

GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMISSION IN ORDER TO EMPHASIZE INTERNATIONAL CONCERN. IN BOTH HAITI AND PARAGUAY THE TIME SEEMS RIPE, ON THE ONE HAND, TO EXPLORE CONCERNS SHARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, TO INVESTIGATE MEANS WHEREBY POSITIVE TRENDS CAN BE REINFORCED AND ENCOURAGED. THE PHILIPPINES CONTINUES TO PRESENT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO MAKE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AN INTEGRAL PART OF RE-BUILDING A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY THERE.

RECOMMENDING THIS FLEXIBILITY OF APPROACH IN THE WORK OF SPECIAL RAPORTEURS IS NOT TO SUGGEST THAT STANDARDS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO FALL. INDEED, THE COMMON STANDARDS DEVELOPED IN THIS ORGANIZATION OVER THE PAST FORTY YEARS - OF WHICH THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS THE CAPSTONE - MUST REMAIN THE YARDSTICKS AGAINST WHICH PERFORMANCE IS MEASURED. THIS IS, IN MANY RESPECTS, THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN IRAN, WHERE THERE IS IRREFUTABLE EVIDENCE OF SUMMARY EXECUTIONS, ARBITRARY IMPRISONMENT AND, MORE RECENTLY, THREATS AGAINST THOSE EXERCISING THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. IN THIS SITUATION, THE VOICE OF THE COMMISSION MUST BE CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCAL. SIMILARLY, WE WOULD WARN AGAINST THE COMMON ASSUMPTION THAT POLITICAL CHANGE NECESSARILY BRINGS WITH IT A MORE FAVOURABLE CLIMATE FOR THE