

# **THE OBSERVATORY**

## **for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders**

**L'OBSERVATOIRE**  
pour la Protection des  
Défenseurs des Droits de l'Homme

**EL OBSERVATORIO**  
para la Protección  
de los Defensores de Derechos Humanos

**UN Human Rights Council  
Seventh Session (March 3 - 28, 2008)  
Agenda Item 3**

### **Inter-active dialogue with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders**

Geneva, March 12, 2008

Mr. Chairman,  
Ms. The Special Representative,

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), welcomes the report of Ms. Hina Jilani, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, and wishes to congratulate her for the importance and the quality of her work, in a context of an increased repression against human rights defenders worldwide.

The Observatory also wishes to welcome the increase of follow-up communications sent by the Special Representative during the last three years, as well as the thematic analysis carried out throughout her mandate, which, in particular, has allowed to identify some trends of repression against human rights defenders (obstacles to the freedoms of association, assembly and the right to protest; anti-terrorism laws) and specific categories of defenders who are particularly vulnerable to human rights violations (defenders working on economic, social and cultural rights; defenders of the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities; defenders of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) persons; women human rights defenders).

Moreover, the Observatory congratulates the Special Representative for her increased collaboration with regional mechanisms of protection for human rights defenders, as such complementarities are playing an important role in strengthening the impact of the Special Representative's activities.

As highlighted in your report, Ms. Jilani, in 2007, States have replied to 34% of your communications, while they had replied to 52% of them in 2006, 58% in 2005 and 64% in 2004. How would you explain this decrease of replies from Governments? Do you think that this diminution can be linked to the increased criminalisation of defenders and the adoption of legislations that are more and more restrictive, especially against freedoms of association and expression, as documented by the Observatory?

In your report, you underline that “country visits have also been an opportunity to directly follow up on cases on the ground with national authorities and civil society”. How would you evaluate the State cooperation in this precise area? Furthermore, could you provide us with more information regarding the follow-up realised by the Indonesian authorities with respect to the identification of the authors of the intimidation campaign led against some human rights defenders you had met in Papua, during your visit in Indonesia, in June 2007?

In conclusion, the Observatory wishes to take this opportunity to thank you warmly, Ms. Jilani, for the quality of the collaboration we have maintained with you since the creation of your mandate.

Mr. President,

Ms. The Special Representative,

I thank you.



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