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Human rights questions

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Hassan Kassem **Najem** (Lebanon)

I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled:

“Human rights questions:

“(a) Implementation of human rights instruments;

“(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

“(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives;

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

“(e) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights”

and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Item 110. Human rights questions

Relevant chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council for the year 1998¹

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/53/3).*

Letter dated 31 December 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the situation in Nigeria, issued on 26 December 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/58)

Letter dated 20 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the ninth anniversary of the Iranian fatwa against Salman Rushdie, issued on 11 February 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/74)

Letter dated 24 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the abolition of the death penalty in Azerbaijan, issued on 19 February 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/75)

Letter dated 26 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/77–S/1998/171);

Letter dated 5 March 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement concerning the upsurge of violence in Kosovo, issued on 3 March 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/79)

Letter dated 9 March 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/80)

Letter dated 8 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the decree of the President of Azerbaijan on the genocide of Azerbaijanis, issued on 26 March 1998 (A/53/94–S/1998/309)

Letter dated 22 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/99–S/1998/344)

Letter dated 27 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting three resolutions adopted by the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council on 21 March 1998 (A/53/131–S/1998/435)

Letter dated 27 June 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/165–S/1998/601)

Letter dated 6 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/167)

Note verbale dated 28 July 1998 from the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/203)

Letter dated 4 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/205)

Letter dated 3 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the elections in Cambodia, issued on 31 July 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/214)

Letter dated 3 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the recent developments in Myanmar issued on 31 July 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/215)

Letter dated 12 August 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/225–S/1998/747)

Letter dated 3 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on Cambodia, issued on 3 September 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/343)

Letter dated 15 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on Myanmar, issued on 11 September 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/404)

Letter dated 9 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Panama City Declaration and the Declaration of Heads of State and Government adopted at the Twelfth Summit of the Rio Group, held in Panama on 4 and 5 September 1998 (A/53/489)

Letter dated 13 October 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/493-S/1998/908)

Letter dated 12 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/494-S/1998/949)

Letter dated 12 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the joint statement made by the Heads of State and Government of Bulgaria, Romania and Greece at their meeting in Delphi, Greece, on 4 October 1998 (A/53/497-S/1998/951)

Letter dated 27 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the joint declaration made by the Heads of Government of the countries of south-eastern Europe at the summit meeting held at Antalya, Turkey, on 12 and 13 October 1998 (A/53/552-S/1998/1010)

Letter dated 22 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/557)

Letter dated 9 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on Burma/Myanmar, issued on 9 October 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/C.3/53/4)

Letter dated 19 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/53/5)

Note by the Secretariat (A/C.3/53/7)

Letter dated 27 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/53/9)

Letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on Burma/Myanmar, issued on 30 October 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/C.3/53/12)

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the common position concerning Nigeria, issued on 30 October 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/C.3/53/13)

(a) Implementation of human rights instruments

Report of the Human Rights Committee²

Report of the Committee against Torture³

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (A/53/230)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (A/53/253)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (A/53/283)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (A/53/339)

Report of the Secretary-General on the effective implementation of international instruments on human rights, including reporting obligations under international instruments on human rights (A/53/469)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (A/53/565)

Note by the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the ninth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, convened at Geneva from 25 to 27 February 1998 (A/53/125)

Note by the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the tenth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, convened at Geneva from 14 to 18 September 1998 (A/53/432)

Letter dated 23 February 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents of the eighth session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held at Tehran from 9 to 11 December 1997 (A/53/72–S/1998/156)

Letter dated 8 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the twenty-fifth session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Doha from 15 to 17 March 1998 (A/53/95–S/1998/311)

Letter dated 7 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/118)

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Report of the Secretary-General on the right to development (A/53/268)

Report of the Secretary-General on human rights and unilateral coercive measures (A/53/293 and Add.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the question of enforced or involuntary disappearances (A/53/304)

Report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the rule of law (A/53/309)

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/53/40)*, vols. I and II.

³ *Ibid.*, *Supplement No. 44 (A/53/44)*.

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004, and public information activities in the field of human rights (A/53/313)

Report of the Secretary-General on regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights (A/53/324)

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Cambodia (A/53/400)

Report of the Secretary-General on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations: safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel (A/53/501)

Note by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (A/53/279)

Note by the Secretary-General on the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and the Follow-up Plan of Action for the United Nations Year for Tolerance (A/53/284)

Note by the Secretary-General on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (A/53/337)

Note by the Secretariat on human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (A/C.3/53/L.5)

Letter dated 23 February 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents of the eighth session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held at Tehran from 9 to 11 December 1997 (A/53/72–S/1998/156)

Identical letters dated 11 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the General Assembly (A/53/81–S/1998/225)

Letter dated 12 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/82–S/1998/229)

Letter dated 12 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/83–S/1998/230)

Letter dated 16 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/86–S/1998/240)

Letter dated 18 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/89–S/1998/250)

Letter dated 1 April 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/93–S/1998/291)

Letter dated 8 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the twenty-fifth session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Doha from 15 to 17 March 1998 (A/53/95–S/1998/311)

Letter dated 17 April 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/98–S/1998/335)

Letter dated 23 April 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/113–S/1998/345)

Letter dated 30 April 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/115–S/1998/365)

Letter dated 18 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, transmitting the declaration submitted by twenty-six Member States on the occasion of the adoption of 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 (A/53/679)

Letter dated 16 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/53/6)

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

Report of the Secretary-General on the technical cooperation programme in Haiti (A/53/530)

Report of the Secretary-General on the human rights situation in Kosovo (A/53/563)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (A/53/322 and Add.1)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti (A/53/355)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/53/364)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/53/365)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Nigeria (A/53/366)

Note by the Secretary-General on the Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda (A/53/367)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Rwanda (A/53/402)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (A/53/423 and Corr.1)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq (A/53/433)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Burundi (A/53/490)

Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in the Sudan (A/53/504)

Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in southern Lebanon and western Bekaa (A/53/537)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan (A/53/539)

Letter dated 13 March 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the joint declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of countries of south-eastern Europe concerning the situation in Kosovo, adopted at Sofia on 10 March 1998 (A/53/84-S/1998/234)

Letter dated 23 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,

transmitting a statement on the withdrawal of the United Nations human rights enquiry team from the Democratic Republic of the Congo issued on 21 April 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/114)

Letter dated 8 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the murder of Bishop Gerardi in Guatemala issued on 4 May 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/120)

Letter dated 20 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the report of the United Nations inquiry into human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo issued on 17 July 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/182)

Letter dated 22 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the situation in Nigeria issued on 22 July 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/53/188)

Letter dated 29 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the situation in Nigeria, issued on 18 September 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union (A/C.3/53/3)

Letter dated 15 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/53/8)

Letter dated 11 November 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/C.3/53/14)

Letter dated 12 November 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/C.3/53/15)

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

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the final report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (A/53/372)

(e) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights⁴

II. Consideration of a draft decision proposed by the Chairman

3. At its 53rd meeting, on 23 November, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of human rights (see para. 4).

⁴ Ibid., *Supplement No. 36* (A/53/36).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

4. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of human rights

The General Assembly takes note of the following documents:

- (a) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;⁵
- (b) Report of the Human Rights Committee;⁶
- (c) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;⁷
- (d) Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture;⁸
- (e) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery;⁹
- (f) Report of the Secretary-General on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations: safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel;¹⁰
- (g) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;¹¹
- (h) Note by the Secretary-General on implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief;¹²
- (i) Note by the Secretary-General on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions;¹³
- (j) Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;¹⁴
- (k) Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Burundi;¹⁵
- (l) Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in the Sudan;¹⁶
- (m) Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in southern Lebanon and western Bekaa.¹⁷

⁵ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 36 (A/53/36).*

⁶ *Ibid.*, *Supplement No. 40 (A/53/40)*, vols. I and II.

⁷ A/53/253.

⁸ A/53/283.

⁹ A/53/339.

¹⁰ A/53/501.

¹¹ A/53/565.

¹² A/53/279.

¹³ A/53/337.

¹⁴ A/53/365.

¹⁵ A/53/490.

¹⁶ A/53/504.

¹⁷ A/53/537.
