submit conclusions and appropriate suggestions to the Commission at its forty-first session (Commission resolution 1984/54). The mandate of the Special Representative has been renewed annually since then.

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly welcomed the interim report of the Special Representative; welcomed the progress in democracy achieved by the holding of local elections in the Islamic Republic of Iran; expressed its serious concern at the continuing violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; and decided to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Baha'is at its fifty-fifth session, in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights (resolution 54/177).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights welcomed the report of the Special Representative; decided to extend the mandate of the Special Representative for a further year and requested the Secretary-General to continue to give all necessary assistance to him; and requested the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Commission resolution 2000/28).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Representative (Commission resolution 2000/28).

The situation of human rights in Iraq

At its forty-seventh session, 1991, the Commission on Human Rights requested its Chairman to appoint a Special Rapporteur to make a thorough study of the violations of human rights committed by the Government of Iraq and to submit an interim report thereon to the General Assembly (Commission resolution 1991/74). The mandate of the Special Rapporteur has been renewed annually since then.

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly called upon the Government of Iraq to abide by its freely undertaken obligations under international human rights treaties and international humanitarian law; to cooperate with United Nations human rights mechanisms, in particular by receiving a return visit by the Special Rapporteur to Iraq and allowing the stationing of human rights monitors throughout Iraq; to abrogate all decrees that prescribe cruel and inhuman punishment or treatment; to abrogate all laws and procedures that penalize free expression and to ensure that the genuine will of the people should be the basis of the authority of the State; to respect the rights of all ethnic and religious groups; to cooperate with the Tripartite Commission to establish the whereabouts and resolve the fate of the remaining several hundred missing persons and to cooperate with the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Commission on Human Rights

for that purpose; to cooperate fully with international aid agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide humanitarian assistance and monitoring in the northern and southern areas of the country; to continue to cooperate in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions so as to ensure fully the equitable distribution to the Iraqi population of the humanitarian supplies purchased under the oil-for-food programme without discrimination, including to remote areas; and decided to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in Iraq at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/178).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights decided to extend for a further year the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and requested him to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session an interim report on human rights in Iraq and to report to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session, and also to keep a gender perspective in mind when seeking and analysing information; and requested the Secretary-General to continue to give all necessary assistance to the Special Rapporteur to enable him to discharge his mandate fully and to approve the allocation of sufficient human and material resources for the sending of human rights monitors to such locations as would facilitate improved information flow and assessment and help in the independent verification of reports on the situation of human rights in Iraq (Commission resolution 2000/17).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur (Commission resolution 2000/17).

Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

At its fiftieth session, in 1994, the Commission on Human Rights invited its Chairman to appoint a Special Rapporteur mandated to establish direct contact with the authorities and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to gather information on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including information supplied by non-governmental organizations. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur has been renewed annually since then.

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly called upon the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to comply with its obligations under international human rights law and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout its entire territory and to uphold its commitment to reform and restore the judicial system and in particular to reform military justice in conformity with the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; urged all parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to work for the full and timely implementation of the provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, to re-establish the authority of the Government, to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel within the country and to protect human rights and respect international humanitarian law; and requested the Special Rapporteur to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/179).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights expressed its concern at the preoccupying situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the eastern parts of the country, and at the continuing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, in particular the continued perpetration of massacres in the course of the conflicts and the conflicts between the Hema and the Lendu ethnic groups; welcomed the visit of the Special Rapporteur to the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the invitation of the Government, the cooperation of the Government and the report of the Special Rapporteur; decided to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for a further year; and requested him to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (Commission resolution 2000/15).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur: (resolution 54/179).

Situation of human rights in the Sudan

The General Assembly has considered this question annually since its forty-seventh session, in 1992 (resolutions 47/142, 48/147, 49/198, 50/197, 51/112 and 52/140 and decision 53/433).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly welcomed the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan; welcomed the cooperation extended by the Government of the Sudan with regard to the Special Rapporteur's first visit to the country, the visit by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the needs assessment mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the fact-finding mission by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the inter-agency humanitarian needs assessment mission to the Nuba Mountains; welcomed the creation of the Committee for the Eradication of Abduction of Women and Children; expressed its deep concern at the impact of the armed conflict on the situation of human rights and the plight of civilians; urged all parties to respect international humanitarian law; called upon the Government of the Sudan to comply fully with its obligations under international human rights instruments and to continue its efforts to bring its national legislation into conformity with them; encouraged both the Government of the Sudan and the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to pursue their dialogue with a view to establishing permanent representation of the High Commissioner; and decided to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/182).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights welcomed the interim report of the Special Rapporteur as well as the cooperation extended by the Government of the Sudan in connection with the visit of the Special Rapporteur; expressed concern at the impact of the conflict on the situation of human rights and its adverse effect on the civilian population and at serious violations of human rights, fundamental freedoms and international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict; urged all parties to respect and protect human rights and international humanitarian law; encouraged the Government of the Sudan to continue its dialogue with the Office of the High Commissioner; noted with appreciation the signature of the accord between the Government and the Office of the High Commissioner on 29 March 2000 and the commitment of the Government to implement it; decided to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for a further year; and requested the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (Commission resolution 2000/27).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur (Commission resolution 2000/27).

The situation of human rights in Kosovo

The General Assembly has considered this question annually since its forty-ninth session, in 1994 (resolutions 49/204, 50/190, 51/111, 52/139 and 53/164).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly underlined the obligation of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to abide by the terms of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the general principles on the political solution to the Kosovo crisis annexed to that resolution; welcomed the

establishment of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force, and called upon all parties in Kosovo and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to cooperate fully with the Mission and the Force in the fulfilment of their respective mandates; called upon all authorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the local Serb leaders in Kosovo and the leaders of the Kosovo Albanian community to condemn all acts of terrorism, sequestration or kidnapping, forced evictions from homes or places of work of any resident of Kosovo, whatever the victim's ethnic background and whoever the perpetrators, to refrain from all acts of violence and to use their influence and leadership to cooperate with the Force and the Mission in stopping those incidents and in bringing the perpetrators to justice; demanded that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia provide an updated list of all persons detained and transferred from Kosovo to other parts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, specifying the charge, if any, under which each individual is detained, and that it guarantee their families and non-governmental organizations and international observers unimpeded and regular access to those who remain in detention and release all individuals detained and transferred from Kosovo prior to July 1999 in violation of international humanitarian and human rights standards; stressed the responsibility of all parties to create a secure environment in Kosovo that will allow refugees and displaced persons to return and allow all those who wish to remain in Kosovo a genuine possibility to do so, irrespective of ethnic origin; and requested the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to continue to monitor closely the situation of human rights in Kosovo, to pay special attention to Kosovo in his reporting and to report his findings to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/183).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/183).

Situation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

At its substantive session of 1992, the Economic and Social Council endorsed resolution 1992/S-1/1, adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its first special session, in which it requested its Chairman to appoint a Special Rapporteur to investigate first-hand the human rights situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia and requested the Special Rapporteur to report on an urgent basis to the members of the Commission and to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session (Council decision 1992/305). The mandate of the Special Rapporteur has been renewed annually since then.

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly reiterated its call for the full and consistent implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the annexes thereto and the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium by all parties to those agreements; stressed the need to direct international human rights efforts in the region to the core issues of the lack of full respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals without distinction, the rule of law and effective administration of justice at all levels of government, the freedom and independence of the media, freedom of expression, freedom of association, including with respect to political parties, freedom of religion and freedom of movement; noted the progress made in Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to political pluralism and freedom of expression, through the participation of all groups and individuals, which represented another step towards democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but remained concerned that freedom of speech and the media were still curtailed by

political influence, notably through the selective and intimidating application of slander laws; reiterated its demand that all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately create conditions conducive to the voluntary return, in safety and with dignity, of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes, with equal emphasis on persons belonging to minorities, that they pass immediately and enforce legislation on property rights in conformity with recommendations made by the Office of the High Representative, and that they end discrimination on ethnic or political grounds; noted with interest the initiatives taken by the Republic of Croatia to improve the legislative and economic framework for the return of refugees, in particular steps to eliminate discriminatory provisions of Croatian laws; noted that the Government of Croatia had continued its efforts to codify democratic norms, including the independence of its judiciary and freedom of association and assembly, while also noting that the Government's application of those laws and principles had lagged behind its stated intentions; expressed deep concern about the fact that government commitments to improve the freedom of the press had remained unfulfilled, and reaffirmed the need for free and independent media and the need to provide to all political parties equal access to all forms of media during the forthcoming electoral campaign; condemned the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) for its gross violations of the human rights of the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo and its violent campaign to expel or deport ethnic Albanian Kosovars from their homes and communities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; called upon the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and all authorities and representatives of ethnic groups in Kosovo to implement Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and consequently to cooperate fully and support the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in fulfilling its mandate; demanded that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia hand over to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia all government officials of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia indicted as war criminals and repudiate the leadership of anyone so indicted as a first step towards establishing a democratic government and becoming a full and respected member of the international community, and reminded the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of its obligations to cooperate fully with the Tribunal; demanded that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia institutionalize democratic norms by holding free and fair elections at all levels of government, respecting the rule of law and the administration of justice and fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms; demanded that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia promote and protect free and independent media and that the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia repeal any law that hinders the full and free exercise of the democratic rights of the citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, cease any harassment and hindrance of journalists, and repeal repressive laws on universities and the media that suppress any and all internal dissent or expression of independent views, and concomitantly respect the right of free speech; called upon States to consider making additional voluntary contributions to meet the pressing human rights and humanitarian needs in the area, and underlined the need for continued coordination among States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations of initiatives and programmes with the aim of avoiding duplication, overlap and working at cross-purposes; and decided to continue its examination of this question at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 54/184).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Special Rapporteur to report to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, paying particular attention to areas that remained a source of grave concern, including the deteriorating human rights situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Commission resolution 2000/26).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur (Commission resolution 2000/26).

Situation of human rights in Afghanistan

The General Assembly has considered this question annually since its fortieth session, in 1985 (resolutions 40/137, 41/158, 42/135, 43/139, 44/161, 45/174, 46/136, 47/141, 48/152, 49/207, 50/189, 51/108, 52/145 and 53/165).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly urged all the Afghan parties to respect fully all human rights and fundamental freedoms, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion, to cease hostilities immediately, and to work and cooperate fully with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan; urged all the Afghan parties to extend their cooperation to the Commission on Human Rights and its Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and to all those special rapporteurs who were seeking invitations; also urged all the Afghan parties, in particular the Taliban, to bring to an end without delay all human rights violations against women and girls; urged all States to respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan and to refrain from interfering in its internal affairs; appealed to all States, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, specialized agencies and other international organizations to provide humanitarian assistance to all in need as soon as the situation on the ground permitted; and decided to keep the situation of human rights in Afghanistan under consideration at its fifty-fifth session, in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council (resolution 54/185).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights invited the Secretary-General to ensure that the ongoing deployment of civilian affairs observers in Afghanistan took place as soon as possible, security conditions permitting, and that gender issues would be fully incorporated into their mission; invited the Secretary-General to exert efforts to ensure a gender perspective in the selection of the staff of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan in order to enhance the role of women in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping; decided to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for one year; and requested the Special Rapporteur to report on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-seventh session (Commission resolution 2000/18).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur (Commission resolution 2000/18).

Situation of human rights in Rwanda

At its third special session, in 1994, the Commission on Human Rights requested its Chairman to appoint a Special Rapporteur, for an initial period of one year, to investigate first-hand the human rights situation and to receive relevant, credible information on human rights there, and requested the Special Rapporteur to visit Rwanda forthwith and to report on an urgent basis to the members of the Commission on the situation of human rights in the country, including his recommendations for bringing violations and abuses to an end and preventing future violations and abuses (Commission resolution S-3/1).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the report of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Rwanda; reiterated its strong condemnation of the crime of genocide and the crimes against humanity committed in Rwanda in 1994; expressed concern that most

of the perpetrators continued to evade justice; also expressed concern that despite the imposition by the Security Council of an arms embargo, the *Interahamwe* militias and the former members of the Rwandan armed forces continued to receive military, financial and logistical support, and called upon the international community to take urgent measures to enable the disarmament of those groups; reiterated its request that all States cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in ensuring that all those responsible are brought to justice; noted improvements in the situation of human rights in Rwanda since the fifty-third session of the Assembly; reiterated its appeal to the international community to provide financial and technical assistance to the Government of Rwanda to strengthen the protection of genocide survivors and witnesses and the administration of justice; noted that in July 1999 the transitional Government's mandate was extended for a further four years, commended the Government for holding elections in a peaceful and successful manner and supported the Government in the continuation of its democratization process; welcomed the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission; reiterated its concern at the conditions in detention centres and prisons; encouraged the efforts of the Government to reduce the prison population; and decided to keep the situation of human rights in Rwanda under consideration at its fifty-fifth session, in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council (resolution 54/188).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights took note with appreciation of the report of the Special Representative of the Commission on the situation of human rights in Rwanda; expressed its appreciation to the members of the National Human Rights Commission for the round table organized with the collaboration of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Government of Rwanda and the assistance of the Special Representative and the international community; welcomed the cooperation and assistance extended by the Government of Rwanda to the Special Representative; noted the efforts which the International Tribunal for Rwanda had made to improve its performance and encouraged further measures to enhance its efficiency; commended the Government of Rwanda on the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission; called for close regular consultation between the Special Representative and the Government of Rwanda, the National Human Rights Commission and all relevant national institutions; and commended the Special Representative for his work, decided to extend his mandate for a further year and requested him to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session (Commission resolution 2000/21).

The situation of human rights in Myanmar

At its forty-eighth session, in 1992, the Commission on Human Rights decided to nominate a Special Rapporteur to establish direct contacts with the Government and the people of Myanmar, including political leaders deprived of their liberty, their families and lawyers, with a view to examining the situation of human rights in Myanmar and following any progress made towards the transfer of power to a civilian government and the drafting of a new constitution, the lifting of restrictions on personal freedoms and the restoration of human rights in Myanmar, and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-ninth session (Commission resolution 1992/58). The mandate of the Special Rapporteur has been renewed annually since then.

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁶ the General Assembly expressed its appreciation to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in

Myanmar for his interim report; urged the Government of Myanmar to cooperate fully and without further delay with the Special Rapporteur, and to allow him, without preconditions, to conduct a field mission and to establish direct contacts with the Government and all other relevant sectors of society, thus enabling him to discharge his mandate fully; requested the Secretary-General to continue his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government of Myanmar, to submit additional reports to the Assembly during its fifty-fourth session on the progress of those discussions and to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution (resolution 54/186).

At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission on Human Rights decided to extend for a further year the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar; requested the Special Rapporteur to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session; requested the Secretary-General to continue to give all necessary assistance to the Special Rapporteur to enable him to discharge his mandate fully and to pursue all efforts to ensure that he was authorized to visit Myanmar; also requested the Secretary-General to continue his discussions with the Government on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy and with anyone he might consider appropriate in order to assist in the implementation of Assembly resolution 54/186; requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to cooperate with the Director-General of the International Labour Office with a view to identifying ways in which their offices might usefully collaborate for the improvement of the human rights situation in Myanmar; and requested the Secretary-General to bring the resolution to the attention of all relevant parts of the United Nations system (Commission resolution 2000/23).

Documents:

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General (resolution 54/186);
- (b) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur (Commission resolution 2000/23).

(d) Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

The World Conference on Human Rights, which was held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, adopted the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly endorsed the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference (resolution 48/121). The Assembly also considered the question at its forty-ninth to fifty-third sessions (resolutions 49/208, 50/201, 51/118, 52/148 and 53/166).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁸⁷ the General Assembly took note of the report of the Third Committee (decision 54/435).

¹⁸⁷ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 116 (d)):

- (a) Report of the Third Committee: A/54/605/Add.4;
- (b) Decision 54/435;
- (c) Meetings of the Third Committee: A/C.3/54/SR.32-43;
- (d) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.83.