



Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERALE/CN.4/2003/54
10 January 2003

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-ninth session
Item 10 of the provisional agendaECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS
The right to foodReport submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Jean Ziegler,
in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/25

Executive summary

The Special Rapporteur submits this report to the Commission on Human Rights in accordance with its resolution 2002/25.

At the time of writing this report, the Special Rapporteur is gravely concerned by the suffering and hunger of 38 million people across Africa, principally in southern Africa and in Ethiopia and Eritrea. He is also extremely concerned that in *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2002* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) highlights the fact that progress in reducing world hunger has virtually come to a halt. The number of undernourished people around the world has increased to 840 million. Over 2 billion people worldwide suffer from "hidden hunger", or micronutrient deficiencies, meaning, for instance, that children fail to grow and develop normally, their bodies are stunted and sometimes deformed, as are their intellectual capacities and immune systems. Every day, every seven seconds, another child under the age of 10 dies from hunger or hunger-related diseases.

In this report, the Special Rapporteur reports on his activities to promote greater awareness and implementation of the right to food, including his official missions. His report on the situation of the right to food in Brazil is submitted to the Commission as an addendum to this report. This report then focuses on two key initiatives being taken at the international level: the development of international "voluntary guidelines" on the right to food, under the auspices of FAO, and the production of a new General Comment No. 15 on the right to water by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In fulfilling his mandate, which includes water as a fundamental element of nourishment, the Special Rapporteur calls attention to this new development, and then discusses concrete examples of how food and water are inextricably linked in practice. The Special Rapporteur believes that these two groundbreaking developments will strengthen the understanding of the right to food around the world and, with hope, engage Governments in taking real action to eradicate hunger.

In a third section of the report, the Special Rapporteur describes the process in place for receiving and responding to allegations of violations of the right to food around the world. The aim of receiving and responding to allegations is to reduce the impunity that surrounds violations of the right to food around the world.

Finally the Special Rapporteur ends with conclusions and recommendations.

/...

II. WATER AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

/...

B. Linkages between the right to water and
the right to food: concrete examples

/...

Occupied Palestinian territories

56. On 20 August 2002, the Special Rapporteur wrote to the Government of Israel regarding reports of rapidly increasing malnutrition levels in the occupied Palestinian territories as a result of possible violations of the right to food in the territories. A joint submission from Palestinian, Israeli and international non-governmental organizations documented evidence of the deteriorating nutritional status, particularly of Palestinian children. A recent assessment for the United States Agency for International Development by Care International indicates an increase in the number of malnourished children with 22.5 per cent of children under 5 suffering from acute (9.3 per cent) or chronic (13.2 per cent) malnutrition.⁴⁶ A recent resolution by the World Health Assembly also records the deterioration in health conditions (WHA55.2). Allegations relate to the escalation in closure, curfew and siege policies by the Israeli occupying authorities since September 2000, and invasions and reoccupation of the Palestinian areas since March/April 2002. These policies have been instituted in response to Palestinian attacks on Israeli soldiers, settlers and civilians. However, it is alleged that these policies have resulted in widespread violation of the Palestinian population's right to food and water. Restrictions of movement are alleged to directly deny access to food, water and work, causing growing malnutrition and poverty. Instances of deliberate destruction of food and water sources necessary for the survival of the civilian population, including the destruction of agricultural land and crops, roof water tanks, groundwater wells and irrigation networks are also reported, and allegations also suggest that closure and siege policies have obstructed the delivery of food aid and emergency assistance. The Special Rapporteur also received, on 29 November 2002, an updated urgent appeal from the same coalition of Israeli, Palestinian and international NGOs, which records a further deterioration of the situation. The Special Rapporteur reminded the Government of Israel of the obligations to respect the

right to food under international human rights and humanitarian law.

/...

	Notes
--	--------------

[46www.usaid.gov/wbg/report_1.htm](http://www.usaid.gov/wbg/report_1.htm).

/...