

Appendix 1

METHODOLOGICAL AND TECHNICAL ISSUES

Section A of this Appendix discusses the format of this report and the methodology used to compile the information. Section B contains descriptions of bodies, procedures and terminology used but not defined in *For the Record 1997*.

Section A. Format and Methodology

1. Presentation of the Material

This report is a pilot project for what we hope will become an annual report. The time-period covered by *For the Record 1997* is the calendar year, from 1 January to 31 December, 1997. The focus is on the main bodies that take action in the area of human rights. In concrete terms, this means that we cover the work of the Commission on Human Rights in March/April, the Sub-Commission in August, ECOSOC in July, the Third Committee of the General Assembly in November, the sessions of the treaty-bodies whenever they meet throughout the year, and actions or decisions of the Security Council and UN field presences whenever these are relevant. In future years, we hope to expand the coverage to encompass the work of other bodies and agencies in the UN system. However, for this initial report, we have focused narrowly on the major areas of activity.

It is important to stress that, while we have had to summarize actions and decisions of UN bodies and mechanisms, we have striven to present the material as objectively as possible, and with no editorial comment.

The report has been produced in three separate formats in both English and French: in hardcopy (6 volumes); on the World Wide Web at <http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord1997>, with full hyperlinks to almost all the original documentation for the English version; and as a CD-ROM of the Website.

In this pilot issue, we were not able to provide hyperlinks to the French documents because we were unable to obtain electronic versions of many of those documents from either the Website of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights or from the United Nations Optical Disk System (ODS). The ODS currently serves as an archive of all public UN documentation in all official languages since the early 1990s; however, the archive is still very incomplete with respect to languages other than English. This situation may change in the future as the Office of the High Commissioner is making a concerted effort to develop the French and Spanish versions of its Website. Where there are no hyperlinks to English documents, it is because we were unable to locate an electronic version of the document by January 31, 1998, the

cut-off date we had established for accumulating 1997 documents.

When you click on a hyperlink on the Website, you are brought to the top of the document and should use the "find" command in the edit menu of your Web browser to locate a specific country, subject or paragraph within the document. In both hardcopy and on the Web we specify, where possible, not only the UN document number but the relevant paragraphs in the document. Unfortunately, there are many documents in which not all paragraphs are numbered consecutively.

2. The Geographic Volumes, 2-6.

In preparing the main section of this report (volumes 2-6), we divided the world into five broad regions which, with one exception, follow geographic lines: Africa (53 entries), Asia (57), Latin America and the Caribbean (33) and Eastern Europe (22). The fifth grouping, Western Europe and Other (29), includes the countries of Western Europe, Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. In the geographic volumes, we have include not only States, but also territories which have ratified at least one of the six major international human rights conventions, and one area (Palestine) which has its own political authority and is the subject of several UN reports and resolutions.

For every geographic entry, the following format was used, although not every entry has information under each heading or sub-heading:

Date of admission to the United Nations.

Treaties and Reports to Treaty Bodies:

(a) **Land and People:** the report indicates whether or not the country/territory has submitted a "core document" (intended to provide general background information for all the treaty bodies) to the UN. If so, a brief summary of document is provided which focuses on how the government describes its national institutions and procedures for the protection of human rights..

(b) Reports to treaty-bodies

1. "Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" refers to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which entered into force 3 January 1976.
2. "Civil and Political Rights" refers to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which entered into force on 23 March 1976.