

SPECIAL PROCEDURES BULLETIN

Second Issue: May-August 2006



HIGHLIGHTS: HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

[Dialogue between the Human Rights Council and Mandate Holders during the First Session of the Human Rights Council](#) (19-30 June 2006)

On 23 June, the newly established Human Rights Council held a dialogue with the Chair of the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures, Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn, the Vice-Chair of the 57th session of the Sub-Commission, Mr. Ibrahim Salama, and the Chair of the 18th Meeting of Chairpersons of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, Ms. Christine Chanet. Mr. Muntarbhorn delivered a [statement](#) on behalf of mandate-holders asking for Special Procedures to be actively involved in the process of the review of mandates which the Council is to complete within one year in accordance with GA resolution 60/251.

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The Special Procedures Bulletin provides a general overview on the main activities of Special Procedures. The next issue of the Bulletin, covering September – December 2006, will be issued in January 2007 and, beginning in 2007, it will be issued quarterly.

How to send information to Special Procedures

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For information on how to submit communications, please visit the OHCHR website under Human Rights Bodies/ Special Procedures.

Please specify which special procedure(s) mechanism the information is addressed to in the subject line of the e-mail or fax, or on the envelope.

How to find information on Special Procedures

To learn more about Special Procedures, consult Fact Sheet no. 27 (Seventeen Frequently Asked Questions about United Nations Special Rapporteurs) available at :

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/about/publications/sheets.htm>

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The OHCHR website contains more information on specific mandates under Human Rights Bodies/ Special Procedures, with pages devoted to each Special Procedure including details on the mandate, how to submit information, country visits, links to reports, etc.

Further information can also be obtained by contacting:
SPBINFO@OHCHR.ORG

COMMUNICATIONS

Some special procedures mechanisms intervene directly with Governments on specific allegations of human rights violations that come within their mandates. The intervention can relate to a human rights violation that has already occurred, is ongoing, or which has a high risk of occurring. The process generally involves sending a letter to the concerned Government requesting information and comments on the allegation and that preventive or investigatory action be taken.

The decision to intervene is at the discretion of the special procedure mandate holder and depends on criteria established by him/her. Criteria generally relate to the reliability of the source and the credibility of information received; the details provided; and the scope of the mandate itself. Mandate holders may send joint communications when the case falls within the scope of more than one mandate. The OHCHR's Special Procedures Quick Response Desk coordinates communications and keeps relevant databases updated.

2005 COMMUNICATIONS

1,049 Total number of communications sent

53% Joint Communications, with 394 Joint Urgent Actions and 156 Joint Letters of Allegation

2,545 Individual cases covered, 14% of them were women

137 Countries received communications

May-August 2006 COMMUNICATIONS

481 Total number of communications sent

44% Joint Communication, with 151 Joint Urgent Actions and 62 Joint Letters of Allegation

890 Individual cases covered, 16% of them were women

118 Countries received communications

COUNTRY VISITS

ADEQUATE HOUSING **VISIT TO AUSTRALIA BY THE SPECIAL** **RAPPORTEUR ON ADEQUATE HOUSING**

The Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari, visited Australia from 31 July to 15 August. In the [press statement](#) issued on 23 August, he identified a serious hidden national housing crisis affecting many sections of the population. The Special Rapporteur urged the Government to urgently address the situation of a number of vulnerable groups including homeless people, women, children, people with disabilities and health problems (including mental health), people with low income, refugees and asylum-seekers, migrants, prisoners and persons released from detention, youth, elderly, persons with complex needs (e.g. HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities), single parents and individuals and communities in rural and remote areas. The Special Rapporteur particularly expressed his concern about poor housing conditions in indigenous communities and urged the Government to address what he considered a humanitarian tragedy. The Special Rapporteur was also troubled by information that some civil society organizations, which have criticized Government policy or engaged

OHCHR WEBSITE PAGE ON [SPECIAL PROCEDURES COUNTRY VISITS](#)

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/visits.htm>

An alphabetical table of country visits by Special Procedures Mandate holders since 1998 is available on this page as well as a list of all countries having extended standing invitations to all the thematic procedures. As of August 2006, 56 countries have extended standing invitations.

A compilation of recommendations of Special Procedures by country is also available.

Adequate housing continued ...

in advocacy on housing issues, have lost or may lose their funding in the future.

ARBITRARY DETENTION **VISIT TO NICARAGUA BY THE WORKING** **GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTION**

The Working Group on arbitrary detention, represented by Ms. Manuela Carmena Castrillo visited Nicaragua from 15 to 22 May. She visited detention centres and held interviews with detainees in the capital, Managua, as well as in the Bluefields and Estelí prisons.

VISIT TO HONDURAS BY THE WORKING GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTION

The Working Group on arbitrary detention, represented by its Chairperson-Rapporteur, Ms. Leïla Zerrougui, and another member, Ms. Manuela Carmena Castrillo, visited Honduras from 23 to 28 May. In the [press statement](#) issued on 2 June, they noted with satisfaction that the new criminal procedure code, which entered into force in 2002, had several positive effects. However, they expressed concern about 1,800 persons who remained in detention. The experts further noted that the police had excessive powers in the criminal justice system whereas the Office of the Prosecutor exercised only weak control over the investigative police. They claimed that this situation seriously jeopardized the integrity of the criminal process, which requires effective checks and balances. Moreover, a number of cases were reported to the Working Group delegation in which the maximum length of detention on remand appeared to have been exceeded. The experts finally expressed deep concern regarding flaws in the Government's strategy to fight violent youth gangs.

CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

VISIT TO UGANDA BY THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, visited Uganda from 4 to 10 June. In the [press release](#) issued on 10 June, she indicated with great satisfaction that an agreement was reached with President Museveni, on 10 June, to strengthen the existing legal and policy framework on the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. She found that the LRA's recruitment and use of children, as well as other abuses, is perhaps the worst possible violation with regard to children and armed conflict in Uganda. She condemned these violations and pledged to assist the International Criminal Court (ICC) in dealing with these issues. She also found that in Gulu and Pader, children have been absorbed into Local Defense Units as well as the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces.

CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF RACISM

VISIT TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON RACISM

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mr. Doudou Diène, visited the Russian Federation from 11 to 17 June. He noted that there is no State policy against racism in Russia. Racism and xenophobia are trends penetrating the Russian society. This is mainly visible in the increase of highly violent racially motivated incidents, including several deaths. He encouraged the creation of a national institution, which would include governmental and non governmental actors, in charge of fighting racism, the elaboration of a political and legislative strategy, based on strong political will, and the strengthening of legal and judicial mechanisms to combat racism.

EXTRAJUDICIAL, SUMMARY OR ARBITRARY EXECUTIONS

VISIT TO GUATEMALA BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON EXTRAJUDICIAL, SUMMARY OR ARBITRARY EXECUTIONS

The Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr. Philip Alston, visited Guatemala from 21 to 26 August. In the [press statement](#), issued on 24 August, he observed that although Guatemala has made enormous achievements in the past ten years, there are now more killings per day than there were during the conflict. These killings, which official estimates place at 5,000 per year but likely are much higher, have created a widespread sense of insecurity amongst the population. The Special Rapporteur asserted that the crucial issue is how to respond to this insecurity. The universally agreed challenge is to end impunity—the fact that those who kill can get away with it and have no reason not to continue and even escalate their murderous ways. In encouraging adherence to the provisions of the Peace Accords and development of an effective justice system, the Special Rapporteur noted that although all of the formal rhetoric of the political parties endorses this approach, almost every component part of such a system is either under-funded or dysfunctional or both.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

VISIT TO THE MALDIVES BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION

The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir, visited the Maldives from 6 to 10 August. In the [press statement](#) issued on 9 August, she noted with satisfaction the desire of the people to maintain peace and harmony within their society. However, she was deeply concerned about the fact that open and honest discourse on the question of freedom of religion or belief was vigorously denied and the few who dared to raise their voices were denounced and threatened. Furthermore, while welcoming the adoption of the Law on the Human Rights Commission on 8 August 2006, she criticized the fact that being Muslim was a requirement for the qualification of the members of the Human Rights Commission, in violation of the Principles relating to the status and functioning of national institutions for protection and promotion of human rights (Paris Principles).

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

VISIT TO ECUADOR BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, Mr. Rodolfo Stavenhagen, visited Ecuador from 28 April to 5 May. In a [press release](#) issued on 5 May, he concluded that indigenous peoples remained in a situation of poverty and lacked adequate access to basic social services such as education and health despite the economic growth of the last years. Furthermore, he was distressed by the lack of regulations regarding indigenous justice, and by the progressive deterioration of indigenous habitat due to extractive activities on the environment of indigenous peoples, in particular in the Amazonian region of Ecuador.

FOLLOW UP VISIT TO GUATEMALA BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, Mr. Rodolfo Stavenhagen, undertook a follow-up visit to Guatemala from 15 to 18 May to examine the implementation of relevant provisions on indigenous rights in the Peace Accords of 1996. He noted with satisfaction the public

Indigenous People continued ...

recognition by the authorities of the atrocities committed during the armed conflict. He also noted that racism and discrimination against indigenous peoples in Guatemala was still deeply rooted in society. He found the situation of indigenous women and children particularly worrisome. He observed delays in the implementation of the Accord on Identity and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. He added that the Administration of Justice system required important and urgent support to ensure access to justice for indigenous people, and in particular for indigenous women. In this context, he recommended that special attention be paid to indigenous customary law.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

VISIT TO COLOMBIA BY THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The Secretary-General's Special Representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Mr. Walter Kälin, visited Colombia from 15 to 28 June. In the [press release](#) issued on 27 June, he declared that Colombia was a country with commendable legislation and a far-reaching policy framework on internal displacement. However, he was troubled by the existence of a gap between law and practice. In particular, he expressed deep concern about the disproportionate impact of displacement on indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities and the increasing phenomenon of inter- and intra-urban displacement. Furthermore, he expressed concern about acts of violence or intimidation against many persons defending the human rights of the displaced as well as against the leaders of displaced or returnee communities.

VISIT TO UGANDA BY THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The Secretary-General's Special Representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Mr. Walter Kälin, visited Uganda from 29 June to 4 July. In the [press statement](#) issued on 4 July, he welcomed the National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons, but asserted that special efforts were needed to implement it. The Special Representative remained concerned about serious problems in IDP camps such as poor health and sanitation conditions, lack of access to schools and availability of teachers, *(continued on next page)*

IDPs continued ...

and high levels of sexual and gender-based violence. He strongly urged the Government to deploy sufficient numbers of civilian police in all parts of Northern Uganda, to rebuild and strengthen the judiciary, and to provide the local governments with the human resources and financial capacities to fulfill their obligations. He recommended that the on-going process of camp decongestion and returns should respect the needs, concerns, and choices of IDPs and be done in parallel with the re-establishment of civil infrastructure and services and the provision of transitional assistance.

MINORITY ISSUES

VISIT TO HUNGARY BY THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON MINORITY ISSUES

The Independent Expert on minority issues, Ms. Gay McDougall, visited Hungary from 26 June to 4 July. In the [press statement](#) issued on 4 July, she welcomed the fact that national legislation and institutional structures in Hungary have raised the focus on the social circumstances of Roma to the highest levels of government. In particular, she highlighted the Governmental decision made in 2002 to bring Roma professionals into the ministries to shape policy decisions and assist implementation. However, she considered that essential steps were still needed to comprehensively address widespread societal discrimination and anti-Roma prejudice. Thus, she expressed deep concern about the decision of the newly re-elected Government to dismantle its current institutional focus on Roma issues, in favour of a broad-based policy to address 'disadvantaged groups'. Indeed, she feared that it could lead to an erosion of progress on Roma issues that require urgent and focused attention.

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

VISIT TO THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY (OPT) BY THE SPECIAL RAPPOREUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OPT

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (OPT), Mr. John Dugard, visited the OPT from 9 to 17 June. In the [press statement](#) issued on 21 June, he noted that respect for human rights had substantially deteriorated in the OPT due to drastic

OPT continued...

economic sanctions against the Palestinian Authority, its agencies and projects since Hamas won the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council. He underscored that this economic strangulation had a severe impact on the life of Palestinians. He also indicated that Gaza was under siege and that the targeted killing of militants was on the increase. He noted with great concern that in the West Bank, the construction of the Wall continued, with a severe impact on human rights. The Special Rapporteur noticed an increase in the number of checkpoints and was appalled by the intensification of Israeli control over the Jordan Valley and the expansion of settlements in the area.

SUDAN

VISIT TO SUDAN BY THE SPECIAL RAPPOREUR ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SUDAN

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Sudan, Ms. Sima Samar, visited Sudan from 12 to 19 August. In the [press statement](#) issued on 17 August, she noted a number of positive developments. However, she expressed concern that efforts to reform several laws related to criminal justice, the police and human rights amongst other topics, to bring all laws in line with the Interim National Constitution and international human rights law have not progressed. She was extremely disturbed by the situation in North and West Darfur, including killings of civilians, rape and displacement, as well as the impunity which surrounds these crimes. She reported accounts that there is high insecurity both within and outside the IDP camps in North and West Darfur—concerns which have not been addressed by the local authorities. She drew attention to the forced relocation of 12 thousand residents in the Dar Essalaam squatter camp in Al Jazeera state, resulting in some arrests and reports of deaths and injuries.

TORTURE

VISIT TO JORDAN BY THE SPECIAL RAPPOREUR ON TORTURE

The Special Rapporteur on torture, Mr. Manfred Nowak, visited Jordan from 25 to 29 June. In the [press statement](#) issued on 29 June he noted that there was general impunity for torture and ill-treatment in Jordan. The Special Rapporteur identified three main issues: the absence of the crime of torture in accordance
(continued on next page)

Torture continued ...

with article 1 of the Convention against Torture; the lack of a functioning complaints mechanism to report and seek effective redress for acts of torture; and a weak legal system in which the ordinary prosecutors and criminal courts have no competence to bring to justice public officials accused of torture.

USE OF MERCENARIES

VISIT TO HONDURAS AND ECUADOR BY THE WORKING GROUP ON THE USE OF MERCENARIES

The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the rights of peoples to self-determination, represented by Ms. Najat Al-Hajjaji, Ms. Amada Benavides de Pérez, Mr. José Luis Gómez del Prado, Mr. Alexander Nikitin, and Ms. Shaista Shameem, visited Honduras and Ecuador from 21 August to 1 September. In the [press statement](#) concerning the visit to Honduras, issued on 28 August, the Working Group welcomed the cooperation of the Government and observed a number of positive steps aimed at regulating private security companies in national legislation and practice. The Working Group expressed concern about reports that Honduran and Chilean nationals have been recruited by private firms that are subsidiaries of foreign-based companies have been trained in Honduras and then sent to Iraq to work as security guards. The reports indicate irregularities of contracts, harsh working conditions with excessive working hours, partial or non payment of remuneration, ill-treatment and isolation, and lack of basic necessities such as medical treatment and sanitation.

In the [press statement](#) concerning the visit to Ecuador, issued on 1 September, the Working Group reported on its meetings and various steps taken by the Government to regulate and monitor the activities of national and transnational private security firms. The Working Group drew attention to the increasing phenomenon of the recruitment of nationals from countries in the region by subsidiaries of transnational companies with legal personality in another country, and providing services in a third country. Concerning the army's protection of wells, pipelines and other facilities owned by oil companies, the Working Group noted the Government's efforts to protect the rights of indigenous communities, but remained

Mercenaries continued ...

concerned about reports that actions taken by indigenous people to claim their legitimate rights have been considered as acts of terrorism and sabotage by the army. The Working Group also noted reports about airborne fumigation activities carried out by private security companies working in connection with Plan Colombia, and the resulting harm caused to the population and the environment along the border zone with Ecuador.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

VISIT TO TURKEY BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Yakin Ertürk, visited Turkey from 22 to 31 May to examine suicides of women in Batman. In the [press release](#) issued on 31 May, she stated that the majority of women in the provinces she visited live lives determined by a patriarchal normative order that draws its strength from reference to tradition, culture and tribal affiliation and often articulates itself on the basis of distorted notions of honour. Diverse forms of violence are deliberately used against women who are seen to transgress this order. Suicides of women in the region occurred in this context.

VISIT TO SWEDEN BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Yakin Ertürk, visited Sweden from 12 to 21 June. In the [press statement](#) issued on 21 June, she noted with satisfaction that Sweden had a firm equal opportunity framework and that the legislative and institutional response of the authorities to violence against women in Sweden was impressive. However, she observed that violence against women remained a mainstream problem in Sweden due to deeply rooted patriarchal gender norms. She was distressed by the fact that women with alcohol or drug problems, women with disabilities or mental illness, lesbian women, Saami women, women from immigrant communities and women in prostitution, remained largely excluded from public policy measures.

VISIT TO THE NETHERLANDS BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Yakin Ertürk, visited the Netherlands from 2 to 11 July. In the [press statement](#) issued on 11 July, she stated that the Netherlands had long been a champion of gender equality and the human rights of women. However, she noted with regret that men consider violence against women as an issue of the private sphere. Furthermore, she commended the legal reforms on trafficking and prostitution,

Violence against women continued ...

which enabled improved protection of women in the sex industry. Yet, she underscored that illegal circuits remained and therefore recommended support for the empowerment of women to allow them to transform the sex sector. She also expressed deep concern about the impact of stringent procedures on asylum seekers and the fact that the women are asked to positively demonstrate that their very trauma prevented them from reporting their experience to the authorities. She was also distressed by reports of suicides and missing persons, especially minors girls in return centres for rejected asylum-seekers. She feared that they may have been trafficked.

FORTHCOMING VISITS

Bahrain (trafficking) *October 2006*

Burundi (human rights in Burundi) *October 2006*

Cambodia (human rights in Cambodia) *November-December 2006*

Ethiopia (minorities) *November-December 2006*

Guatemala (disappearances) *September 2006*

Indonesia (migrants) *December 2006*

Italy (racism) *October 2006*

Japan (human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) *December 2006*

Kenya (indigenous peoples) *December 2006*

Lebanon (food) *September 2006*

Lebanon & Israel (joint visit: adequate housing, defenders, IDPs, summary executions & health) *September 2006*

Liberia (human rights in Liberia) *November 2006*

Mongolia (human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) *December 2006*

Oman (trafficking) *October 2006*

Paraguay (torture) *November 2006*

Qatar (trafficking) *October 2006*

Republic of Korea (human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) *December 2006*

Republic of Korea (migrants) *December 2006*

Spain (housing) *November – December 2006*

Turkey (arbitrary detention) *October 2006*

Ukraine (sale of children) *October 2006*

SPECIAL SESSIONS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Occupied Palestinian Territory:

On 5 and 6 July, the Human Rights Council met for its [first special session](#) at the request of the Arab Group to address the situation of human rights in the Palestinian and other Arab Occupied Territories (OPT). The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Mr. John Dugard, was invited to the Council to present his findings from his visit to the OPT in June 2006. The [resolution](#), adopted on 6 July by a recorded vote of 29 votes in favour, 11 against and 5 abstentions, decided to dispatch an urgent fact-finding mission headed by the Special Rapporteur.

Lebanon:

On 11 August, the Human Rights Council devoted its [second special session](#) to the situation in Lebanon and adopted a [resolution](#) on the grave situation of human rights caused by Israeli military operations. The resolution decided to establish and immediately dispatch a high-level commission of inquiry of eminent experts on human rights law and international humanitarian law.

REQUESTED AND ACCEPTED VISITS

VISIT REQUESTS

May-August 2006

ACCEPTED / INVITATIONS

May-August 2006

Algeria (disappearances)	Mongolia (education)	Algeria (violence against women)	Israel (religion)	Russian Federation (IDPs, disappearances)
Azerbaijan (IDPs)	Nepal (summary executions)	Angola (housing)	Japan (trafficking)	Senegal (defenders)
Bangladesh (minorities)	Nicaragua (summary executions)	Argentina (disappearances)	Latvia (racism)	Sierre Leone (summary executions)
Belarus (freedom of expression)	Philippines (counter terrorism, summary executions, right to food)	Australia (migrants)	Libya (freedom of expression)	Sri Lanka (torture, freedom of expression)
Bolivia (education)	Timor-Leste (torture)	Bangladesh (religion)	Lithuania (racism)	South Africa (migrants, counter-terrorism, food, housing)
Brazil (summary executions)	Thailand (minorities, sale of children)	Belarus (trafficking)	Malaysia (education)	Sudan (freedom of expression)
Cambodia (independence of judges and lawyers)	Turkmenistan (health, education)	Bolivia (torture)	Maldives (defenders, independence of judges and lawyers)	Tajikistan (religion)
Colombia (mercenaries)	United Arab Emirates (education)	Bosnia and Herzegovina (education)	Mali (defenders)	Tanzania (economic reform, poverty)
Dominican Republic (joint visit: racism & minorities)	Uzbekistan (torture)	Burundi (human rights in Burundi)	Mauritius (religion)	Thailand (joint visit: sale of children & trafficking)
El Salvador (summary executions)	Zimbabwe (food)	China (religion, poverty)	Mexico (sale of children, defenders)	Timor-Leste (IDPs, summary executions)
Honduras (summary executions)		Democratic Republic of Congo (defenders)	Mongolia (education)	Togo (torture, summary executions, defenders)
Liberia (torture)		Ecuador (mercenaries)	Morocco (housing, education)	Uganda (health, development, poverty)
		El Salvador (disappearances)	Nicaragua (racism)	Ukraine (toxic waste, freedom of expression)
		Estonia (racism)	Nigeria (torture, independence of judges and lawyers, violence against women, IDPs, trafficking)	United Kingdom (religion)
		Guatemala (education, defenders)	Palestinian Authority (summary executions)	United States of America (migrants)
		Guyana (food)	Paraguay (independence of judges and lawyers)	Venezuela (defenders)
		Honduras (disappearances)	Peru (mercenaries, summary executions)	Zimbabwe (violence against women)
		Indonesia (structural adjustment, defenders, torture)	Philippines (housing, poverty)	
		Iran (religion, disappearances, arbitrary detention)	Romania (education)	
		Iraq (defenders)		

DECISIONS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AFFECTING SPECIAL PROCEDURES

On 29 June, the Human Rights Council adopted Decision 102 to extend “exceptionally for one year, subject to the review to be undertaken by the Council [. . .] the mandates and the mandate-holders of all the Commission’s special procedures [. . .]”

On 29 June, the Human Rights Council adopted Decision 104 to “establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group to formulate concrete recommendations on the issue of reviewing and, where necessary, improving and rationalizing all mandates, mechanisms, functions and responsibilities in order to maintain a system of special procedures, [. . .] through open-ended, intersessional, transparent, well scheduled and inclusive consultations, with the participation of all stakeholders [. . .]”

HIGHLIGHTS

[Dialogue between the Human Rights Council and Mandate Holders during the First Session of the Human Rights Council](#) (19-30 June 2006)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 ...

He also emphasized the need to define the role of the special procedures with regard to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which should draw on the findings and recommendations of the special procedures as well as treaty bodies. On 29 June, the Council decided to extend all mandates for one year, subject to review. The Council also adopted a decision to establish two open-ended intergovernmental working groups respectively, on the review of mandates, and to develop the modalities of the universal periodic review mechanism.

[Special Procedures 13th Annual Meeting](#) (19-23 June 2006)

Special Procedures mandate holders gathered in Geneva for their [annual meeting](#) to discuss their work and exchange views on their experiences. They discussed the role of Special Procedures in the context of the Human Rights Council, in particular with regard to the review of mandates and the universal periodic review. Mandate holders addressed a [statement](#) to the Human Rights Council focusing on the role of special procedures within the new institution. They also elected the new Coordination Committee consisting of: Vitit Muntarbhorn (Chairperson of the thirteenth meeting), Gay McDougall (Rapporteur of the thirteenth meeting), Charlotte Abaka, Amada Benavides de Perez, Asma Jahangir, and Philip Alston (ex officio member). The meeting was an occasion for mandate holders to discuss preliminary remarks on the draft of the revised Manual for Special Procedures Mandate Holders, which will be posted on the internet for comments from all partners, to exchange views with partners (NGOs, treaty bodies, OHCHR branches), and to discuss the joint report

All decisions and statements from the Human Rights Council can be found on the OHCHR website on the [extranet](#) of the Human Rights Council.

Annual Meeting continued ...

of five mandate holders on the Guantánamo Detention Center.

[World Press Freedom Day](#)

On 2 May, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Mr. Ambeyi Ligabo, and his counterparts at the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, issued a joint statement commending the vital role played by the press for the advancement of democracy and human rights. This event was also an opportunity to recall that in 2005, the world recorded the highest number of journalists and other media professionals killed or injured in the line of duty. The four Special Rapporteurs called upon all governments to combat impunity with regard to violence against journalists and media personnel, by bringing to justice those responsible for attacks against them, and by taking measures that enable journalists and media personnel to continue providing information freely and independently. All journalists detained because of their media-related activities should be released immediately.

[Adoption of instruments on disappearances and on indigenous peoples](#)

On 29 June, the Human Rights Council adopted the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The General Assembly will consider these instruments during its 61st session.

PRESS STATEMENTS

[DETENTION OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS IN BELARUS](#)

On 2 May, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Mr. Adrian Severin, expressed grave concern over the detention of opposition leaders who were arrested in Minsk on 27 April 2006, and sentenced to 15 days in prison on charges of organizing and participating in an unauthorized protest rally, following their participation in a march to protest the Government's management of the Chernobyl nuclear accident of 1986.

[AID CUT FOR MILLIONS OF SUDANESE](#)

On 9 May, following the decision of the United Nations World Food Programme to cut food rations for millions of Sudanese due to a huge shortfall in requested funds, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr. Jean Ziegler, issued a statement to appeal to Member States to immediately honour their legal obligations and ensure the realization of the right to food of the suffering populations, in close collaboration with the authorities of Sudan.

[UPSURGE IN VIOLENCE IN MOGADISHU](#)

On 12 May, the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Mr. Ghanim Alnajjar, issued a statement to condemn the serious upsurge in violence against civilians caused by fighting between heavily-armed militia forces in Mogadishu's northern neighbourhoods.

[COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS TARGET CIVILIANS IN MYANMAR](#)

On 16 May, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, the Independent Expert on minority issues, Ms. Gay McDougall, the Special Rapporteur on torture, Mr. Manfred Nowak, the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr. Jean Ziegler, and the Special Rapporteur on the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Mr. Paul Hunt, issued a joint statement to appeal to the Government of Myanmar to take urgent measures to end the counter-insurgency military operations

Myanmar continued ...

targeting civilians in Northern Karen and Eastern Pegu areas, which have led to the forcible eviction and displacement of thousands of ethnic minority villagers.

[PLAN OF ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION](#)

On 23 May, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Mr. Vernor Muñoz Villalobos, appealed to States to take all necessary measures to ensure that human rights education is integrated into the primary and secondary schools system. He noted that the plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education will contribute to the goal of universal primary education by promoting human rights-based learning.

[POLITICAL IMPRISONMENTS IN MYANMAR](#)

On 26 May, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, issued a statement to appeal to the Government of Myanmar to release Ms. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the General-Secretary of the National League for Democracy and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, who has been detained for 10 of the last 16 years without charge or trial for her peaceful advocacy of fundamental democratic freedoms. He also called for the release of all remaining political prisoners.

On 19 June, during the inauguration of the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani issued a press statement to observe the birthday of Ms. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

[FORCED EVICTIONS IN KARACHI](#)

On 26 May, the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari, issued a statement to condemn the wave of forced evictions in connection with the construction of the Lyari Expressway in Karachi, India, leading to the destruction of thousands of houses since the beginning of this year. Reportedly, the Karachi City Government is planning to demolish and evict inhabitants of

India continued ...

another 6,000 housing units in 20 different informal settlements throughout the city. When completed, the Lyari Expressway project allegedly will have rendered an estimated 250,000 people homeless.

[VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF BASSAC RESIDENTS IN CAMBODIA](#)

On 30 May, the Secretary-General's Special Representative on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani, and the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari, issued a statement expressing their grave concern about the process of evictions taking place in the Bassac river area in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, as part of a plan to redevelop the land, claimed to be the property of a private company. They noted that this process has already rendered several hundred families homeless and living in open air. The experts called for a halt to these evictions and for immediate action to ensure that these families have access to adequate housing consistent with Cambodia's human rights obligations.

On 29 June, the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani, reiterated their condemnations of the forced evictions targeting poor and vulnerable people in the capital Phnom Penh, carried out with complete disregard for Cambodia's human rights obligations, as well as the denial of access by, and help from, non-governmental organizations to the victims.

[DEATH SENTENCE WITHOUT TRIAL IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF KOREA](#)

On 31 May, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr. Philip Alston, the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on arbitrary detention, Ms. Leila Zerrougui, the Special Rapporteur on torture, Mr. Manfred Nowak, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn, issued a joint press statement to express their dismay at the refusal of the Government to respond in any meaningful way to concerns expressed about the scheduled execution of Son Jong Nam for alleged treason. He was reportedly tortured by the National Security Agency and then sentenced to death without a trial and without

Republic of Korea continued ...

the benefit of any of the procedural safeguards required by international human rights law.

[WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY \(June 5\)](#)

On 2 June, the Special Rapporteur on adverse effects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes on the enjoyment of human rights, Mr. Okechukwu Ibeanu, issued a statement to express his deep concern about impunity for violations of human rights around the world due to the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes. He explained that in the industrialized countries, the classic disposal options, namely land filling and incineration, are being subjected to restrictions, bans or phase-outs, principally because they are widely rejected by the population. Therefore, there is increased pressure to export waste to poor and remote areas.

[RELEASE OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER SU SU NWAY IN MYANMAR](#)

On 7 June, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, expressed his great satisfaction about the release of human rights defender, Ms. Su Su Nway, on 6 June, and appealed to the Government of Myanmar to unconditionally release all remaining prisoners of conscience. Su Su Nway was the first person in Myanmar to successfully prosecute local government officials for imposing forced labour. Subsequently, she was prosecuted by other local officials for alleged criminal intimidation. She has been imprisoned since October 2005.

[PUBLIC EXECUTION FOLLOWING ILLEGAL TRIAL IN AFGHANISTAN](#)

On 8 June, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Mr. Leandro Despouy, issued a press statement to condemn the execution of an alleged murderer, Badshah Khan, in front of a large crowd following a trial by a local Taliban court. He stated that the administration of justice was a function that clearly belongs to the State of Afghanistan, and therefore considered it entirely unacceptable for a non-state entity, such as the Taliban, to exercise a state function by trying and punishing an alleged criminal. He further declared that the return to the practice of making a public spectacle of the execution harked back to the worst excesses of the old regime.

ATTACKS AGAINST THE JUDICIARY IN EGYPT

On 14 June, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Mr. Leandro Despouy, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani, and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Mr. Ambeyi Ligabo, expressed alarm over the Government's disciplinary decisions against judges, the proposed Judicial Authority Law, and the severe repression of demonstrations organized by civil society in support of the judiciary.

SIMULTANEOUS SUICIDE OF THREE DETAINEES IN THE GUANTÁNAMO MILITARY BASE

On 14 June, the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on arbitrary detention, Ms. Leila Zerrougui, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Mr. Leandro Despouy, the Special Rapporteur on torture, Mr. Manfred Nowak, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir, and the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Mr. Paul Hunt, issued a press statement to express their dismay about the suicide of three detainees at the Guantánamo military base on 10 June. They reiterated their appeal to the United States to close the base and to implement the recommendations in their report dated 27 February 2006.

CONSULTATIONS AT THE HOLY SEE

From 14 to 16 June, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ms Asma Jahangir, held consultations at the Holy See to share ideas and opinions on current issues related to freedom of religion or belief, such as the coexistence of religions and inter-religious dialogue, the question of conversion and the propagation of religion, and the question of religious symbols.

WORLD URBAN FORUM

On 20 June, the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari, spoke before the third session of the World Urban Forum (19-23 June 2006) in Vancouver. He stressed the urgent need for States to halt the practice of forced evictions and displacement and called on all actors at the World Urban Forum to unequivocally oppose

World Urban Forum continued ...

forced evictions as a means of achieving 'development'.

FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN EASTERN CHAD

On 26 June, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Mr. Walter Kälin, issued a statement to appeal to the Chadian and Sudanese authorities, and the international community, to provide protection to the residents of Eastern Chad. Following the request for assistance by Chad, he also called on donor countries and international agencies to help Chad in meeting the shelter and subsistence needs of all affected populations.

REMOVAL OF HEAD OF NIGERIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

On 28 June, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani, issued a joint press statement with her counterpart from the African Commission, Ms. Reine Alapini-Gansou, to express profound concern at the removal of Mr. Bukhari Bello as Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria on 19 June 2006. The experts feared that Mr. Bello's removal was caused by the critical stance taken by the National Human Rights Commission on a number of human rights issues.

ADOPTION OF NEW COUNTER-TERRORISM LEGISLATION IN ISRAEL

On 4 July, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Mr. Martin Scheinin, issued a statement to express his appreciation of the fact that many of the criticisms voiced by different stakeholders, including civil society, in relation to the previous draft law on counter-terrorism had been addressed in the draft that was finally adopted. However, he raised some concern about the fact that the law still does not provide all the necessary procedural safeguards for individuals detained for security reasons.

CONCERNS ABOUT COMPLIANCE OF EMERGENCY REGULATIONS OF THAILAND WITH HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

On 18 July, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr. Philip Alston, called on the Government of Thailand to repeal those

(continued on next page)

Thailand continued ...

provisions of the emergency regulations being applied in southern Thailand that violate international human rights law. In particular, he expressed deep concern about a provision of Thailand's Emergency Decree which provides that soldiers and police officers may not be prosecuted or disciplined even for otherwise illegal killings so long as they are acting reasonably and in good faith.

COUNTER-TERRORISM LEGISLATION IN BAHRAIN NOT IN LINE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS

On 25 July, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Mr. Martin Scheinin, urged the executive and legislative branches of the Government in the Kingdom of Bahrain to reconsider the new counter-terrorism bill due to concerns that the implementation of this law could have a negative impact on human rights in the country. He identified four main concerns: the overly broad definition of terrorism; the restrictions on freedom of association and assembly; the excessive limitations put on freedom of speech and the excessive powers of the Public Prosecutor regarding detention without judicial review.

ATTACKS AGAINST SCHOOLS IN AFGHANISTAN

On 9 August, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Mr. Vernor Muñoz Villalobos, expressed his outrage at the increase of attacks against schools, teachers, and students in various provinces of Afghanistan. He believed that through these attacks, terrorist groups sought to prevent parents from sending their children to school and thus to encourage the authorities to close them. He indicated that between January and June 2006, at least 172 attacks on schools occurred and that as a direct consequence, 200,000 to 500,000 children were

Afghanistan continued ...

denied the right to education in Afghanistan. In particular, he was deeply troubled about the disproportionate impact those attacks have on girls' education due to the lower number of girls' schools and the particular reluctance of parents to send girls to school.

KILLING OF HUMANITARIAN WORKERS IN SRI LANKA

On 11 August, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary and summary executions, Mr. Philip Alston, and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr. Jean Ziegler, issued a joint statement to condemn the killings of 17 local workers of the NGO Action contre la faim in Sri Lanka on 6 and 8 August. They called for an independent, impartial, and rapid investigation of the execution.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SRI LANKA

On 15 August, the Special Representative on children and armed conflict, Ms. Radika Coomaraswamy, issued a public statement to condemn the killing of around 50 adolescent schoolgirls during the bombing of a compound in Kilinochchi. 100 others were injured. She called on the parties involved to cease all hostilities and respect international humanitarian law to ensure child protection.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE DISAPPEARED

On the occasion of the International Day of the Disappeared (30 August), the Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances reiterated its solidarity with all those who suffer from enforced disappearance and paid tribute to the efforts of human rights defenders working for disappeared persons and their relatives. The Working Group expressed concern that disappearances continue to occur in large numbers.