

contention that the country reports before us are uneven in quality and are informed by differing principles of judgment and assessment. While we may not be able to report on each country with the same degree of intensity, we should strive for uniform fact-finding procedures.

The case of Iran, of course, is a special one, because Iran alone has categorically withheld cooperation from the Commission, thereby making it impossible to arrive at definitive conclusions. What judgments we draw must therefore be the product of other evidence, much of it collected from beyond the borders of Iran. But there remain sufficient grounds for profound concern over evidence of summary executions, torture, infringements of minority and religious rights, especially against the Baha'i community, and the absence of judicial safeguards against arbitrary prosecutions.

The Commission must guard against falling for the proposition that universally accepted norms and standards can be attenuated because of the laws, customs and practices of a particular state. The Universal Declaration is exactly that -- UNIVERSAL -- and it would be a sorry reversal for this Commission ever to agree that despicable practices such as mutilation, dismemberment or other aberrations of protected norms were placed beyond our scrutiny.

Three other country situations also warrant comment from the point of view of cooperation with the United Nations. The report on Chile contains a damning indictment of that country's Minister of Justice and his less-than-cooperative attitude during the visit of the special rapporteur. The report on Haiti was drafted without the benefit of a visit, although for reasons largely beyond the control of any individual. The report on Afghanistan is confined as it is to a narrow geographical spectrum. My delegation hopes that by the time we meet next year all foreign troops will have been withdrawn and a new government enjoying broad popular appeal will have taken office.

While these differences are well beyond the power of this Commission to correct, others could be remedied through greater consistency of analysis. In a number of reports, for example, the special rapporteurs or experts have drawn conclusions as to the good will of the government concerned or the prospects for improvements in