

groups, acting with a measure of immunity which suggests collaboration with state security authorities. This has been a relatively new and unsettling development in Chile. In Guatemala and El Salvador the operations of death squads have long been an integral part of the human rights problem. In traditional regimes, shifts of power or perceived alterations of the social and political order have caused or contributed to human rights abuses not previously apparent. One such situation occurred in Fiji, which suffered the effects of two military coups. During this period, Canada expressed concern over reports of human rights violations. We are heartened by the return to civilian rule in Fiji but call upon the interim government to hold new elections as soon as possible and to promulgate a new Constitution which respects the rights of the entire population of Fiji. In other instances, transitional regimes have given rise to vigilante groups or private armies. We have been alarmed at the proliferation of these groups in the Philippines, and struck by the horror of their power in Haiti.

A major area of controversy in the past two or three years has been the question of commissioning and decommissioning our fact-finding procedures. Since the beginning of fact-finding and its evolution in the case of Chile, we have learned a great deal about procedures and relationships between the UN and the government concerned. But there is still no satisfactory mechanism for placing a situation on the Commission agenda. The ECOSOC Resolution 1503 procedures place emphasis, quite rightly, on gross and systematic violations of human rights. But few would argue that the 1503 procedures function adequately in practice. They have proven inadequate as a means of identifying those situations which should come to the attention of the Commission in a dispassionate way.

Similarly, the removal of special procedures has recently triggered controversy. In the cases of Haiti, Guatemala and El Salvador, strong pressures have been exerted to soften previous texts, move a situation to a different item, or remove the country entirely from the Commission's agenda. In at least two recent situations, the Philippines and Haiti, the existence of a special rapporteur of the Commission might have proved helpful to efforts to restore human rights in difficult circumstances. In one situation, that of Equatorial Guinea, a change of government and the resultant decision