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PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

**Report submitted by Ms. Hina Jilani, Special Representative of the
Secretary-General on human rights defenders in accordance with
Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/61**

Executive summary

This is the third report submitted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders, Ms. Hina Jilani, to the Commission on Human Rights. Submitted pursuant to Commission resolution 2000/61, the report notes the Special Representative's great concern that the global situation of defenders has not improved in the past year. While continuing to collect and report on information relative to specific cases of violations, the Special Representative's fundamental focus is now the practical implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders, as adopted by States.

Section I of the report provides a résumé of some of the Special Representative's activities over the year. In section II the Special Representative presents an analysis of the situation of defenders looking at some trends: the type of violations committed against them; the categories of most vulnerable defenders; the types of perpetrators and their place in a State hierarchy; the significance of the absence of information on human rights defenders from some countries; public opinion and the role of the media; and some positive developments. Through her analysis the Special Representative identifies a number of priorities and makes related recommendations which she considers to be strategic in improving the situation of defenders.

This initial analysis provides the basis for section III of the report which focuses on strengthening implementation of the Declaration. The report notes the call by the Secretary-General for a more cohesive and implementation-oriented role for the United Nations with regard to human rights standards and the Millennium Development Goals. The Special Representative seeks to complement the Secretary-General's efforts by developing her strategy for strengthening the Declaration's implementation in the light of his initiatives. She notes that the work of human rights defenders is central to the implementation of human rights standards, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the work of the United Nations in general, and that many United Nations staff are themselves defenders of human rights. The Special Representative is convinced that the Declaration, as well as her reports and recommendations, can only be effective if given greater consideration at the country and regional levels and that different entities within the United Nations system can play a fundamental role in this regard.

In developing recommendations relative to the second section of the report, the Special Representative seeks to ensure that they are complementary to ongoing processes to which States, the United Nations and civil society are contributing - including with regard to democratization, achievement of the Millennium Goals and the human rights responsibilities of private sector actors. In this way, the Special Representative hopes to facilitate the incorporation of a focus on the Declaration into the existing work of relevant actors.

In section IV of her report, the Special Representative continues her focus on violations confronted by defenders, as developed in her previous reports. She draws attention to particular types of violation of the Declaration and identifies those countries in which these violations are alleged to have occurred.

The conclusions and recommendations (sect. V) identify a number of strategic areas through which the protection of human rights defenders can be reinforced, including: strengthening national judicial systems; setting minimum human rights standards for counter-terrorism and security legislation; protecting the “contextual space” that defenders require to work; the human rights responsibilities of multinationals; and the need to focus on States where defenders are not seen or heard. The recommendations focus also on the key roles of a number of actors in implementing the Declaration such as: the United Nations system, including the country team and treaty bodies; the role and responsibilities of local government; the responsibilities of the international community in addressing “systemic” violations; and the media. Finally, the report also recommends integrating a focus on human rights defenders into current efforts with regard to democratization and the Millennium Development Goals.

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Introduction

1. The methodology of work adopted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders for implementation of the mandate entrusted to her has helped to establish a mechanism to collect and report information on the situation of defenders. This information has provided, and must continue to provide, the basis for implementation of the mandate, established pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/61. Accordingly, this report, like those submitted by the Special Representative in preceding years,¹ looks at specific concerns affecting human rights defenders in the countries from which she received information.

2. The Special Representative considers, however, that it has become increasingly urgent to give greater attention to addressing the problems identified. Thus, the geographic focus on the concerns in the report is preceded by a section that includes an analysis of overall trends in the situation of defenders and a section on strengthening implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders.²

3. The Special Representative is convinced that for her mandate to be fully effective on behalf of human rights defenders it must function in close partnership with relevant entities within the United Nations system, as well as with States and non-governmental organizations. In her report, she makes a particular effort to take into consideration the Secretary-General's focus on human rights aspects of United Nations reform and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

4. The Secretary-General's emphatic messages - through his reform process and the Millennium Campaign - are implementation of the human rights standards that have been set and greater cooperation and coherence between the various entities of the United Nations system in undertaking such implementation. The Special Representative shall endeavour, through this report and future collaboration, coordination and prioritization, to shape the scope of her mandate so as to accommodate the spirit of these messages which she considers to be not only fundamental to the protection of defenders but also initiatives to whose success defenders themselves can make an invaluable contribution.

5. Indeed, a continuing theme throughout the report is the Special Representative's conviction that human rights defenders contribute to the achievement of the core goals of the United Nations and her recognition that many United Nations staff themselves serve as defenders in one capacity or another. The Special Representative considers that the United Nations system has a fundamental role to fulfil in implementation of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

6. The recommendations made in sections two and three, and presented together at the end of the report, focus on addressing concerns or methodologies that the Special Representative considers as being strategic to the Declaration's implementation. By identifying these priorities here, and addressing them not only to States, but also to United Nations bodies, intergovernmental organizations and civil society, she hopes to facilitate the adoption by these

different actors of common approaches to implementing the Declaration. The Special Representative is acutely aware of the need for the strengthened implementation of human rights standards globally and the core role that human rights defenders have in this regard. By ensuring that her own recommendations complement existing processes engaged in by the United Nations and others she hopes to not only strengthen implementation of the Declaration but also to support improved United Nations action in the field of human rights and improved implementation of human rights standards on the ground.

I. MANDATE, METHODS OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES

A. Mandate and methods of work

7. The Special Representative's mandate and methods of work are outlined in her first report to the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/2001/94). Over the past 12 months, the Special Representative enjoyed constructive cooperation with, and in some cases received valuable support from: a number of States; intergovernmental organizations including United Nations entities, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; and numerous national and international NGOs, including Amnesty International, the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) and the Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme and the Organisation mondiale contre la torture (through their joint programme the "Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders").

B. Activities

Urgent appeals and allegations

8. During the period under review, the Special Representative sent numerous communications to Governments, including urgent appeals and allegation letters. Seeking to avoid duplication of the activities of other special procedures, the Special Representative sent joint communications over the past year with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for human rights in Cambodia and the Chairman/Rapporteur of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and with the Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; torture; freedom of opinion and expression; the independence of judges and lawyers; violence against women; the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people; the human rights of migrants; the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and the situation of human rights in Iraq.

Country visits

9. During the period under review the Special Representative conducted a country visit to Guatemala from 26 May to 1 June 2002 (E/CN.4/2003/104/Add.2). She had intended to visit the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia but was twice obliged to postpone a planned visit following unexpected delays in the formation of a Government after general elections on 15 September 2002. As of the date of submission, the Special Representative was hoping

to conduct her visit, in coordination with national authorities, before the start of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission. The Special Representative has received an invitation to visit Thailand and, in discussion with relevant authorities, is also hoping to conduct this visit prior to the start of the fifty-ninth session.

10. Additional invitations have been received over the past year from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Turkey. The Special Representative received responses to her requests for invitations from Singapore and Egypt requesting additional information, and from Indonesia declining her request.

11. Over the year, the Special Representative requested invitations from Belarus, Nigeria, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. She also sent renewed requests for invitations to Governments that had not responded to an initial request including Bhutan, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, India, Malaysia, Togo and Uzbekistan.

Participation in global and regional activities

12. The Special Representative participated in numerous activities around the world some of which focused exclusively on human rights defenders, while others addressed defenders in a broader context. In many instances the Special Representative received valuable support for her participation in such events from their organizers, and particularly from NGOs. The following paragraphs refer to some of these activities.

13. The Special Representative participated in “Steps to Protection - the Dublin platform for human rights defenders” organized by “Frontline” in January 2002 in Dublin. In March 2002, she addressed a meeting on “Preventing and combating violence against women” organized by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna.

14. The Special Representative participated in the second International Citizens Meeting organized by the Barcelona City Council and the UNESCO Chair on Peace and Human Rights of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, held in Barcelona, Spain, in April 2002. She addressed the thirty-first session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in May 2002. She also participated in the “Human Dimensions Implementation” meeting organized by ODIHR in Warsaw in September 2002.

15. In November 2002, the Special Representative addressed the General Assembly in New York and presented her report (A/57/182). She participated as a panellist in a discussion on human rights and counter-terrorism hosted by Amnesty International and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and made a presentation on “Implementation of the human rights defenders’ mandate” at a meeting hosted by ISHR and the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights. The Special Representative also addressed the Third Conference on the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City, held in Venice, Italy, in December 2002.

16. The Special Representative was invited to a number of meetings that she was unable to attend because of prior commitments or limited resources.

II. ANALYSIS OF TRENDS IN THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

A. Trends in violations and contextual difficulties faced by human rights defenders

17. Human rights defenders continue to be subjected to violations of human rights involving executions, torture, beatings, arbitrary arrest and detention, death threats, harassment, defamation and restrictions on their freedom of expression and association. In some instances, perpetrators target the families of human rights defenders as a means of applying additional pressure to the defender in question.

18. Aside from violations targeting individuals, there are clear trends illustrating a strategy, within some States, of restricting the environment in which human rights defenders operate. Organizations are closed down on the slightest of pretexts, sources of funding are cut off or inappropriately restricted, efforts to register an organization with a human rights mandate are intentionally slowed by bureaucracy.

19. The Special Representative is particularly concerned at the rapid expansion of policy, legislation and procedures described as “security” or “counter-terrorism” measures, but which can have an effect on, or may be subverted to restrict the work of, human rights defenders and sometimes target the defenders themselves. The information received over the past year contains examples of human rights defenders allegedly being targeted in the counter-terrorist discourse of States. For example, in some instances they have been falsely accused by State authorities or State-owned media of being affiliated with an armed opposition or terrorist group.

20. The introduction of exceptions to the rule of law, for example through special legislation on security in general or against terrorism in particular, has affected the ability of national judicial systems to protect human rights defenders from arbitrary actions. These measures have their most severe impact on defenders in States where respect for human rights is already restricted. However, such measures are now also being adopted in States where fundamental human rights are largely guaranteed. These measures are seriously undermining the very norms which underlie the legitimacy of human rights activity and make the protection of defenders an obligation. The Special Representative is acutely aware of the responsibility of States to guarantee security and of the threats to human security posed by acts of terrorism and armed groups. She is, however, convinced that the imperative of security will not be served by violating human rights and should be achieved within compliance of these standards.

21. The Special Representative has been greatly disturbed by the number of incidents reported to her involving an excessive and indiscriminate use of force against those exercising their right of peaceful assembly. In some cases the initial use of force by State authorities to repress peaceful protests provoked a violent reaction and turned these protests into riots. The responsibilities of the State, as contained in articles 2 and 12 of the Declaration, force the Special Representative to conclude that by conduct of this type the State makes itself answerable for such provocation and the consequential violence.

22. Identifying priorities for action is not easy in the face of the wide scope of violations documented under the Special Representative's mandate. However, the capacity of a national judicial system to provide prompt and effective recourse to defenders confronted by violations of their rights is fundamental. In this regard, national judicial systems must be able to address not only human rights violations of individual defenders, but also consider violations of the Declaration that affect the framework upon which defenders depend to conduct their work - such as appropriate legislation, the possibility for the legal registration of an organization, access to funding and independence.

B. Trends in the status of human rights defenders who are victims

23. As related in earlier reports of the Special Representative, human rights defenders who have been the victims of violations continue to include individuals and organizations from a wide spectrum of society. She has noted, however, that certain categories of defender are more likely to be targeted during certain periods of time, for example according to the political agendas in their countries or provinces. Thus, journalists working for independent newspapers are often victims during the run-up to an election, while trade union leaders are more likely to be targeted when government policy affecting the members of their organizations is being reviewed. These "seasonal" changes in the vulnerability of human rights defenders could be a basis for the adoption of strategies for protection that would be especially active on behalf of certain defenders precisely during periods of expected vulnerability. It must, however, be emphasized that there are defenders whose vulnerability is acute all the time. The Special Representative maintains her deep concern for the situation of defenders striving for the rights of the socially or politically marginalized, such as minorities, indigenous people and rural populations. She is particularly anxious to highlight the specific risks that women human rights defenders face either because of the issues on which they are working or because of the environment in which they work.

24. In the context of the increasing use of counter-terrorist and security legislation, this trend appears to affect most often those defenders who are advocating for the rights of minority groups or the right to self-determination. In many cases, the vulnerability of these human rights defenders is increased by the fact that they are themselves members of the group on behalf of which they advocate.

C. Trends in the status of perpetrators of violations or other obstacles faced by human rights defenders

25. It is often difficult to identify the individual author of a particular violation but, for the purposes of strategically addressing violations, one can identify two levels of perpetrator.

26. With regard to a first level, the Special Representative has noted that violations against human rights defenders are often ordered and committed by persons acting at a local level of a State hierarchy. These include acts committed in provinces beyond the capital city as well as acts committed in the capital by officials with only a local mandate. In some instances violations occur through acts of local authorities because of a total inability of the State to identify and address such violations and the weakness of its institutions - for example, because of a

dysfunctional judicial system or ill-equipped and poorly trained police force. This fact does not in any way reduce the responsibility that the State carries for these acts and indicates the urgency with which the State needs to develop strategies and establish national and local mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders.

27. Even where a violation is entirely “local” in its character, in many cases it is obvious that the violation would not have occurred or been met with impunity without the tacit acceptance of national-level authorities, implicating the State as a whole. In this regard, the Special Representative notes a second level of instance for which it is clear from the status, number and variety of persons involved that the State system as a whole is implicated. These “systemic” situations are of special concern and require particular and more vigorous attention.

28. The identification of these two different “levels” of perpetrator and of the manner in which the State is implicated in violations provide opportunities for a more strategic approach to the protection of human rights defenders and implementation of the Declaration.

29. Instances of “systemic” State-wide violation require international support to ensure respect for the Declaration and such support should not be withheld pending the provision of technical cooperation assistance, which cannot be effective without the prior commitment to human rights standards by the State itself. In addition, the Special Representative has noted with concern a perception among local (or provincial) authorities that fulfilling human rights guarantees is the responsibility only of a national Government. This misconception has prevented the development of a sense of human rights responsibility within local authorities and needs to be addressed. In this context, processes of decentralization should clearly emphasize that responsibility for guaranteeing the enjoyment of human rights and of respecting international principles are as much a part of local as of national governance.

30. The immediate perpetrators of violations (i.e. those who actually commit the acts reproached, as opposed to ordering that they be committed by others) are most often from within State security forces. The Special Representative has been notified of an increasing number of acts attributed to the military, a trend that may be a reflection of the expanding role of the military in many countries to include tasks that are normally reserved for civilians. This is frequently accompanied by derogation from certain human rights standards and the application of an entirely separate system of checks and balances and of justice (sometimes secret), impairing the accountability and transparency of public institutions and contributing to impunity. These disturbing trends are currently confronted most directly by human rights defenders working for the promotion and protection of democracy, including defenders who are actually members of the State or related agencies. Attention should be given to providing support to these defenders.

31. Paramilitary groups in a number of countries also bear responsibility for severe acts committed against human rights defenders. In many instances there is convincing evidence that paramilitary groups act with the connivance of State forces, to the extent that even some off-duty or former members of State security forces undertake actions as part of a paramilitary force. The Special Representative considers that the responsibility of the State for the violations committed

by these groups remains clear and entire. With regard to armed opposition groups, the Special Representative considers that, despite the numerous political and legal complexities implied, more direct contact and dialogue with these groups by human rights mechanisms could be useful in addressing the very serious violations committed by them. She is, therefore, eager to develop a framework that is politically appropriate for such engagement, within the limits of her mandate. While States remain the primary bearers of responsibility under international human rights standards, it is essential to recognize the responsibility that armed opposition groups must carry for the very severe violations they commit, including against defenders.

32. The Special Representative wishes to draw attention also to a more obscure, but ever more significant group of actors in the context of difficulties faced by human rights defenders. Private sector actors, including transnational and national corporations, are increasingly culpable in the violation of the economic, social and cultural rights of populations in many countries of the South. Indigenous populations are often particularly affected by such violations. Affected populations find that in the current environment of globalization their own Governments are either unable or unwilling to redress the difficulties they confront. In a number of instances, States appear to perceive the protection of multinationals as in their national interest, even when the activities of these corporations may threaten the rights and livelihood of local populations. Indeed, the Special Representative has received information that indicates complicity of State authorities in promoting the interests of some multinational concerns at the cost of a local population's economic and social rights.

33. Economic policies and the social consequences of the operation of some multinational entities have led to protests against these entities, through peaceful demonstrations, information campaigns, legal proceedings or other activities by human rights defenders (for example with regard to environmental concerns or labour rights). The Special Representative is disturbed by reports of many incidents where coercive power of the State has been used against human rights defenders to quell protest and criticism of policies and practices that undermine the interest of the people affected and violate their rights. In many of the situations brought to her attention violence and coercion were used against defenders leading to severe and lasting injuries. In a number of instances, the Special Representative is forced to draw a link between such State responses and some multinationals as the possible instigators of the violations committed.

34. It is imperative to find approaches to economic development that secure people's economic interests through means that do not conflict with their economic, social and cultural rights. Attention must be given to ensuring respect for the right peacefully to react to economic, social and cultural rights concerns. New approaches should take into consideration the role and responsibilities of private sector corporations, including multinationals, for respecting human rights standards. The Special Representative draws encouragement in this regard from a number of United Nations sources that have emphasized the role or responsibilities of private sector actors in the context of human rights violations, including the sessional working group on transnational corporations of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the United Nations report on the illegal exploitation of natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2002/1146) and concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.³

D. Patterns in the absence of information on human rights defenders from some countries

35. Inevitably, past reports of the Special Representative have focused on analysis of the information available. However, she considers that there is cause also to draw attention to some noticeable absences of information. There are a number of States from where there is a significant silence on the part of human rights defenders, in spite of concerns with regard to human rights within those States. The Special Representative considers that one reason for this silence is sometimes fear by human rights defenders to act because of the harsh response they expect from the authorities. In such States "human rights" actions may still be described officially as subversive in nature and often equated with threats to national security. In one example, human rights NGOs were denied legal registration by authorities with the argument that the promotion and protection of human rights was a role reserved only for the State. In some situations, human rights have been so restricted that defenders' capacity to organize is severely curtailed.

36. In other States, however, human rights defenders have difficulty in communicating information because they lack resources to collect or communicate details of human rights violations, because there is no legislative or administrative framework through which they may operate or because they do not recognize themselves as human rights defenders. In many countries human rights defenders are not aware of the Declaration or the existence of international mechanisms.

37. The Special Representative is convinced that she should not allow the relative absence of information to distract her attention from States where there is a need to secure the safety and role of human rights defenders who are now silent through self-censorship or because of other factors mentioned above. In these contexts, actions to strengthen the capacity of human rights defenders and to promote the Declaration will need to focus on national legislation, the ratification and implementation of international human rights instruments, the strengthening of civil society and the provision of human rights education for governmental and non-governmental actors. These are activities that fall well within the mandates and current programmes of several United Nations entities and she would encourage them to incorporate a human rights defenders' perspective in this work. In addition, the Special Representative is available to work with States that wish to enter into a dialogue with her with a view to addressing any of the above concerns.

E. Public opinion and the role of the media

38. The Special Representative is concerned at the very limited role of the general public in reacting to the adoption of legislation and practices that pose a significant threat to human rights and to actions against defenders striving for the promotion and protection of these rights, whether in their own country or abroad. In some States, a weak public role is the result of fear of repercussions or of ignorance of the concerns. A lack of information is sometimes linked to restrictions on the freedom of expression and of press freedom, or indeed to poverty and rural isolation preventing access to information. In other States the Special Representative regretfully notes public indifference to these human rights concerns.

39. Public support for the activities of human rights defenders is in itself an important means of protection for defenders. This support can be generated and enhanced by increasing public awareness and understanding of the implications and impact of the policies and practices that defenders seek to eliminate or promote.

40. The media can fulfil a fundamental role in this regard by lending visibility to the rights recognized by the Declaration and so strengthening the will and capacity to promote human rights through actions that the Declaration also protects. Similarly, the timely, complete and impartial coverage by the media of human rights violations, their effects and implications are often essential in mobilizing public opinion. The Special Representative recognizes and welcomes the valuable contribution of many journalists who are themselves fulfilling the role of human rights defenders, often at considerable personal risk. It is, nevertheless, true that public media in most countries and regions of the world have not paid adequate attention to issues of human rights and the situation of those who defend them and that, as a consequence, public awareness of, and response to, these concerns are often extremely low. This is an issue that merits serious consideration by individual journalists, media organizations and by those United Nations entities whose mandates and programmes include a media and public information focus.

F. Positive developments

41. Amid the largely negative trends identified above, there are some positive achievements. The Special Representative welcomes the release from detention of defenders who have been the subject of urgent actions under her mandate and the numerous initiatives taken by States to provide protection to defenders on whose behalf she has expressed concern as to their safety.

42. The Special Representative is encouraged by the openness with which many Governments have received her communications and recommendations on means for the better protection of human rights defenders and the effective implementation of the Declaration. This openness has raised her expectations of concrete actions being taken to implement these recommendations. In addition, a few States have taken the very positive initiative of examining ways through which the Declaration on human rights defenders could be translated into their national legislation.

43. The strengthening of defenders' networks and coalitions (notably through intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations) that has been spurred by the creation of this mandate is a development that is extremely reassuring. These networks are in themselves mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders.

44. The development by OHCHR of guidelines (E/CN.4/2002/18, annex) on the respect for human rights in the context of State counter-terrorism activities and their presentation to the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee by the High Commissioner in October 2002 marks a positive initiative. The Special Representative, noting that the guidelines contain a number of provisions that would protect human rights defenders from violations of their rights in the context of counter-terrorist legislation or actions, urges that they be taken into consideration by States.

45. This analysis of emerging trends in the context of the challenges faced by human rights defenders illustrates the fact that the problems they face are numerous and evolving, that there is an urgent need for greater action to address these challenges and protect defenders, and that such action should be strategic. The Special Representative looks, in particular, to the Declaration, adopted by States as an expression of their commitment to achieving such protection and to nurturing the vital work of human rights defenders. In addition to the recommendations made above, the following section of this report is devoted to the promotion and implementation of the Declaration.

III. STRENGTHENING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

A. Human rights defenders and democratization

46. The Special Representative refers to democracy and democratization not only in its sense of popular participation in the selection of a Government, but also in terms of additional characteristics. These include the separation of powers, the accountability of government officials, the availability of effective redress through an independent judiciary and a State system that acts within, and in support of, the protection of fundamental human rights.⁴

47. In tracing the course of the challenges confronted by defenders to their source and in analysing their causes, the Special Representative considers that processes of democratization and the preservation of democratic principles and procedures are central to addressing those challenges and to the implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders. In addition, the Special Representative notes that human rights defenders have a fundamental role to play in the strengthening and preservation of democracy and its components.

48. Human rights defenders are a part of democratization. Their presence and activity in a State is in itself both an indicator of democratization and a motor for its further development. It follows that international, regional and country-level efforts in the context of democratization should include recognition of the contribution of defenders and should take steps to support and strengthen that contribution. Such support could be provided through specific efforts to promote and implement the Declaration on human rights defenders.

49. The Special Representative recommends that international and regional efforts in the area of democratization⁵ clearly integrate the role of human rights defenders and take steps to promote the Declaration. Those United Nations bodies (including departments, agencies or programmes at Headquarters or in the field) that focus on democratization may wish to give special consideration to this recommendation, given the multiple links that can be made between their work in this domain, the United Nations reform process, the mainstreaming of human rights within the work of the Organization and the work and situation of defenders.

B. Human rights defenders and the Millennium Development Goals

50. The work of human rights defenders is fundamental to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals⁶ (MDGs), including with regard to HIV/AIDS, gender equality and the rights of women, the right to education, the rights to health of children and mothers,

environmental sustainability and the right to development. Human rights defenders in such capacities as medical personnel, ministerial civil servants, lawyers, teachers, regional and municipal government officials, journalists, staff of NGOs and the United Nations make essential contributions to the achievement of these goals. When the work of these human rights defenders is weakened or ended, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is placed at risk. Conversely, support for their work is often support for the implementation of the goals.

51. In his first annual progress report⁷ on implementing the Millennium Declaration the Secretary-General warned that prospects for reaching the MDGs were limited and drew particular attention to lack of progress with regard to human rights and democracy. In addition, the Secretary-General said that he was initiating a Millennium Campaign for achievement of the Goals that would embrace collective and cooperative action by the United Nations system, national Governments, civil society, the international financial institutions and other partners.

52. In the context of the Secretary-General's urging greater efforts to attain the MDGs and the vital role that human rights defenders have to play in this regard, the Special Representative calls for those actors cited in the Millennium Campaign to include implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders in their MDG strategies as well as support to defenders as key contributors to the process. In this regard, she wishes to make special reference to the role of the United Nations at country level.

C. Implementation of the Declaration - the United Nations country team and United Nations reform

53. The Special Representative firmly believes that if her reports are truly to have an effective and long-term impact and strengthen respect for the Declaration, they must be implemented at the country level. The United Nations agencies, programmes and offices that are members of the United Nations country team (UNCT) can play a very significant role in this regard.

54. As a representative of the Secretary-General, the mandate-holder recalls the Secretary-General's consistent support for mainstreaming human rights within the United Nations system and his recent "agenda for further change" on reform of the Organization.⁸ Both of these processes - human rights mainstreaming and United Nations reform - support an active role by UNCT with regard to human rights. In addition, human rights defenders are often key partners of the UNCT and United Nations staff themselves often fulfil a role as human rights defenders. From this perspective, the Special Representative believes there is a solid basis for a substantive role by UNCT members in the implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders, within the context of their respective mandates. The Special Representative would also be eager to seek the cooperation of UNCT in addressing recommendations that she develops for mainstreaming human rights as one strategy for the implementation of the Declaration.

55. The Special Representative recognizes that there are aspects to her mandate and reports, and indeed those of other special procedures of the Commission, which are not conducive to action by every member of UNCT. However, there are also aspects that can be very ably

addressed by the country team. In terms of methodology, she notes that UNCT members may wish to integrate their support to the Declaration into the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process.

D. Implementation of the Declaration - regional actions

56. Ideally, the Declaration on human rights defenders would be implemented in full at country level. In many States, however, this is not currently a reality. Mechanisms at an international level provide an important response to these country-level concerns. These responses can produce better results when coordinated with regional-level efforts. Such coordination is particularly fruitful when regional and international mechanisms can draw upon each other's strengths - such as scope of mandate, geographical, political and cultural proximity to country situations or resources - to provide timely and appropriate responses to critical situations. More significantly, however, a regional approach has helped the Special Representative to call upon commitments made by States at the regional level, in addition to their international commitments, for the implementation of her mandate. As outlined in her earlier reports, she is, therefore, supporting the development of a regional approach to the implementation of the Declaration and to enhancing protection for human rights defenders and their activities.

57. The Organization of American States has established a Human Rights Defenders Unit. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights is currently considering a draft resolution that, if adopted, would establish a focal point on human rights defenders. It is hoped that the Commission will go on to establish such a mechanism. The Special Representative is hoping to initiate discussions with European regional mechanisms in order to explore the need for a human rights defenders focus in that region. NGOs in all regions are establishing and strengthening networks to promote and protect human rights defenders, and growing attention is being given to the specific role of women human rights defenders.

58. These regional efforts, both inter- and non-governmental, are making a significant difference to the protection and promotion of the rights of defenders. They also give increasingly valuable support to the mandate of the Special Representative, providing her with information, facilitating her follow-up on cases, or in supporting her visits to regions.

59. However, in terms of the effective implementation of the Declaration, it must be noted that the situation of human rights defenders remains of great concern, as evidenced by section II above and the list of cases in the addendum. Regional action has been much more effective in some countries and regions than in others.

60. The Special Representative notes that the United Nations system has its own regional capacities, although these do not, so far, have a focus on human rights defenders. OHCHR is gradually developing a regional human rights capacity and now has six regional or subregional representatives. The Special Representative has received strong support from the regional adviser for the Americas and the adviser for Asia and it is her hope to pursue this collaboration with the recently appointed representatives in other regions. Other United Nations entities have established or are building regional capacities, such as the United Nations Development Programme's Sub-Regional Resource Facilities (SURFs) initiative,⁹ which may be able to

contribute, within their mandates, to the implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders. The United Nations reform and human rights mainstreaming processes provide a basis for increasing the United Nations regional contribution to human rights defenders. The Special Representative welcomes practical suggestions from relevant United Nations entities as to how this could be done.

61. Other intergovernmental organizations may wish to draw from the experience of the OAS and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in strengthening their own approach to the Declaration. A similar approach could be adopted by NGOs operating at a regional level.

E. Implementation of the Declaration - collaboration with other special procedures and the treaty bodies

62. The broad scope of the human rights defenders mandate has encouraged the Special Representative to seek regular collaboration and coordination with the mandates of other special procedures of the Commission. In her first report to the Commission (E/CN.4/2001/94) she elaborated on her methodology in this regard. Cooperation has been focused almost entirely on specific cases of common concern and she has been able to send numerous communications to Governments in partnership with other mandates. She has also, on numerous occasions, participated in public and private thematic discussions with other special procedures mandate-holders. Together, they have examined their methods of work with a view to strengthened collaboration and the Special Representative has worked with staff in OHCHR in this context.

63. She has been unable, however, to collaborate to any great extent with other special procedures on the development of structures or processes that would help prevent the violations that she and her colleagues have addressed through their communications. This absence of a common focus on positive efforts is in part due to the very limited resources at their disposal. The Special Representative would continue to explore possibilities for better collaboration in this regard.

64. Collaboration of the Special Representative with treaty bodies, in the context of the implementation of the Declaration, has been very limited. However, with the information-gathering and reporting basis of her mandate now established, she would like to approach treaty bodies to discuss with them the links between the work and situation of human rights defenders, implementation of the Declaration and the role and activities of treaty bodies. She will also seek, where relevant, to take into consideration treaty body recommendations and general comments in her own work. Treaty bodies, given their focus on the compatibility of national legislation with particular international human rights treaties, could be particularly helpful in identifying and addressing national laws that are incompatible with the Declaration on human rights defenders.

IV. GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS - VIOLATIONS CONFRONTING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND WHERE THEY HAVE OCCURRED

65. This section of the report is based upon information received over the last year. The large majority of the violations presented below allegedly occurred during the same period.

However, in some instances, information that she received over the past 12 months refers to violations that were reportedly committed before this period. In all instances where the Special Representative refers to a country by name, the violations alleged have been raised by her with the State concerned, either in the form of an “urgent action” letter during the year, or through a letter listing allegations and communicated to State authorities at the end of the 12-month period. In many instances States have responded to her letters, and these responses are reflected in the annex to her report along with the details of each case. In other instances, States have not responded.

66. The Special Representative does not pretend to provide an exhaustive list of the violations suffered by all human rights defenders. However, the cases presented here are representative of the incidents that are occurring and of the types of information she has received. With regard to the different types of concern referred to in the following paragraphs, the Special Representative draws the Commission’s attention to her previous report (E/CN.4/2002/106) in which she expanded, in thematic terms, upon the character of these violations and how they impact upon human rights defenders and their work.

67. In describing these many incidents and types of violation the Special Representative wishes to emphasize not only the impact on the victims when each incident allegedly occurred, but also the fact that in the large majority of instances the violations continued to have a detrimental effect on the lives of victims and their families long afterwards. Death threats have obliged defenders to change the daily pattern of their lives and that of their families. Harassment is often a process, rather than a single act, frustrating its victims’ efforts to conduct their work and lives. The long-term suffering and trauma, both physical and mental, caused by torture, beatings, kidnapping and imprisonment need no explanation.

68. The Special Representative deplors the **execution** of human rights defenders. In addition, she notes with great concern that in many instances it is clear that prior to the actual killing of defenders indicators of a worsening pattern of violations being committed against these individuals went unheeded by authorities. The failure to investigate death threats and, indeed, the failure to adequately investigate and prosecute those responsible for earlier killings of human rights defenders undoubtedly creates a climate of impunity that has encouraged aggressors. According to the Special Representative’s information, the alleged murder of human rights defenders as a result of their human rights work occurred with regard to: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines and Turkey.

69. According to the information received, defenders have been the victims of **death threats** and **other threats** and **intimidation** in: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Turkey and Zimbabwe.

70. In some instances, threats were also made against the defenders’ family members. Threats were often made anonymously through a telephone call or sometimes by letter. In a few instances the threats were made directly to the defenders by unknown persons, and occasionally they were made by a person who was known to the defender, such as a member of the local

authorities. In only very few cases were death threats effectively investigated by the authorities. In a number of instances, however, authorities did provide armed protection to the defenders in question.

71. The Special Representative received information on numerous cases in which defenders were allegedly **beaten** by members of State security forces and by unidentified attackers. In some instances these beatings were accompanied by **kidnapping**, sometimes by unidentified persons but on a few occasions reportedly by members of the authorities. Incidents of these types reportedly occurred with regard to: Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mexico, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

72. According to the information available to the Special Representative **arbitrary arrest and detention** procedures were allegedly used against human rights defenders in a very large number of States, including with regard to: Algeria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

73. The arbitrary arrest and detention of defenders was sometimes accompanied by beatings inflicted upon them during the arrest itself or once in detention. In a few cases brought to the Special Representative's attention, defenders were held in incommunicado detention and it was often impossible, for a period of time, for victims' family members to even confirm that the defender was actually in State custody. In at least one instance, a defender was forcibly committed to a psychiatric institution.

74. In many cases the Special Representative's information suggests that the arbitrary arrest and detention of defenders occurred in violation of applicable national, as well as international, law. In addition, she is concerned at the growing number of instances in which newly adopted national legislation, itself in violation of the Declaration and other international standards, is being used to detain defenders.

75. It is notable that in the large majority of these cases the arrest and detention were not followed by any form of judicial proceeding and the defenders in question were either subsequently released or held without trial.

76. In a few cases, however, human rights defenders were the target of **criminal or other charges** leading sometimes to **prosecution**. According to the information available to the Special Representative, charges and in some instances actual prosecution, were pressed in Algeria, Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Turkey, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. The various cases involved, inter alia, the application of national security legislation, a code on administrative offences and charges of "sabotage of the policy of national solidarity" and of "publishing or communicating false statements prejudicial to the State".

77. In a number of States, defenders have been the victims of **defamation** or **misrepresentation**, being described as, inter alia, terrorists, rebels, troublemakers or members of an opposition political party. In some instances the Special Representative has witnessed a tendency by State authorities and even by certain media to assimilate defenders to the persons whose human rights they are seeking to protect. Thus, defenders who act to protect the human rights of persons from armed opposition groups are themselves described as being affiliated with those groups. Defamation can have a very damaging impact on the situation of a defender living within a local community and may also have a subsequent negative influence on the defender's safety. According to the Special Representative's information such incidents occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Turkey and Zimbabwe.

78. In many instances the **offices and/or homes** of defenders were subject to **attacks, burglaries and unauthorized searches**. Documents relating to defenders' human rights work - such as complaints of human rights violations made by victims - were stolen, as well as equipment such as computers. According to the information received by the Special Representative incidents of these types allegedly occurred in Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Pakistan, Panama, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Tunisia. In some instances the allegations report that the authors of these acts were members of the State security forces, but in most cases the authors' identities were unknown.

79. **Harassment** of human rights defenders is commonplace and often goes unreported. It is almost always committed by authorities making use of their official status. Harassment can involve a wide variety of circumstances, such as the repeated summoning of a defender to appear before local authorities, where the defender may be kept waiting for several hours before being told to leave. In some instances, defenders have received such summonses several days a week. Such actions can have a very detrimental impact on the capacity of a defender to continue human rights work and represent a serious abuse of authority. According to the information available harassment of defenders occurred in: Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Colombia, Haiti, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Paraguay, Sudan and Tunisia.

80. In a few instances defenders were prevented from conducting their human rights work when State authorities **obstructed the holding of meetings** between defenders or prevented defenders from travelling into a country to investigate human rights concerns through the **denial of visas**. These types of concern, according to the Special Representative's information, occurred with regard to Cuba, India, Indonesia, Israel, the Russian Federation and Tunisia.

81. In a few instances, the Special Representative received information indicating that the State authorities threatened the **professional independence of defenders** or the **context from which they conduct their defence of human rights**. This sort of action allegedly involved pressuring defenders to falsify their reports of an event to accommodate an official version, threatening to revoke student status or revoking the legal status of a human rights organization. In some instances defenders experienced (sometimes insurmountable) obstacles in **registering** a new organization or in renewing the registration of an existing organization. In at least one instance an organization was closed down, allegedly for trivial reasons. The initial concerns were reported from Kenya and the Sudan, respectively while the latter instances allegedly occurred in Belarus, the Russian Federation and Tunisia.

82. The above paragraphs provide a general list of the efforts used against human rights defenders to prevent or end their human rights work. The Special Representative wishes to emphasize that in many cases referred to her less serious incidents that went unaddressed by the authorities were subsequently followed by grave human rights violations. Harassment has led to intimidation; arbitrary arrest and detention to beating; death threats to murder. This fact emphasizes the vital importance that early action be taken by relevant authorities to address violations of the Declaration on human rights defenders as soon as they are reported. Inaction at these early stages imposes an increasing burden of responsibility upon States when violations worsen.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

83. Her analysis of the evolving trends in the situation of human rights defenders has made it clear to the Special Representative that the effective implementation of the Declaration requires the development and implementation of multiple strategies. The part of her mandate focusing on receiving information and reporting on the situation of human rights defenders has become the basis on which she is able to suggest such action.

84. Engaging Governments, human rights defenders and other interested actors in a dialogue on issues emerging from information that she has received has proved essential to making recommendations for strategies with better potential for positive results. It must, however, be mentioned that this engagement has been meaningful only when Governments had a genuine commitment to uphold the principles of the Declaration, and when the legitimacy of the work of human rights defenders was fully acknowledged. The Special Representative has sought and welcomed cooperation based on the common understanding that protection of human rights defenders is the central concern of this mandate.

85. As outlined in the above sections, the Special Representative considers that it would be in keeping with the Secretary-General's reform process for her to work more closely with the implementing bodies of the United Nations. It is clear that the work and objectives of human rights defenders converge with the work and objectives of the United Nations in many areas and that the United Nations has a fundamental role to play in implementing the Declaration on human rights defenders. The Special Representative's mandate would be considerably strengthened if United Nations entities were to contribute further to implementing those of her recommendations that can be supported within their scope of responsibilities. To this end, the Special Representative has tried, in the present report, to develop recommendations that are complementary to both their mandates and hers and which can be easily incorporated into their existing implementation functions and programmes of action.

B. Recommendations

86. The following recommendations have been identified as priorities for a strategic approach to the situation and role of human rights defenders. They are addressed to several different actors, including States, United Nations entities, as well as intergovernmental

organizations and civil society and focus on strengthening implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders. In a number of instances, as explained above, they have been developed so as to complement and support existing processes and methodologies to which States and the United Nations are currently contributing.

1. The protection of human rights defenders

87. Particular attention must be given to ensuring and maintaining the “**contextual space**” in which defenders operate - including rights to assembly and expression and the possibility to legally register and obtain funding for a human rights organization. With this “space” assured, defenders are in a better position to conduct their work and to defend their own rights.

88. **The strengthening of national judicial systems**, in respect of international standards, is fundamental to providing prompt and effective recourse to defenders confronted by violations of their rights as well as to protecting the contextual space that defenders require to conduct their work.

89. **Counter-terrorism and security legislation** should respect international human rights standards, including the Declaration. Attention to OHCHR guidelines in this regard would be useful.

90. “Seasonal” **changes in the vulnerability** of human rights defenders could be a basis for the adoption of regional **strategies** for protection that would be especially active on behalf of certain defenders during periods of expected vulnerability. Certain rights, for example those relating to the possibility to protest violations through peaceful means, should also be given particular attention given their strategic importance.

91. Effective responses to instances of “**systemic**” **State-wide violation require international support** to ensure respect for the Declaration on human rights defenders. International actors with relevant mandates or authority should include concern for the systemic abuse of the rights of defenders among the issues they prioritize in their dealings with States where this is a concern.

92. There should be recognition of the **role and responsibility of multinationals** in the violation of the rights of defenders in certain instances. Efforts in this regard should be accompanied by development actions that secure people’s economic interests through modes of development that do not conflict with their economic, social and cultural rights.

93. Greater attention must be given to addressing **acts committed by paramilitary and armed opposition groups**. State responsibility for the actions of the former must be emphasized. With regard to the latter, international intervention in the context of peace negotiations must place emphasis on responsibility to protect human rights standards. Direct contact between the Special Representative and such groups should be considered where actions of these groups have caused or threatened violation of the rights of defenders, or have contributed to conditions or environments that obstruct the work for the defence of human rights.

94. In **States where human rights defenders are largely silent** actions should be taken to strengthen the capacity of human rights defenders and to promote the Declaration, focusing on national legislation, the ratification and implementation of international human rights instruments, the strengthening of civil society and the provision of human rights education for governmental and non-governmental actors. These are activities that fall well within the mandates and current programmes of several United Nations entities and the Special Representative encourages them to incorporate a human rights defenders' perspective in their work.

95. With regard to **armed opposition groups**, the Special Representative considers that, despite the numerous political and legal complexities implied, **more direct contact and engagement** with these groups in the context of her mandate could be useful in addressing the violations committed by these perpetrators.

2. The media

96. The positive role of the media in providing information on the Declaration and on violations of its articles and the implications of such actions, as well as in creating public support for the work of human rights defenders, is vital. Initiatives towards strengthening the role of the media in this regard could be taken by media organizations and NGOs, as well as through some existing United Nations activities. Initiatives might involve human rights training or improved access to information on human rights concerns for the media.

3. The role and responsibilities of local government

97. Processes of decentralization of State authority should clearly emphasize that responsibility for guaranteeing the enjoyment of human rights and of respecting international principles is a part of local, as well as national, governance. Local government officials should have access to human rights education programmes and should be supported and encouraged by national authorities in their efforts to respect human rights standards. Implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders should be pursued at local as well as national levels.

4. Implementation of the Declaration in the context of processes - democratization

98. International and regional efforts in the area of democratization should include an emphasis on the role of human rights defenders and take steps to promote the Declaration. Those organs within the United Nations that focus on democratization may wish to give special consideration to this recommendation.

5. Implementation of the Declaration in the context of processes - the Millennium Development Goals

99. A strengthening of efforts to implement the Declaration on human rights defenders is a strengthening of efforts to achieve the MDGs. The principal MDG implementation actors, including relevant United Nations entities, could include a focus on the Declaration as an aspect of their strategies.

6. The special role of the United Nations country team

100. The Special Representative notes the Secretary-General's support for the mainstreaming of human rights, the United Nations reform process and the Millennium Campaign, as well as the strong links between the role and objectives of human rights defenders and those of the United Nations country team. From this perspective, UNCT should be active in implementation of aspects of the Declaration. The Special Representative is also eager to cooperate with UNCT in addressing recommendations she develops for mainstreaming human rights as one strategy for the implementation of the Declaration. UNCT actions in this regard could possibly be linked to the CCA and UNDAF process.

7. Regional actions

101. The efforts of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to establish a focus on human rights defenders (for example through the creation of a human rights defenders "unit") should be continued. An exchange of information between organizations will help in sharing, and learning from, acquired experience. United Nations entities (including OHCHR) with a regional focus and, in particular, a regional presence could give greater consideration to the role they can fulfil in addressing the situation of defenders and supporting the Declaration's implementation at the regional level.

8. Special procedures and treaty bodies

102. The Special Representative shall seek to meet with human rights treaty bodies to discuss with them the links between their role and activities and those of human rights defenders. She will seek to discuss the extent to which treaty bodies may be able to further support the Declaration's implementation. The Special Representative shall continue to explore means of ensuring implementation of her recommendations at the regional and country levels, including through follow-up to the recommendations contained above. She will seek to collaborate and coordinate with other special procedures mandate-holders in this regard.

Notes

¹ Including annual reports to the Commission in 2001(E/CN.4/2001/94) and 2002 (E/CN.4/2002/106), annual reports to the General Assembly in 2001 (A/56/341) and 2002 (A/57/182), and reports to the Commission on missions conducted to Colombia (E/CN.4/2002/106/Add.2) and Kyrgyzstan (E/CN.4/2002/106/Add.1).

² Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Assembly by its resolution 53/144 of 8 March 1999.

³ Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Democratic Republic of the Congo, "The Committee notes the negative impact on children of the armed conflict within the State party's territory and the role of numerous actors in this conflict, including the armed forces of several States all party to the Convention, armed groups and numerous private

companies, as cited in a United Nations report on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Committee notes, in particular, grave violations of the Convention within territory outside of the control of the Government of the State party and where armed elements, including armed forces under the jurisdiction of other States parties to the Convention, have been active. The Committee notes, in addition, that article 38 of the Convention requires States parties to respect provisions of international humanitarian law applicable to them and that, as indicated by United Nations sources (see, *inter alia*, Security Council resolution 1341 (2001) of 22 February 2001), this law has been violated, particularly with regard to children. In this context, in addition to the responsibility of the State party, the Committee also emphasizes the responsibilities of several other States and certain other actors for the negative impact of the armed conflict upon children and for violations of some provisions of the Convention and international humanitarian law within areas of the State party” (CRC/C/15/Add.153, para. 6).

⁴ See, for example, the introduction to the Secretary-General’s report entitled “Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies” (A/50/332).

⁵ See, for example, General Assembly resolution 56/269 of 25 April 2002, entitled “Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, to be held in Ulaanbaatar in 2003”.

⁶ As contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000.

⁷ Report of the Secretary-General entitled “Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration” (A/57/270).

⁸ Report of the Secretary-General entitled “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change” (A/57/387).

⁹ See, for example, the description included on the following web page, as of 25 November 2002: <http://www.undp.org/bdp/surf.htm>.
