

international human rights instruments to which the states concerned are party, and other extra-conventional instruments adopted within the UN system; the special rapporteurs' investigations are not judicial inquiries; the special rapporteurs are agents not of confidential but of public procedures and their relations with the press are governed by the basic principle of transparency; and the special rapporteurs are organs of the Commission on Human Rights and as such benefit throughout their mandates and beyond, in respect of matters connected with their mandates, from the privileges and immunities, *inter alia* from search, seizure, prosecution and arrest, enjoyed by the UN.

The meeting recommended, *inter alia*, that:

- ♦ the Activities and Programmes Branch of the OHCHR develop systems for effective coordination among various special rapporteurs/representatives, experts and working groups of the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights and of the advisory services programme, and between them and the field operations of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in particular to facilitate a regular flow of information on their activities, to transmit information from one mandate to other relevant mandates, and to encourage joint activities;
- ♦ thematic rapporteurs and working groups consult with the country-specific rapporteurs prior to undertaking or seeking a field mission;
- ♦ the Secretariat devise modalities to improve cooperation between the special procedures system and the treaty bodies;
- ♦ a representatives of the special procedures participate in the annual meetings of the persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies;
- ♦ consideration be given to issuing laissez-passers to special rapporteurs/representatives, experts and chairpersons of working groups of the special procedures and the advisory services programme of the Commission on Human Rights when they undertake field missions;
- ♦ the limited human resources presently available to the holders of special procedures mandates not be further diminished under the new structure of the OHCHR; and
- ♦ technical cooperation continue to function as a separate entity and not be merged or amalgamated with the special procedures owing to the different nature of the respective activities.

The meeting also reiterated several recommendations made at the conclusion of the third meeting, including, *inter alia*, that:

- ♦ a study be carried out on the conditions under which the HCHR could intervene with a given country to facilitate the follow-up of recommendations by the holders of human rights mandates; and

- ♦ the HCHR convey suggestions concerning a follow-up procedure to the special rapporteurs/representatives, experts and working groups before their fifth meeting is convened.

Appendix V of the report sets out the terms of reference for fact-finding missions. These terms include that the government guarantee:

- ♦ freedom of movement in the whole country, including facilitation of transport, in particular to restricted areas;
- ♦ freedom of inquiry, in particular as regards: (a) access to all prisons, detention centres and places of interrogation; (b) contacts with central and local authorities of all branches of government; (c) contacts with representatives of non-governmental organizations, other private institutions and the media; (d) confidential and unsupervised contact with witnesses and other private persons, including persons deprived of their liberty; and (e) full access to all documentary material relevant to the mandate;
- ♦ assurance that no persons, official or private individuals who have been in contact with the special rapporteur/representative in relation to the mandate will for this reason suffer threats, harassment or punishment or be subjected to judicial proceedings;
- ♦ appropriate security arrangements without, however, restricting the freedom of movement and inquiry referred to above; and
- ♦ extension of these same guarantees and facilities to the appropriate UN staff who will assist the special rapporteur/representative before, during and after the visit.



TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

Report of the Secretary-General

The report of the Secretary-General on technical cooperation in the field of human rights (E/CN.4/1998/92) provides an overview of the programme and budget and information on, *inter alia*: new developments in technical cooperation, new approaches to cooperation within the UN system, assistance to national human rights institutions, support to the Voluntary Fund, a global assistance strategy, and activities carried out in 1997. (More detailed information, including the specific types of assistance available under the programme, is available in Human Rights Fact Sheet No. 3, Rev. 1).

According to its mission statement, the technical cooperation programme in the field of human rights is a UN programme implemented under the leadership of the