

I. INTRODUCTION

This document is the outcome of a conference held at York University, Toronto, Canada on June 22nd-June 24th, 1997, entitled: "Enforcing International Human Rights Law: The Treaty System in the Twenty-First Century".

The conclusions and recommendations are the Rapporteur's impressions of some of the important issues and solutions which ought to occupy the international human rights community now, and into the twenty-first century. This is not a consensus document or a set of recommendations which are endorsed by all members of the group. Rather, it reflects the Rapporteur's summary of many of the ideas for constructive change, both short-term and long-term, which emerged from the background papers produced for the conference and the discussion at the conference itself.

Participants included a wide variety of international human rights actors: members of each of the six treaty bodies, representatives of three UN specialized agencies, UN officials from the UN Center for Human Rights, the Division for the Advancement of Women, and the Division for Political Affairs, individuals from eight major non-governmental organizations, representatives of states parties, representatives of the Council of Europe and the Organization of American States, representatives of special procedures mechanisms of the UN Center for Human Rights and UN human rights field missions, and leading international human rights academics.

The conference was convened in order to address the problems of implementation faced by the human rights treaty system. The aim was to consider steps to improve the enforcement of international human rights law and to develop a vision for the advancement of the treaty regime - a goal consistent with the broader imperative and context of UN reform.

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