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New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 59th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KABORE (Burkina Faso)

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The meeting was called to order at 6.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/44/3, A/44/402, A/44/403, A/44/404, A/44/426, A/44/440, A/44/462, A/44/482, A/44/573, A/44/600, A/44/620, A/44/622, A/44/635, A/44/657, A/44/669, A/44/671; A/C.3/44/1 and 4; A/44/57, A/44/68, A/44/71, A/44/99, A/44/119, A/44/153, A/44/171, A/44/238 and Corr.1, A/44/320, A/44/325, A/44/355-S/20704, A/44/367, A/44/377, A/44/378, A/44/381, A/44/466, A/44/504, A/44/580, A/44/706, A/44/728 and A/C.3/44/8)

AGENDA ITEM 109: EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (A/44/98, A/44/171, A/44/539, A/44/668, A/44/409-S/20743 and Corr.1 and 2, A/44/551-S/20870 and A/44/689-S/20921)

1. Mr. GHAREKHAN (India), stressing his country's strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, said that, in his Government's view, individual rights in the political sphere were indissociable from those relating to social and economic life. India was therefore seeking to combine democracy with economic development and social justice.

2. His delegation considered it unproductive when the espousal of human rights took on a controversial character; in fact, a divisive approach detracted from the importance of the subject. Words, or even signatures to Covenants, were clearly not enough to ensure the effective enjoyment of human rights. Referring to statements made in the Committee welcoming the reform of apartheid, he said that apartheid could not be reformed and must be dismantled. The people of Palestine, too, had to be permitted to exercise their right to self-determination and to live in peace and security. His Government also hoped that the authorities in Myanmar would respond to their people's urge for freedom and democracy and would work with the people to bring the present tensions to an end. As the Indian Foreign Minister had stated at the 20th plenary meeting on 5 October 1989, the Indian Government was distressed that the report of the Constitution Inquiry Advisory Committee in Fiji did very little to eliminate the racially discriminatory character of the draft constitution, and hoped that better sense would prevail before it was too late. His delegation also reaffirmed its solidarity with the people of Cyprus and supported efforts to resolve the problem in that country on the basis of its sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

3. Noting that the urge for democratic expression of views within nations was paralleled by a drive for more democratic representation in international forums, he welcomed the expansion of the membership of the Commission on the Status of Women, which would reflect more equitably the different regional groups. It was to be hoped that the principle of equitable regional distribution would also be applied in other bodies of the United Nations system and, in particular, that a consensus would be reached on the proposed expansion of the Commission on Human Rights.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

4. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on human rights and mass exoduses (A/44/622), he recalled that, in speaking on the same subject at the previous session, his delegation had expressed some doubt as to whether it was appropriate for the Office for Research and Collection of Information to rely on non-governmental organizations for monitoring possible flows of refugees. In the context of the present report, he again wished to stress how important it was for the relevant United Nations bodies to remain in touch with the Governments of the Member States concerned. Non-governmental organizations could and did make a valuable contribution, but they could not take over the role of the Member States. His delegation looked forward with interest to further reports on that subject. It also took note with interest of the report of the Working Group on the Drafting of a Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, as well as in the three documents under agenda item 109 pertaining to the reporting obligations of States parties to United Nations instruments on human rights (A/44/98, A/44/539 and A/44/668). There appeared to be some need to improve the efficacy of existing mechanisms in relation to the rights which they were designed to protect and promote.

5. Ms. KUNUTSOR (Togo) said that the proliferation of instruments on human rights was in itself convincing evidence of the wide range of the efforts to protect and promote those rights. At the same time, such instruments were meaningful only if they were implemented effectively by the States parties concerned. It was therefore vital to ensure the proper functioning of the treaty - monitoring bodies and, in that connection, she welcomed the study carried out by an independent expert (A/44/668) on long-term approaches to enhancing the effective operation of both existing and prospective human rights treaty bodies. The study had highlighted the burden placed upon States parties by multiple reporting obligations and had proposed the extension of the reporting cycle and the consolidation and harmonization of reporting guidelines. It was encouraging that steps to extend the periodicity of reporting had recently been taken by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Group of Three. In addition, her delegation welcomed the fact that, as indicated in document A/44/539, the Secretary-General intended to submit to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly the final text of the consolidated guidelines governing the initial section of the reports of States parties. The adoption of such consolidated guidelines was expected to alleviate the reporting burdens of States who were parties to several instruments by making it possible for them to submit the same initial section of their report to various treaty bodies.

6. The treaty bodies had in recent years faced a particularly precarious financial situation as a result of the general financial crisis of the United Nations and the failure of some States parties to fulfil their financial commitments. The General Assembly had on many occasions voiced its concern that financial problems were increasingly hampering the effective functioning of the various monitoring bodies. She therefore welcomed the conclusion contained in the study by the independent expert that, as a short-term measure, the General Assembly should authorize temporary regular budget funding to make up the shortfall required

(Ms. Kunutsor, Togo)

to enable treaty bodies to continue to fulfil their functions. In light of the findings of the study, it was becoming increasingly clear that regular budget funding for all of the treaty bodies was the best way to enable those bodies to avoid future financial problems. As properly pointed out in the study, the entire international community was the main beneficiary of an effective treaty régime, and human rights instruments and the treaty bodies established to monitor them must be considered as an integral part of the United Nations system.

7. The treaty system was the corner-stone of the United Nations human rights programme and it was essential to do everything possible to ensure the effective implementation of the human rights instruments and the optimal functioning of the monitoring bodies. In that connection her delegation welcomed the recommendations to provide technical assistance and consultative services on a regular basis in order to assist States parties in fulfilling their reporting obligations.

8. Mrs. BARGHOUTI (Observer for Palestine) said that the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory had been consistently and systematically violated. The Israeli military authorities were continuing their acts of cruelty against defenceless Palestinian civilians in order to break their will and to put an end to the heroic intifadah. The brutal nature of Israeli oppressive and inhuman treatment of the Palestinians had been confirmed and documented by many international human rights institutions and individuals.

9. It was clear that the Israeli authorities were resorting to expulsion as a punitive action against the Palestinian people. Between 1967 and 1987, the Israeli authorities had expelled more than 1,200 Palestinians and, during the intifadah alone, they had deported 61. Such expulsions constituted a clear violation of article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention.

10. On the pretext of security, Israel had introduced in Gaza a system by which every Arab labourer seeking work in Israel was required to have a magnetic identity card. Before such cards were issued, the labourer had to pass very rigid security measures. The slightest violation of those laws could deprive any labourer from obtaining the card which in turn meant depriving him of all means of an honest livelihood. That system of discrimination closely resembled that followed by the apartheid régime of South Africa.

11. The Israeli Government had also stepped up its attacks on the Palestinian press during the intifadah and Palestinian journalists had charged that those measures represented part of a grand design to censor the heritage, history and culture of the Palestinian people in order to deprive them of their Palestinian consciousness. More than 70 per cent of the Palestinian journalists in territory under Israeli occupation had either been arrested or detained without trial or kept under house arrest.

12. The use of plastic bullets by Israeli armed forces had been introduced into the occupied territories in August 1988 because rubber bullets and tear gas had been insufficient to deter stone throwing. The scale of human rights violations in

(Mrs. Barghouti, Observer,  
Palestine)

the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly shooting, systematic beatings and widespread misuse of tear gas had placed a strain on the health services. Instead of expanding such services, the occupation authorities had taken measures to obstruct ambulances and cars carrying the sick and wounded; Israeli soldiers had raided hospitals and health clinics and denied medical teams access to areas under long curfew. UNRWA and other humanitarian agencies had reported regular interference with their efforts to collect and transport the wounded.

13. Palestinian political detainees were interrogated by the Israeli secret service and the use of torture and mistreatment in Israeli detention centres had been widely documented. Such detention centres had been called "confession factories" reflecting the efficient methods applied for forcing Palestinians to sign confessions written in Hebrew, a language most could not read, for acts they had not committed.

14. Such brutality and the denial of the basic human rights of the Palestinian people could only be ended through a comprehensive peace in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. She urged the Committee to support the legitimate struggles of the Palestinian people for freedom and independence.

15. Mr. DAZA (Chile) said that his delegation had endeavoured during the past two years to clarify the nature and timing of Chile's transition to a democratic régime, which would be completed with the forthcoming elections. His country had made great strides in the past 15 years in building a free modern society and a prosperous economy. The people of Chile enjoyed political and economic freedom and looked to the future with optimism. His country had also achieved a great deal in pursuing social policies aimed at eliminating extreme poverty and bringing about a more equitable distribution of wealth. While it had not solved all of its major problems, Chile had constructed a society which could successfully resolve them.

16. It was disappointing that the Western European countries refused to recognize the new reality in Chile, even though it had been recognized elsewhere. Those countries had spread disinformation about his country, quoting out of context from the Special Rapporteur's report on human rights in his country. It would appear that certain States were distressed at the fact that a military Government had lived up to its commitments.

17. The decision of his Government to refuse an ad hoc approach to the situation of human rights in Chile was understandable. The Special Rapporteur had described his past working relationship with Chile as productive, but there was no recognition of the co-operative spirit shown by his country. His Government had based its decision on the current reality in Chile. While the human rights situation in Chile had been unsatisfactory in the past, conditions were now normal. Individuals were no longer exiled, fortune was not condoned and all complaints of human rights violations were investigated. While the distorted picture painted by some in the Third Committee would not impede the progress of his country, it could have an adverse effect on the cause of human rights.

18. Mr. VOICU (Romania) said that the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms was a component of the social, economic and political system of each State and could not be assessed outside the national context. Human rights were therefore by their very nature an internal matter and the responsibility of each State. In that connection, he referred to the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States contained in General Assembly resolution 36/103 and, in particular, to its paragraphs 1, 2, 2.I (a) and (b), 1.II (j) and (l), and 2.III (d). At a time when the basic principles of relations between States were more and more widely recognized, it was totally inadmissible as well as contrary to the requirements of the new climate prevailing in international life that the Governments of some States should arrogate to themselves the power to evaluate the manner in which human rights were exercised in other countries. It was also illegal to encourage organizations and groups to break the laws of their country. The claim of some States that they were entitled to condemn Governments whose domestic policy they disliked or to enforce sanctions against those Governments was equally inadmissible from the point of view of international law. Such attempts at interfering in the domestic affairs of other States could only have negative consequences on relations between States as a whole and, in particular, on international co-operation in the field of human rights.

19. Romania was a socialist country working towards ensuring full equality of rights to all its inhabitants, irrespective of their ethnic origin. The economic and social transformations and qualitative changes wrought in the material and spiritual life of the Romanian people over the past decades had created a framework conducive to the promotion of human rights for everyone in close correlation with the progress achieved in all sectors of activity, emphasis being placed permanently on material as well as legal guarantees of human rights.

20. Debates in the Committee at the current session had once again revealed that attempts were being made to emphasize only certain formal and marginal aspects of the promotion of human rights and to ignore the essential aspects. Such an approach was designed to divert attention from such social phenomena as mass unemployment, exploitation of the working people and flagrant economic and social inequalities, which should form the central subject of discussion.

21. In considering agenda item 12, the Committee should examine appropriate ways and means of creating favourable conditions for the promotion and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in their entirety; in particular, it should respond to calls for more vigorous action against all manifestations of racism and racial discrimination and other acts of hatred, discord, violence and terrorism which jeopardized the normal life of peoples and individuals. So far as the institutional aspects of human rights were concerned, his delegation felt that the existing mechanisms within the United Nations were adequate and that attention should now be focused primarily on ways and means of ensuring that the existing bodies could implement their mandates, concentrating on generally recognized fundamental aspects of human rights rather than on marginal or formal ones. If they were to make a genuinely constructive contribution, those bodies should not be used for purposes of political and ideological diversion.

22. Mr. ORAMAS OLIVA (Cuba) said that the Commission on Human Rights had put great effort into considering the large number of items on its agenda and it was a matter of concern that there had been certain adverse trends which had lessened the effectiveness of its work. Some Western countries continued to exploit human rights issues for political ends, to the disadvantage of developing countries. The defence of human rights was not the exclusive concern of a few countries and those few could not impose their ideas on the rest. All countries, the developing countries in particular, had the duty to guarantee the rights of their peoples.

23. He wished to reiterate Cuba's support for resolution 1989/6 of the Commission on Human Rights, entitled "Adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of political, military, economic and other forms of assistance given to the racist and colonialist régime of South Africa" and for other resolutions and decisions condemning the continuing violation of human rights in South Africa. The elections held in that country on 6 September 1989 had only confirmed the racist policy of apartheid. In addition, his Government condemned the repressive policy pursued by the Government of Israel against the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.

24. According to the report of the Special Rapporteur on Chile (A/44/635), human rights continued to be violated and the system of military justice still posed a threat to fundamental freedoms. The consistent implementation of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations would help to bring about major changes in the human rights situation in Chile and, in particular, he endorsed the recommendation stressing the need for the Government of Chile to resume its co-operation with the Special Rapporteur. It was also important to pay close attention to the manner in which the forthcoming elections in Chile were conducted.

25. His country shared the concern of many delegations about the deterioration of the human rights situation in Guatemala. Violations of those rights had increased in 1989 as a result of repressive actions by the military and paramilitary groups. Such actions were an obstacle to a negotiated political settlement among all parties concerned.

26. His Government had hoped that the new Government in El Salvador would take steps to find a negotiated settlement to the conflict in that country. In the mean time, however, the human rights situation in that country had deteriorated. Out of desperation, the military high command had resorted to repressive measures, such as massive and indiscriminate bombing of the civilian population. The assassination of the Rector and others associated with the Central American University was proof of the evil nature of that régime and should be fully investigated by the international community. His country was also concerned at the evidence of growing interference in the conflict by the United States, which might lead to its regionalization. Only genuine dialogue could lead to a solution, which must be based on strict respect for the rights of the Salvadorian people.

27. Despite being rebuffed by the international community, the United States of America had persisted in an anti-Cuban campaign in the service of which it used its economic might and control of international information sources. Everyone knew

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

that his country did not commit flagrant or massive violations of human rights. Cuba was a State based on the rule of law and governed by a Constitution overwhelmingly approved in a referendum. It was governed by laws enacted by the National Assembly and elected its leaders at regular intervals. The laws in force duly guaranteed the civil and political rights of citizens. More important, those rights were not merely for the enjoyment of a few. The enormous efforts to combat underdevelopment had resulted in a literate population and a policy of free education for all. Cuba was an open country with nothing to hide. In 1988, his Government had invited a mission of the Commission on Human Rights to observe the efforts being made in Cuba to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights in order to respond to the gross calumnies spread by the United States Government, which still persisted in its unilateral and shameful economic blockade of his country. The report of the observer mission had confirmed the absence of human rights violations in Cuba. Furthermore, the Commission on Human Rights had seen no need for further investigation of the human rights situation in his country.

28. Mr. GOLEMANOV (Bulgaria), noting with satisfaction the positive changes which had taken place in the field of human rights in many parts of the world during the year, stressed the importance of the role of the United Nations in promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The immediate tasks facing the Organization were to identify the main areas and priorities of co-operation, to intensify its efforts in the field of human rights and to encourage all participants in the process to discard outdated ideas and focus on the problems facing them from the vantage point of their common interests. In his delegation's view, highest priority should continue to be assigned to the elimination of massive and flagrant violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially in situations which threatened international peace and security and which resulted from racism, racial discrimination and apartheid, foreign domination and occupation, aggression and threats against the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States, and the denial of the right to self-determination. The use of human rights issues as a means of exerting pressure on others could only hamper progress; existing problems could only be solved on the basis of fair and sincere dialogue between all parties.

29. Emphasizing his country's active participation in international co-operation in the field of human rights in conformity with existing international instruments, including the Concluding Document adopted in 1989 by the Vienna Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, he said that considerable changes towards the further democratization of all spheres of public life were taking place in Bulgaria's legislation and Government apparatus. Earlier in 1989, the National Assembly had eliminated previously existing restrictions on travel and temporary or permanent residence abroad, thus effectively ensuring the right of all citizens freely to leave and to return to their country. Changes had also been introduced in other spheres, such as that of freedom of religion and conscience. Among the most recent examples of the energetic approach adopted by his country's new leadership was the decision to abolish an article of the Penal Code on anti-Government propaganda and to amnesty all persons previously convicted under that article, and also the reorganization of the Ministry of the Interior and the disbanding of its directorate which had previously dealt with ideological subversion.



(Mr. Golemanov, Bulgaria)

30. While most of the speakers who had mentioned Bulgaria in the present debate had made efforts to achieve a reasonable standard of objectivity, a few others had unfortunately failed to take account of recent developments or to refrain from placing political bias above genuine concern for human rights. His delegation particularly deplored the remarks concerning Bulgaria contained in the statement by the observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference, an organization with whose members Bulgaria had for many years maintained good relations of trust and co-operation in many areas. Indeed, it was the realism and statesmanship of the current Chairman of the Fifth Islamic Summit, the Emir of Kuwait, which had greatly contributed to the initiation of Bulgaria's most recent efforts to deal with the issue of its Muslim citizens. The Bulgarian Government, for its part, had consistently kept the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference informed of its position and had demonstrated in many other ways its full readiness to co-operate with them in all spheres of mutual interest.

31. As regards the alleged expulsion from Bulgaria of citizens of Turkish origin, he said that his country's constitution guaranteed equal rights to all its citizens. Those Bulgarian citizens who, following the adoption of the new legislation on free travel, had left Bulgaria for Turkey in the spring of 1989 had done so of their own free will and under no compulsion whatsoever. To date, 64,797 Bulgarian citizens had returned to Bulgaria, and the flow still continued. In conclusion, he stressed his country's desire to live in mutual trust and respect with its Balkan neighbours and also to work for the development and maintenance of normal good-neighbourly relations with Turkey, discussing all existing problems without any pre-conditions and in compliance with generally accepted principles and norms of international law.

32. Mr. ELIADES (Cyprus) said that his delegation supported any measure aimed at improving reporting procedures on human rights. In that connection he reiterated that the unhampered functioning of the Human Rights Committee should be safeguarded by continuing the current practice of holding one of its sessions each year in New York.

33. His delegation welcomed the peaceful changes taking place in Eastern Europe which were conducive to a favourable climate for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Those events, together with a marked improvement in the relationship between the great Powers and the revitalization of the United Nations role in settling intractable conflicts, would, his delegation hoped, have a positive impact on other parts of the world where human rights violations continued unabated. The world was still confronted by serious cases of flagrant violations of human rights which called for more effective action on the part of the international community.

34. Such a case was the continuing violation of human rights in Cyprus which, for more than 15 years, had been divided. Almost 40 per cent of Cypriot territory was occupied by 35,000 Turkish troops, who were forcibly preventing 200,000 Greek Cypriots from returning to their ancestral homes. Turkey had been pursuing a policy of massive colonization in occupied Cyprus, by implanting 65,000 Turks there in an obvious attempt to change the demography of the country, while diluting the political will of the Turkish Cypriot community. During the previous few months,

(Mr. Eliades, Cyprus)

the Turkish side had been provocatively transporting and settling Bulgarian Muslims in Cyprus. At the same time, Turkey was plundering and mercilessly destroying the rich cultural heritage of Cyprus.

35. The adverse economic and political conditions prevailing in the occupied territory had caused the emigration, according to Turkish sources, of more than 20,000 Turkish Cypriots. As a result, for every indigenous Turkish Cypriot in Cyprus there was one Turk from mainland Turkey. The Turkish side was seeking to institutionalize a system of segregation of the Cypriot people based on ethnic origin.

36. Lasting peace and security for all was still attainable on the basis of an agreement for the establishment of a demilitarized, bi-communal, federal republic, under which the basic rights and fundamental freedoms of all citizens would be guaranteed. Progress towards such a solution must not, of course, run counter to the relevant United Nations resolutions.

37. Earlier in 1989, the Greek Cypriot side had submitted to the Secretary-General proposals for the creation of a demilitarized federal republic in Cyprus which would provide for participation by both communities at all levels and in all organs of the State and guarantee non-discrimination and the strict protection of human rights.

38. The Secretary-General would be meeting with the President of Cyprus the following day and, a few days later, with the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, Mr. Rauf Denktash, in his renewed efforts to resume the peace talks. His delegation considered that the New York meetings represented a step in the direction of substantive negotiations aimed at achieving a just and viable solution which would safeguard the unity, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-alignment of Cyprus without foreign troops and settlers on its soil. His Government had repeatedly expressed its full support for the efforts of the Secretary-General, which, it hoped, would result in a settlement restoring basic rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots.

39. Mr. CHYRSANTHOPOULOS (Greece) recalled that the Secretary-General had informed the Commission on Human Rights at its most recent session that the question of respect for human rights in Cyprus, including freedom of movement, freedom of settlement and the right to own property for all Cypriots, constituted an integral part of his mission of good offices and had been among the issues discussed by the leaders of the two communities during the current intercommunal talks.

40. The problem of the refugees was a matter of continuing concern; 200,000 Cypriots continued to be refugees in their own country as a result of the Turkish invasion of July 1974 and the continuing occupation of part of the Republic of Cyprus. A solution to that problem would greatly enhance the prospects of an overall settlement of the situation in Cyprus.

(Mr. Chyrsanthopoulos, Greece)

41. Also of great concern were the attempts by Turkey to change demographic composition of the occupied areas of the Republic of Cyprus. The total population of Cyprus was approximately 600,000, comprising 500,000 Greek Cypriots and 100,000 Turkish Cypriots. Even the smallest influx of settlers could therefore create serious problems. Turkey had proceeded with a massive transfer of settlers from Eastern Turkey with the result that the total number of settlers, including the occupation forces, currently surpassed that of the Turkish Cypriots themselves. The latter were reacting strongly to the presence of the settlers and in some cases had clashed violently with them, as had been reported even in the Turkish press. The settlers had gone so far as to found their own political party in the illegal entity which had been created in the occupied part of the country and which had been declared legally invalid by the Security Council in its resolution 541 (1983). Moreover, according to recent disturbing reports, the Turkish-Cypriot side had started to settle Muslims from Bulgaria in the occupied part of the Republic of Cyprus.

42. The problem of Cyprus was one of invasion and foreign occupation of the territory of a member State of the United Nations and, as such, it constituted a serious violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The problem of Cyprus could not be solved without the withdrawal of the occupation forces and of the settlers. It was to be hoped that the resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights aimed at the full restoration of respect for human rights in Cyprus would be implemented fully.

43. Mr. RASTAM (Malaysia), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.88 entitled "Enlargement of the Commission on Human Rights and the further promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms" on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the draft resolution was the product of lengthy consultations held in a spirit of compromise and co-operation, and expressed the hope that it could be adopted without a vote.

44. Miss CHENG (Democratic Kampuchea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that her delegation was grateful for the support expressed by delegations for the legitimate aspirations of the Kampuchean people to regain their right to self-determination. Since mid-1987, the Vietnamese occupiers had realized that they could no longer subjugate Cambodia by military means, and had attempted to depict their aggression and occupation as a civil war. They had disguised their forces as Cambodian soldiers, concealed a large number of other forces among the more than 1 million Vietnamese settlers living in Cambodia, and claimed to have completed a total military withdrawal. The rejection by the Vietnamese of an international verification mechanism to supervise that so-called withdrawal indicated that they had something to hide. Vietnamese language, culture and communism were also being imposed upon the Cambodian nation.

45. Some of the measures advocated by Prince Samdech Norodom Sihanouk to prevent the Khmer Rouge from regaining power were the dispatch of a United Nations international control mechanism and peace-keeping force, general disarmament of all armed factions or, if rejected by Viet Nam, equal reduction of effective military strength, simultaneous dismantling of the United Nations-recognized coalition

(Miss Cheng, Democratic Kampuchea)

Government of Democratic Kampuchea and the Vietnamese-backed régime in Phnom Pehn, and general elections organised by a provisional quadripartite Cambodian Government under United Nations supervision. Regrettably, Viet Nam had rejected all those suggestions and it continued to invoke the threat of the Khmer Rouge which provided a pretext for maintaining Vietnamese colonialism in Cambodia.

46. Mr. SAAD (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, referred to remarks made by the representative of Israel regarding the human rights situation of Jews in the Syrian Arab Republic. Israeli racism was directed not only against Arabs participating in the intifadah but also against certain Jewish groups themselves, for example, the Falasha of Ethiopia. His delegation made a distinction between Judaism, a respected religion, and Zionism, a racist political movement.

47. There was no "Jewish question" in the Syrian Arab Republic politically motivated propaganda notwithstanding. There was no discrimination in the treatment of Syrian citizens: all were subject to the same law. Syrian citizens of Jewish religion were, first and foremost, citizens. The restrictions on emigration were the same for all its citizens. Syrian Jews were well off and all had the opportunity to work and maintain their religious centres and private schools, although the public schools were open to them.

48. The arrested Jews to whom the representative of Israel had referred had violated the law restricting contact with Israel because of the state of war existing with that country.

49. Mr. ILIC (Yugoslavia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, took issue with the contention of the representative of Greece that there was no Yugoslav minority in Greece.

50. Ms. VARGAS (Nicaragua), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of El Salvador had spent the greater part of his statement in the general debate attacking President Daniel Ortega and the Government of Nicaragua, and had claimed Sandinist involvement in the current situation in his country. That was a ploy to divert the attention of the international community from the numerous reports of human rights violations in El Salvador and relieve the pressure on his Government, which had refused to accept a cease-fire under international supervision and was also attempting to evade its responsibility to comply with the Esquipulas II agreement.

51. The Government of El Salvador must recognize that no form of repression could deter a people which was fighting for far-reaching social change and its human rights. Revolution was not an exportable commodity; to be genuine it had to be the product of the people. Nicaragua had adopted a policy of negotiation and supported the multilateral efforts to bring about a settlement in the Central American region, such as the Esquipulas agreements and the Contadora process. It did not represent a threat to any of its neighbours.

(Ms. Vargas, Nicaragua)

52. Actions such as those of the Government of El Salvador posed an obstacle to the speedy implementation of the peace agreements and the verification mechanisms which Nicaragua had for so long been advocating. His delegation appealed to the international community to ignore the most recent propaganda attack against Nicaragua and urged the Government of El Salvador to accept and support the peace process.

53. Mr. GURCUOGLU (Turkey), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, pointed out that the question of Cyprus dated from 1963, and not 1974, as some would have the Committee believe. The question could only be settled by the two Cypriot parties. On the eve of the talks between the leaders of the two communities that were to be held under the auspices of the Secretary-General's good offices mission, provocative allegations must be avoided. Greece must also acknowledge its share of responsibility for the situation.

54. Mr. WALDROP (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that its concerns regarding the situation of human rights in Cuba were based on Articles 55 and 56 of the United Nations Charter and the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which Cuba was a party. His Government would like to see the Cuban people benefit from its Government's adherence to international norms such as those cited. In practice, however, the Government of Cuba did not respect the human rights of its citizens. His delegation looked forward to the outcome of the dialogue initiated by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 1989/113 of the Commission on Human Rights.

55. Mr. BARNEA (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the explanations offered by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic did not lessen the seriousness of the violation of the rights of Jews in that country. His delegation stood by its previous statement. If the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic was concerned at the situation in the occupied territories, he should tell his people to reject violence and work towards free elections.

56. It was gratifying to learn that, according to the representative of Lebanon, all the human rights problems in Beirut had been solved and that only in southern Lebanon did such problems exist. Israel had no interest in or laid claim to any part of Lebanese territory. Its only concern was to protect Israeli villages on the Lebanese border. When the Lebanese Government was able to control its entire territory and prevent terrorist activities, Israel would be ready to enter into negotiations on southern Lebanon.

57. Mr. ELIADES (Cyprus), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that two prominent Turkish Cypriot leaders had recently stated publicly that the Berlin wall might have crumbled, but the partition of Cyprus was here to stay. That was not a new line of thought, as partition had been the goal of the Turkish leadership even before the independence of Cyprus. A Turkish Cypriot leader had also recently admitted to having planted a bomb at the offices of a Turkish Cypriot newspaper which had been attributed to Greek factions, in order to heighten tensions. Intercommunal violence had snowballed as a result, and many innocent persons on both sides had died.

(Mr. Eliades, Cyprus)

58. The late Secretary-General U Thant, commenting on the events of 1963, had stated that the Turkish Cypriot leaders had opposed any measures that would bring the groups together or require acceptance or governmental authority. He had attributed that position to a deliberate policy of self-imposed segregation.

59. Mr. CHRYSANTHOPOULOS (Greece), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said, in reference to the statement by the representative of Turkey, that he had simply called for compliance with the relevant decisions of the Commission on Human Rights. The conspirators in the unfortunate events of 1974, involving an attempt on the life of the Head of Government in Cyprus, were not serving life sentences in Greece. They had never acted on behalf of the Greek Government. He expressed surprise that those events had been brought up in the current deliberations.

60. Regarding the statement by the representative of Yugoslavia, a country with which Greece enjoyed friendly relations, he was also surprised that the issue of a Yugoslav minority had been raised. He emphasized that there was no such minority in Greece.

61. Mr. SAAD (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel was the first enemy of human rights. A United States journalist who had recently visited his country had concluded that the Jews living there were treated in the best possible manner. Moreover, one of the founders of Zionism had said that the Jewish people would dominate all others and had the capacity to become masters of the world regardless of the impact which such a development would have on other States. Israel had spilt blood in the Palestinian territories where the Palestinian people were fighting for their self-determination.

62. Israel had occupied part of Lebanon and, as a consequence, Lebanon was continuing to suffer. Syrian forces were in Lebanon because the authorities of that country had invited them in. His country's only interest was in stability. The recent assassination of the President of Lebanon had been an Israeli attempt to destabilize the country further.

63. Mr. MORA (Cuba) said that the representative of the United States had expressed concern regarding human rights in Cuba, a matter on which he did not have the right to comment. Moreover, a mission which had visited Cuba had issued a report which made no mention of violations of human rights in Cuba. The United States had a monopoly of the mass media and was using it to orchestrate public opinion against Cuba.

64. The United States was the world's biggest consumer of drugs and pornography. The population of that country included 70 million illiterates and a 16-year-old adolescent could see 200,000 acts of violence on television in the course of a single year. To protect oneself against the United States was an act of self-defence.

65. During the current year the United States had carried out naval and air exercises near Cuban waters. He was also curious to know by what right the United

(Mr. Mora, Cuba)

States had set up a radio station to broadcast into Cuba or authorized the CIA to commit murders throughout the world.

66. Mr. BARNEA (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic had claimed that the Syrian army had been invited into Lebanon by the Lebanese authorities. He asked whether Syria had also been asked by the same authorities to bomb Beirut and slaughter thousands of people.

67. Mr. WALDROP (United States of America) said that he was very disappointed at the slanderous attack by the representative of Cuba. The allegations were false and the representative of Cuba, who moreover was resident in the United States, knew them to be false.

68. Mr. MORA (Cuba) said that the previous November a United States congressman had requested the inclusion in the United States budget of a subsidy for the José Martí radio station. How could the representative of the United States claim that that country had not conducted naval and air exercises around the territorial waters of Cuba?

The meeting rose at 8.50 p.m.