

tions prevailing in prisons; that *de facto* discrimination against women persists as a matter of custom, noting such areas as employment and representation in the conduct of public affairs; the disproportionate level of unemployment among women and the government's explanation that this is due to economic hardship; the existence of the phenomenon of street children; the lack of legal provision for alternatives to military service in the case of conscientious objectors; the conscription of conscientious objectors by force and their punishment by military courts, as well as reprisals against family members; the requirement that religions be registered and the provision increasing the number of followers required for registration; discrimination against non-recognized religions in their entitlement to own private property and to receive foreign funds; provisions in the 1991 Press Law, particularly related to the notions of "State secrets" and "untrue and unverified information"; the extent of the government's monopoly with regard to printing and distribution of newspapers; the strict governmental control over electronic media; and the statement of the government that it is not possible to ensure that small national minorities have access to educational facilities in their language of origin.

The Committee recommended, *inter alia*, that the government:

- ♦ amend the Constitution to enable individuals to bring questions related to human rights to the Constitutional Court;
- ♦ commute immediately the death sentences of all persons currently on death row; consider ratification of the Second Optional Protocol;
- ♦ establish an independent body to investigate complaints of torture and ill treatment by law enforcement personnel;
- ♦ take specific protection and punitive measures with respect to all forms of violence against women, including rape, noting that the lack of data on cases of domestic violence should not be interpreted to mean that no such incidents occur; compile relevant data for submission in the next periodic report; and
- ♦ provide human rights training to the legal profession and the judiciary.

## THEMATIC REPORTS

### Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

#### Arbitrary detention, Working Group on: (E/CN.4/1998/44, para. 19)

The report notes that an urgent appeal was sent to the government. No details of the case were provided.

#### Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/68, para. 16; E/CN.4/1998/68/Add.1, para. 22)

The report notes that a follow-up communication was sent to the government requesting further clarification of an allegation previously transmitted. The case related to a death in police custody as a result of injuries inflicted during a severe beating. The Special Rapporteur requested that the government provide information on the outcome of the proceedings against the two accused police officers, as well as on the results of the investigations carried out concerning a third police officer.

#### Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/6, paras. 17, 19, 48, 50, 63, 69, 70)

Concerning legislation related to freedom of religion and non-discrimination on religious grounds, the report notes that the government provided a copy of the Constitution. The report also notes that communications were sent to the government with regard to violations of religious freedom related to Christianity, Jehovah's Witnesses and Hare Krishna. The report notes permission for a teacher to give religious instruction is reportedly dependent on the approval of the national Orthodox Church. The government responded to the information transmitted, stressing that legislation and government policy were in conformity with the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and that the state in no way impeded the activities of religious organizations. The government noted that the "State Council for Religious Affairs" had registered all the 44 religious organizations, representing 14 denominations, that had made an application and submitted their statutes. The Jehovah's Witnesses were not registered on account of the incompatibility of their activities with the legal provisions on military service. According to the authorities, apart from an incident in April 1995 involving a Hare Krishna, in respect of which appropriate measures had been taken, there is no intolerance or discrimination vis-à-vis religious organizations. The government stated that for the time being no overall effort was being made to promote religious tolerance in educational institutions more effectively.

#### Torture, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/38, paras. 20-21; E/CN.4/1998/38/Add.1, paras. 10-13)

The report notes that six newly reported cases, some of them collective, concerning 11 individuals and a number of unnamed persons, were sent to the government. The report states that the observations made in the 1997 report (E/CN.4/1997/7, para. 23) remain pertinent. A number of detentions were related to the trial of a senior member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party (ARF), and 30 other persons accused of participation in attempting to stage an armed coup, and reports that they had been ill-treated or tortured following arrest.