

where persons were taken hostage or died; a search for the missing persons continued; and, efforts have been made to establish the criminal liability of, and bring to court, those involved in the reported incidents.

Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/60, paras. 15, 16, 17, 18, 28, 38, 39, 46, 54, 56, 60, 61, 64, 76, 96; E/CN.4/1997/60/Add.1, paras. 402–419)

The Special Rapporteur (SR) notes that information continued to be received about systematic violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by Russian forces in Chechnya and indicating that least 30,000 civilians had been killed in the conflict. The report notes a number of practices including: systematic targeting of civilians and civilian installations such as hospitals, schools and mosques; failure to allow civilians sufficient time to leave towns via the so-called "humanitarian corridor"; failure to inform civilians of the existence of the corridor and/or its location; widespread use of violence against non-combatants in the conflict zone; impunity for Russian troops responsible for violations of human rights and humanitarian law; and, proscription on involvement by the judiciary and/or police of the Chechen administration in Grozny in the investigations and prosecution of local complaints against Russian troops. The report does acknowledge attacks on the right to life by Chechen forces but does not contain any details. Urgent appeals sent to the government related to the situation in Chechnya and were transmitted on behalf of: an unknown number of civilians killed when Russia forces entered the town of Sernovodsk; 50,000 civilians in the town of Shali; the civilian population in Grozny; and, generally two specific individuals and about 500 unidentified persons who were killed in the fighting.

The SR also expressed concern about the application of the death penalty in Russia. He noted that, when Russia joined the Council of Europe in 1996, the government undertook to impose an immediate moratorium on executions and to abolish the death penalty within three years.

The government response to the civilian deaths during the conflict in Chechnya were characterized as the tragic consequence of military operations and that the towns subject to operations by the Russian forces were strongholds for illegal armed groups.

Racial Discrimination, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/71, para. 93)

The report refers to information transmitted to the government on discrimination against the Meskhetian Turks in Krasnodar Territory. The report notes that: the Meskhetians in Krasnodar comprise the significant part of the forced migrants who arrived in the territory of Russia from other Union Republics before the breakup of the Soviet Union; Russia has not given any legal status to these people; the Meskhetians were a "repressed" people during the years of Soviet power and are trying to solve the difficult and painful problem of returning to the place from which they were expelled; and, authorities in the Krasnodar Territory are conducting a severe policy aimed at moderating by various means the immigration inflow from outside. The government has not replied to the information sent by the Special Rapporteur.

Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/91, paras. 9, 17, 21, 26, 39, 41)

The report notes that there is intolerance and discrimination against Buddhists in Russia as well as the fact that there have been reported cases of imprisonment for refusal to perform military service and the law does not provide for alternative service. The government informed the Special Rapporteur that a conscientious objector had been released from prison.

The Special Rapporteur's interim report to the General Assembly (A/52/477, paras. 25, 30, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38) notes that communications were sent to the government related to provincial legislation and regulations imposing restrictions on religious minorities and cases of harassment and threats against and disappearances of clergy and believers.

Sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, Special Rapporteur on the: (E/CN.4/1997/95, paras. 27, 41, 51, 56, 58)

The report notes that Russia has proposed the creation of a network of specialized services and institutions in Russia to focus on the specific problems of children. The report also notes that the estimates of street children in Saint Petersburg alone range from 6,000 to 15,000 and that Russia is one of the source countries for women and girls being trafficked to the west. Reference is also made to the fact that, in Moscow, girls as young as 8 years sell themselves for food, cigarettes, or a miniature of vodka, and more and more young boys are being taught and forced to work as girls with clients. In terms of these young boys, in 1992 there was an estimated 500 to 600 young transsexuals, and the "sexual re-profiling" of young boys is becoming more frequent in the Moscow area because of their cheaper availability as compared to the capitals and major cities in a number of industrialized countries.

Torture, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/7, Section III; E/CN.4/1997/7/Add.1, paras.417-433)

The report notes that information continued to be received related to torture or ill-treatment during the course of military operations in the Chechen Republic. The Special Rapporteur (SR) transmitted 25 individual cases and made an urgent appeal jointly with the SR on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, concerning the situation in the Chechen Republic.

The report notes that the SR visited Russia in 1994. Since that time the government has reported on measures taken to implement the recommendations arising from that visit. The SR noted that: initial steps had been taken to make state enterprises and institutions, which applied criminal penalties in the form of deprivation of freedom, state unitary enterprises (federal state-funded enterprises); the Steering Committee on reform of the custodial detention system continued to address issues such as personnel involved in the enforcement of penalties, reducing the number of inmates in prison institutions and conditions in which prisoners are held and the working conditions of staff in places of detention in order to raise the entrance requirements for work in those institutions; initial proposals for legislation aimed at strengthening human rights safeguards and reinforcing legality in the Russian penal system; the declaration in June 1996 by the Constitutional Court