

of enforced or involuntary disappearance in southern Kordofan; other alleged victims were said to have travelled voluntarily to various other Sudanese provinces in search of employment and stability; and, four persons had died. In the light of the testimonies and statements of those citizens and the statements of other persons interviewed, the Committee found that none of them had been abducted by the armed forces or government agencies.

The WG informed the government that the information contained in the report of the Special Committee was insufficient to consider the cases clarified under the WG's methods of work. This was due to the fact that more detailed information needed to be provided, including the current address of the alleged victim or a death certificate in those cases where the individual was reported to have died.

**Freedom of opinion and expression, Special Rapporteur on:** (E/CN.4/1998/40, paras. 8, 55, 94–97)

The report notes that the Special Rapporteur (SR) has a standing invitation to visit Sudan. In commentary on women and freedom of expression, the report notes that an urgent appeal was sent by the SR jointly with the Special Rapporteurs on the situation in Sudan and on violence against women, concerning an incident on 1 December 1997 in front of the UNDP offices in Khartoum. According to the information received, a group of approximately 50 women had arrived outside the gate of the UNDP compound to present a statement to the UN Secretary-General through the UN Resident Coordinator in Sudan. The statement was in protest against the compulsory military conscription of the women's sons and brothers to fight the civil war in southern part of the country. Information indicated that the women were: peacefully demonstrating, carrying banners denouncing the deployment of their sons and brothers; assaulted and beaten with sticks and rubber hoses and slapped by police and security officers; and arrested and dragged into police vehicles. It was further reported that approximately 34 of these women were tried the same day, convicted of public order offences, fined 10,000 Sudanese pounds, flogged with 10 strokes each, and then released. Further, it has been reported that some of the women were hospitalized as a result of the injuries suffered.

The government replied that the demonstration was carried out in violation of the law which requires a licence from local authorities of Khartoum State. The licence, which is routinely issued within 48 hours upon request, then assures protection by police. The government stated that since the gathering was illegal, the authorities were, in accordance with the law, bound to prevent any act that intended or was likely to cause a breach of public peace or tranquillity in a public place, and referred to its obligation to protect the UN office in Khartoum under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and other relevant instruments.

**Racism and racial discrimination, Special Rapporteur on:** (E/CN.4/1998/79, paras. 35, 53)

The Special Rapporteur referred to information related

to the persistence of black slavery, indicating that such practices are said to be increasingly inflicted on Blacks made prisoners in the war which has raged in Sudan since 1983.

**Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on:**

(E/CN.4/1998/6, paras. 17, 19, 29, 48, 50, 64)

The report refers to violations of freedom of religion and belief against Christianity, and notes reports indicating that Christian schools have reportedly been bulldozed.

**Torture, Special Rapporteur on:**

(E/CN.4/1998/38, paras. 177–180;

E/CN.4/1998/38/Add.1, paras. 396–410)

Eight urgent appeals were transmitted to the government, all in conjunction with the Special Rapporteur (SR) on the situation of human rights in the Sudan. Two appeals were individual cases, and six were collective on behalf of a total of 163 named individuals and one group of 775 unidentified children reportedly held at Al Huda camp at Abu Dum, a facility for street children. The SR also sent a communication to the government in response to the arrest and treatment of the 50 women demonstrating in front of the UNDP office in Khartoum (see the summary under "Freedom of opinion and expression").

The cases transmitted referred to, *inter alia*, the arrest and incommunicado detention of 90 persons — including several members of the Umma Party and of the Ansar religious order, some former government officials and lawyers, a former member of the Sudan Doctor's Union, a member of the Democratic Union Party, a member of the Communist Party, trade unionists, an imam, and a journalist. The report notes the government statement that the named persons had been legally detained on suspicion of involvement in a foreign invasion on Sudanese territory, and their right to physical and mental integrity was fully protected as well as their humane treatment while in detention. Information was provided on the detention of approximately 775 boys between the ages of 7 and 16 at the Al Huda camp. Some were said to have been taken to the camp forcibly, despite the fact that they were not homeless, many were said to be suffering from serious medical neglect, sometimes life-threatening, and a number had been subjected to torture or ill-treatment for attempting to escape or other infringements. The government referred to its undertaking to work with UNICEF on family reunification for these children, denied that conditions in the camp were harsh, and noted its decision to close down the camp and replace it with reception and reunification centres in which children would spend a maximum of six months during which their cases could be studied with a view to their rehabilitation and reunification.

The SR also transmitted information related to: the arrest of 76 persons, among whom were four members of the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party; the arrest and alleged torture during a previous detention of a 64-year-old labour union leader; the arrest of 13 university students said to be political activists who were allegedly being held