

cial police and had transmitted information on the reported killings of three media professionals; the killing of a journalist and director of the weekly magazine *Siete Dias* who was reportedly facing a defamation lawsuit; the killing of the publisher and editor of the daily newspaper *La Prensa*, who was allegedly facing several lawsuits for criminal libel, with his killing possibly linked to his coverage of drug trafficking and the involvement of the local administration; and, a journalist with the magazine *Como*, who reportedly died from head injuries after having been severely beaten as he was leaving the offices of the Federal Judicial Police in Mexico City, possibly because of articles he had published on alleged links between police and drug-traffickers.

Independence of judges and lawyers, Special Rapporteur on the: (E/CN.4/1998/39, paras. 15, 17, 19, 117–119)

The report refers to an urgent appeal sent to the government on behalf of a lawyer who is a member of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (ANAD) and had been the target of harassment and death threats. Information indicated that the ANAD is a group of independent lawyers that undertakes cases involving labour and indigenous rights. The report notes that in response to the wave of harassment, ANAD had registered formal complaints with the Office of the Attorney General, asking for appropriate investigation and protection. As of the date of the appeal, no protection had been provided and no investigation had been initiated.

The Special Rapporteur (SR) also sent a communication to the government concerning a judge who had reportedly received death threats from the President of the Upper Tribunal of the State of Tabasco. Information indicated that the judge had been removed from his judicial functions for failing to sign a judicial order of imprisonment against a former local deputy of the Revolutionary Democratic Party (RDP), who was being tried for fraud and who had already been detained. According to the source, during trial the judge had ordered the deputy's release and the President of the Upper Tribunal had requested him to change that decision. Concern was expressed that the threats made against the judge might be carried out. In its reply to the SR's communication the government stated that the judge had not been removed from office, but resigned in order to avoid penal responsibility for an alleged crime of fraud for which he is being tried. The government asserted that his appeals at different levels of the courts, including an amparo appeal, were refused and his complaint before different human rights organizations for alleged violation of his rights was unfounded and intended to gain impunity for a crime that he committed.

Sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, Special Rapporteur on the: (E/CN.4/1998/101/Add.2)

The Special Rapporteur (SR) visited Mexico from 10 to 21 November 1997. The focus of the mission was the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the SR made

on-site investigations during the nights in order to observe the situation of children in streets, bars and nightclubs. The Special Rapporteur also visited a number of children's homes to meet with child victims of exploitation and abuse.

The report contains information on, *inter alia*: the commercial sexual exploitation of children in a metropolis (Mexico City, D.F.) and an industrialized port region (Puerto de Veracruz and Zalapa); the impact of tourism on commercial sexual exploitation (Cancun, Q.R.); such exploitation of children in frontier areas (Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua and Tijuana, B.C.); the causes and characteristics of such exploitation; government programmes; and the criminal justice system.

The commentary on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Mexico City notes a number of elements related to causes and characteristics, including that: it is estimated that 90 per cent of street children are victims of sexual abuse at one stage of their lives in the streets; since 1994, there has been an increase in child prostitution, especially in the involvement of young girls who come primarily from southern states such as Tlaxcala, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Puebla and Veracruz; socially disadvantaged conditions, unemployment and lack of educational opportunities were cited as the main causes for rural-urban migration of young single girls; most of the girls travel to the Federal District to find employment and end up in the streets without money and housing; in many cases, these girls have escaped a violent family situation and are vulnerable to exploitation by pimps or middlemen; other girls are lured away from their families, sometimes with the family's blessing, by a middleman (*padrote*) or a "boyfriend" or a prospective "husband", who promise to secure employment for them in the city and who often loan the girls substantial amounts of money beforehand to create a dependent relationship; eventually, the debts owed by these girls are so great that they are forced to prostitute themselves for their former "husbands" or "boyfriends", now pimps; in such cases, the physical and sexual exploitation is exacerbated by the emotional and psychological exploitation of the young girls' feelings.

The SR stated: one of the main causes for children leaving home or being abandoned is family disintegration and the lack of capacity of families to take care of their members; family violence and substance-abuse are also factors in the changing of social values and morals which do not recognize income situations as the main cause for vulnerability; increased rates of teenage pregnancies and averse social attitudes to this phenomenon also propel young girls into prostitution; some girls are given work in bars and restaurants, largely based on the understanding that other services are also to be made available at the client's request; some of the girls in prostitution send money home to their families to supplement the family income or support a younger sibling's education; street girls involved in prostitution are often exploited not only by their pimps but also by the police, restaurant (*loncherias*) and café owners, as well as local