

THE PROBLEM OF ENCOURAGING POSITIVE CHANGE IS DOUBLY DIFFICULT WHEN HUMAN RIGHTS BECOMES A MATTER OF BILATERAL DISPUTE. TWO SITUATIONS HAVE BEEN CALLED ELOQUENTLY TO OUR ATTENTION RECENTLY: THE PLIGHT OF THE TURKISH MOSLEM MINORITY IN BULGARIA AND THE SITUATION OF THE HUNGARIAN, GERMAN AND OTHER MINORITIES IN ROMANIA. THE LATTER SITUATION IS AN ESPECIALLY FLAGRANT EXAMPLE OF THE REPRESSION OF CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS IN THE NAME OF ECONOMIC REORGANIZATION. THUS FAR, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE SCOPE FOR THIS ORGANIZATION TO ACT, EITHER BECAUSE MINORITIES IN GENERAL HAVE LARGELY ESCAPED OUR ATTENTION IN THE PAST OR BECAUSE OF THE STRENGTH OF REGIONAL BLOCS WITHIN OUR ORGANIZATION, WHICH, THIS YEAR, HAS BECOME A VIRULENT DISEASE WITHIN OUR RANKS. CLEARLY, THESE AND OTHER DISPUTES POINT TO THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGING AHEAD WITH WORK ON MINORITY RIGHTS. THEY POINT AS WELL TO THE NEED FOR NEW AND IMAGINATIVE DEPARTURES, INVOLVING THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO ASSIST THE PROCESS OF BILATERAL DIALOGUE. WITH RESPECT TO BOTH BULGARIA AND ROMANIA, WHAT WE SHOULD BE AIMING TOWARDS IS PROGRESS, WITH THE CLEAR ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE COMMISSION.

THE PROBLEMS OF ADDRESSING THE PLIGHT OF MINORITIES IS EXACERBATED IN TIME OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT OR CIVIL WAR. THE BAHA'I MINORITY IN IRAN HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO PARTICULARLY SEVERE RECRIMINATIONS IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. THE END OF CONFLICT