

- ♦ governments develop further cooperation with organizations representing persons with disabilities at all levels and strengthen their support for the work of these organizations; and
- ♦ the UN take measures to assist governments in the monitoring and evaluation of mechanisms established to facilitate implementation of the Standard Rules.

The report concludes by noting the need to develop further the human rights aspects both implicit and explicit in the Standard Rules and, also, to give more attention to the child aspect and the gender perspective in future implementation efforts.

### Resolution of the Commission on Human Rights

Under the agenda item dealing with the report of the Sub-Commission, the Commission adopted by consensus a resolution on the human rights of persons with disabilities (1998/31). The Commission, *inter alia*: recalled that all persons with disabilities have the right to protection against discrimination and full and equal enjoyment of human rights; reaffirmed the continuing validity and value of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons; recalled General Assembly resolution 52/107 (12 December 1997) calling for the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by children with disabilities; welcomed initiatives to hold international conferences related to persons with disabilities; re-emphasized the responsibility of governments to remove, or facilitate the removal of, barriers and obstacles to the full integration and participation of persons with disabilities in society; expressed concern at the extent of disabilities caused by the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines, particularly among civilian populations; recognized that any violation of the principle of equality and any discrimination or negative differential treatment of persons with disabilities is an infringement of the human rights of such persons; welcomed the decision of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur (SR); invited the CSD SR to address the session of the Commission in the year 2000; encouraged governments to support non-governmental organizations active in the promotion and protection of human rights for persons with disabilities; recognized the right of such persons, individually and collectively, to form and become members of organizations of persons with disabilities and the right of such organizations to speak for and act as legitimate representatives of their members; urged governments to implement the Standard Rules, with particular attention given to the needs of children, women and persons with developmental and psychiatric disabilities; expressed grave concern that situations of armed conflict have especially devastating consequences for the human rights of persons with disabilities; welcomed increased international efforts with respect to anti-personnel mines and noted the conclusion of the Convention on the

Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; called on states and relevant UN bodies to contribute on an ongoing basis to international mine clearance efforts; urged states to take further action to promote gender- and age-appropriate mine-awareness programmes and rehabilitation; called on the UNDP and all intergovernmental institutions for development cooperation to integrate disability measures into their mainstream activities; encouraged governments to work towards the development of appropriate education policies and practices for children and adults with disabilities; and, invited the ILO to take the lead internationally in formulating policies and strategies that will lead to equal employment opportunities.



## DISAPPEARANCES

### Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances: (E/CN.4/1998/43)

The Working Group (WG) on enforced or involuntary disappearances was established by the Commission at its 1980 session. At that time, the mandate of the Group was to act as a channel of communication between families of disappeared persons and the governments concerned, with a view to ensuring that sufficiently documented and clearly identified individual cases were investigated and the whereabouts of the disappeared persons clarified. This mandate continues and, following adoption by the General Assembly in 1992 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, the Working Group was also given the task of monitoring states' compliance with the Declaration. The effect of the Declaration was to place states under an obligation to take effective measures to prevent and terminate acts of enforced disappearance by making them continuing offences under criminal law and establishing civil liability.

The report to the 1998 Commission includes information on, *inter alia*: meetings and missions of the WG, communications, methods of work, a draft international convention related to disappearances, compensation, presumption of death and exhumation, and implementation of the Declaration. The report also includes summaries of information on cases related to a number of countries as well as the Palestinian Authority.

The total number of cases transmitted to governments since the Group was established stands at 47,758. The total number of cases being kept under active consideration, pending clarification, stands at 44,940. The number of countries with outstanding cases of alleged disappearance was 63 in 1997. Between January and 21 November 1997, the period upon which the report is based, the WG received some 1,111 new cases of disappearance in 26 countries, 180 of which allegedly occurred in 1997.