

In Haiti and the Philippines, repressive regimes have been succeeded by new governments dedicated to a fresh approach to human rights. They must be supported and encouraged. Equatorial Guinea has only recently emerged from a tragic situation in which an ugly regime succeeded in destroying the very infrastructure of the country. Uganda, as well, endured one of the most notorious governments of the 1970s before finally emerging with a government publicly committed to greater respect for human rights. In all these cases, the assistance of the United Nations has been crucial in the economic and social spheres; with care and discernment, we could be equally crucial in the restoration of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, complementary support from national and regional and non-governmental institutions should be encouraged. The global standards of this organization, rooted in the Declaration of 1948, provide the basic framework. The fact-finding, conciliation and monitoring mechanisms developed under various instruments and procedures afford useful examples to other bodies. We acknowledge especially the work of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and we welcome the recent entry into force of the African Charter of Human and People's Rights. Amnesty International, the vast array of church groups, and the Helsinki Watch Committees play indispensable roles - their submission and their commitment are invaluable. National and regional and NGO institutions however, require the active support and assistance of the entire international community. We therefore welcome the initiative of the Centre for Human Rights in launching training programs in the human rights field, and we look forward to placing all such efforts on a solid budgetary foundation.

Mr. Chairman, we listened with interest to earlier portions of this debate. We noted the charges and counter-charges of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, and a later exchange between the Soviet Union and the United States. It occurred to us then, as it does now, that our own intervention might trigger similar rights of reply, and provoke similarly heated arguments. But about human rights there can be no equivocation, no cavilling, no sophistry. If some are angered, let the issue be joined.

In many respects this chamber is ill-suited to the tasks of discharging its charter mandates. Non-governmental organizations have always been better than governments at describing situations in comprehensive, if brutal, clarity. We represent governments. Our governments have interests. It is therefore frequently tempting to bury views behind high-sounding phrases rather than to face the issues directly.