

human rights programme, and noted that, in order to help produce lasting results, monitoring and preventive activities may need to be accompanied by promotional activities through advisory services and technical cooperation; welcomed efforts to integrate economic, social and cultural rights as well as a gender perspective into the technical cooperation programme; welcomed the enhanced cooperation between the OHCHR and the UNDP; invited relevant UN treaty bodies, special rapporteurs and special representatives, as well as working groups, to continue to include in their recommendations, whenever appropriate, proposals for specific projects to be realized under the programme of advisory services and technical cooperation in the field of human rights; requested the Secretary-General to, *inter alia*: (a) ensure efficient management of the Voluntary Fund, strict and transparent project management rules, periodic evaluations of the programme and projects, and the dissemination of evaluation results, as well as to arrange for the holding of information meetings open to all states and organizations directly involved in the advisory services and technical cooperation programme; and (b) submit an analytical report to the Commission's session in the year 2000 on the progress and concrete achievements made as well as obstacles encountered in the implementation of the programme of advisory services and technical cooperation and on the operation and administration of the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights.



TORTURE

Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

The Commission on Human Rights established the mandate on the question of torture at its 1985 session and has renewed it as required since then. The focus of the work is primarily torture but there is scope within the mandate to consider cases within a "grey zone" related to other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, such as corporal punishment. The Special Rapporteur (SR) in 1998 was Nigel S. Rodley.

Taken together, the reports to the 1998 Commission (E/CN.4/1998/38; E/CN.4/1998/38/Add.1) are generally a summary of cases taken up by the SR, with a more detailed narrative provided in the addendum to the main report. Regular communications were sent to 45 governments on behalf of 380 individuals and 24 groups involving about 655 persons. Of these, about 74 were known to be women and about 56 were known to be minors. In addition, 119 urgent appeals were transmitted to 45 governments on behalf of some 563 individuals (at least 19 known to be women and 9 known to be minors), as well as 22 groups (one involving about 780 children). Allegations of a general nature regarding torture prac-

tices were also sent to some governments. The report notes that 28 governments provided replies on approximately 345 of the cases submitted during the period under review and 19 responded to some 290 cases from previous years.

Features and characteristics of the individual cases and general concerns handled by the SR included, *inter alia*:

- ◆ amputation as a form of punishment and extreme forms of corporal punishment often specifically inflicted on women who were considered to have been involved in "offences of a moral nature"; the use of stoning, lashing or flogging, sometimes for offences of a moral nature;
- ◆ torture and ill treatment during periods of incommunicado detention in police and gendarmerie stations, military security centres and secret detention centres, reportedly to extract information and force the signing of confessions in the form of written statements and as a form of punishment; with the methods used including a cloth stuffed in a detainee's mouth followed by large quantities of dirty water and chemicals, burns inflicted with a torch, electric shocks to sensitive parts of the body; tying a rope around the penis and/or testicles or placing the genitals between drawers, burnings by cigarettes, insertion of objects or glue into the anus, suspension, rape, pumping of salt water into the stomach, and the boring of holes in limbs or breaking of them;
- ◆ denial of independent medical supervision during incommunicado detention and thereafter or delays in medical examinations which were then carried out by government-appointed doctors;
- ◆ legal provisions by which forensic medicine services are subordinate to the security forces, stipulating that only a medical examination authorized by a police authority was valid in court, the latter causing some victims of possible acts of torture or ill treatment to be reluctant to seek such authorization for fear of reprisals;
- ◆ a substantial incidence of torture or other ill treatment inflicted by members of the police against street children at both the time of arrest and during detention at police stations, including beatings with fists, boots, electric shock batons, clubs, chains, rubber hosing, boxing gloves or a metal rod with a ball attached and beatings on the soles of the feet, sometimes with electric batons, detention in places in which there were no beds or blankets, and sometimes no food, and refusal of permission to use the toilets;
- ◆ the widespread use of torture against persons arrested for political reasons with reports indicating that some prisoners were stuffed into burlap sacks and thrown into a river;
- ◆ poor prison conditions, including the use of torture and ill treatment as a means of discipline and punishment, a prevalence of contagious diseases such as