

spend money wisely, the Centre would have had difficulty even if they had fully understood the implications and demands of their duty to take the lead.

It does not appear that the Centre is learning much from the Rwandan crisis. There is little talk of having not taken the lead in actively advocating both within and without the UN about violations in Rwanda. Several rapporteurs with scarce resources and minimal Centre support, attempted to put the spotlight on Rwanda. The report¹⁸ of Special Rapporteur Ndiaye on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions was tabled at the 50th session of the Commission on Human Rights, but effectively died there. There appears to have been no effort by the Centre in Geneva or through its New York office to lobby with regard to Rwanda even after the April massacres began. In fact, in mid November many New York based national missions and NGOs did not think that the new High Commissioner for Human Rights had even been to the UN in New York since he had taken up his Geneva post in April¹⁹.

Inter alia the UN Centre and the HCHR need to take two steps if they are to start to more adequately carry out human rights advocacy. First of all they must make a conscious policy shift to in fact advocate on behalf of human rights victims. They must fully understand that they are the full time human rights conscience of the UN and that they have a duty to push the limits of advocacy within the UN. They then need to alert the rest of the UN including the Secretary General and the Security Council that their duty flows from the UN Charter and the International Bill of Rights²⁰ and in instances of grave human rights violations that this duty to advocate for the abused overrides all other duties.

RECOMMENDATION

Canada should encourage the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights to clearly enunciate their obligation to advocate for human rights

Secondly, they must increase the lobbying capacity of their NY office. The initial point of departure is an increase in the seniority of the senior position at the Centre for Human Rights NY office²¹ to at least a D2 level and more hopefully at the D3 level. The post must be sufficiently senior to open doors within the Secretariat and amongst missions, and to make it difficult to

¹⁸ E/CN.4/1994/7/Add.1 11 August 1993

¹⁹ It appears that he has, but if his passing left so little impact, then one has to be even more concerned about what human rights lobbying he might have done.

²⁰ The International Bill of Human Rights consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Optional Protocol.

²¹ This is already being requested although it is not clear whether this is to more forcefully advocate for the Centre and the HCHR, or for the rights of the abused, or for both.