

Disappearances

More progress was made at CHR47 toward a Declaration on Disappearances. The Commission agreed to set up a working group to discuss the Draft Declaration, which had been forwarded to CHR by the Sub-commission. While a few countries still had some problems with the draft, there was widespread support for the Declaration in principle. The Working Group will meet for two weeks prior to CHR48 with a view to finishing work on the Draft Declaration so it can be transmitted to UNGA47 for adoption in 1992. This Declaration would condemn enforced or involuntary disappearances as "an offence to human dignity". It would also require that States ensure the establishment of an official, updated register of prisoners at each place of detention, and take steps to establish centralized registers where possible. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that an enforced or involuntary disappearance has been committed, States would be required to promptly refer the matter to an independent authority for investigation.

Administration of Justice

The resolution on "Human Rights in the Administration of Justice" was improved this year by providing for a much-needed strengthening of cooperation between Vienna (Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) and Geneva. The resolution also asks the Secretary-General to establish a consolidated list of provisions in various UN standards relating to human rights issues in the administration of justice, with a view to drafting model national legislation. It also asks the Sub-commission to study implementation of these standards, identify problems, recommend solutions and take necessary action with a view to drafting model texts.

Fair Trial

In another resolution, the study by Sub-commission experts Chenichenko and Treat on the Right to a Fair Trial was endorsed and passed to ECOSOC for its endorsement. Treat and Chenichenko were asked to present a preliminary report for next year's CHR looking at ways to formulate the basic guarantees necessary for a fair trial into an international standard - possibly a model code.

Other thematic and institutional issues

In addition to aboriginal issues, Canada took the lead on a number of thematic resolutions, including the right to freedom of opinion and expression and mass exoduses. The resolution on freedom of opinion and expression welcomes the intention of the special rapporteurs to study in greater detail measures necessary for the strengthening and promotion of these rights, as well as the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and the right to take part in government. It also calls on states to immediately

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