

education and food. The government indicated that the basic principles governing these programmes were to respect and preserve, through bi-cultural education, the ethnic identity of each of the seven Mayan language groups, guarantee their legal stay and security in Mexico until such time as they individually expressed their preference for voluntary repatriation, and to offer them a standard of living and opportunities for development and work equivalent to those of the Mexican population living in the same area. The government also indicated that the Minister of the Interior had announced an immigration stabilization plan to enable refugees to become integrated into the country. The government further noted the development, with the government of Guatemala and in cooperation with UNHCR, of mechanisms for cooperation to facilitate the repatriation and economic assimilation of those asking to return to their communities.

Restitution, compensation and rehabilitation, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/29, paras. 4 and Mexico)

The report of the Secretary-General summarizes information provided by the government in which it is stated that: the amendment in 1994 to federal laws and provisions have resulted in the adoption of laws in various states aimed at caring for and compensating victims. In one state this has included the establishment of a fund into which fines imposed by the courts are deposited to increase the amount of assistance available to victims. Further, several states have established centres to care for victims of offences.

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NICARAGUA

Date of admission to UN: 24 October 1945.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: Nicaragua has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 12 March 1980.

Nicaragua's second periodic report was due 30 June 1995.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 12 March 1980.

Nicaragua's third periodic report was due 11 June 1991; the fourth periodic report was due 11 June 1996.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 12 March 1980.

Second Optional Protocol: Signed: 21 February 1990.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 15 February 1978.

Nicaragua's 10th periodic report was due 17 March 1997.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 17 July 1980; ratified: 21 May 1981.

Nicaragua's fourth periodic report was due 9 February 1994.

Torture

Signed: 15 April 1985.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 6 February 1990; ratified: 5 October 1990.

Nicaragua's second periodic report was due 3 November 1997.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

Disappearances, Working Group on enforced or involuntary: (E/CN.4/1997/34, paras. 256-259)

Most of the 234 cases reported to the Working Group (WG) occurred between 1979 and 1983, within the context of internal armed conflict, and pointed to the involvement of members of the army, the former Sandinistas, the former General Directorate for the Security of the State and the Frontier Guard. Two cases, however, reportedly occurred in 1994. The first concerned a farmer who was allegedly detained by a group composed of members of the army and the police; the second concerned a person allegedly accused of being a member of an armed group.

Of the 234 cases, 103 remain to be clarified, but the government has not responded to the WG's requests for information and clarification. The WG expressed regret at the lack of response from the government. It stressed the need to improve cooperation and to remind the government that under the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance there is a continuous commitment to conduct thorough and impartial investigations until the fate of the victim is clarified.

Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/60, paras. 16, 18, 34; E/CN.4/1997/60/Add.1, paras. 360-364)

The Special Rapporteur (SR) referred to the government allegations of violations of the right to life committed by security forces during demonstrations and a massacre in Nueva Segovia in which 11 people were killed, allegedly by members of the Sandanista People's Army. The government has not responded to any of the cases transmitted and the SR urges the authorities to conduct thorough and impartial investigations into these allegations, hold those responsible accountable before a court of law, and provide appropriate compensation to the victims or their families.

Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (A/52/477, paras. 21, 25, 28, 31, 37)

The Special Rapporteur's interim report to the General Assembly notes that the government provided information on freedom of religion and belief from the perspective of the curricula and textbooks or primary or basic and secondary educational institutions. The report refers to communications addressed to the government related to violations of religious freedoms against groups and communities other than the official, state or predominant religion. Information received indicated that the Catholic Church was campaigning to introduce Catholic textbooks in public schools that appear to preach a message of intolerance towards other religions.

Violence against women, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/47, para. 34)

In the section of the report dealing with rape and sexual harassment, the Special Rapporteur notes that in many countries the legal link between rape and morality remains. The law in Nicaragua, however, is seen as one of the most