

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

AI Index: IOR 41/043/2005 (Public)
News Service No: 100
20 April 2005

2005 UN Commission on Human Rights: Agenda item 18 on Cooperation with special procedures

**Joint oral statement by Amnesty International, Baha'i International Community,
Franciscans International, Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers), International
Federation of ACAT, Lutheran World Federation and
Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (MRAP)¹**

Amnesty International, Baha'i International Community, Franciscans International, Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers), International Federation of ACAT, Lutheran World Federation and Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples welcome the increasing number of Standing Invitations being issued to the Special Procedures of the UN Commission on Human Rights. In particular, we would like to highlight those issued since the last session of the Commission: Mongolia, Republic of Macedonia, New Zealand and Uruguay, bringing the total to 52². We urge all other States, in particular those who are currently members of the Commission to do likewise: Armenia, Australia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, China, Congo, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Ukraine, USA and Zimbabwe.³

At the same time, we call on *all* States, whether or not they have issued a Standing Invitation, to cooperate with the Special Procedures by:

- facilitating their visits in accordance with the terms of reference on fact-finding missions;
- ensuring the widest distribution of the recommendations of the Special Procedures following a country visit, the incorporation of those recommendations into national plans of action and their reflection in national protection systems where appropriate;
- providing information to the Special Procedures on how the recommendations arising from country visits have been implemented, and identifying any obstacles to implementation;
- responding fully and promptly to communications from the Special Procedures, including urgent appeals and letters of general allegation;
- reviewing and implementing recommendations concerning the protection of human rights generally elaborated by the Special Procedures;
- protecting those who provide information to or meet with the Special Procedures from reprisals, investigating and prosecuting those alleged to be responsible for any such reprisals, and reporting to the Commission on these developments; and
- demonstrating respect for the mechanisms and the mandate-holders by refraining from attacks on individual mandate-holders casting doubt on their integrity.

We believe that States which are members of the Commission have a particular responsibility to strengthen human rights standards, of which co-operation with the Special Procedures, as just elaborated, is one critical element.

We welcome the recent steps taken by some of the Special Procedures and encourage others to follow their example, in particular:

- to establish mechanisms for follow-up to country missions, including through seeking information from States and NGOs on implementation of recommendations;
- to develop criteria to determine what constitutes a full and satisfactory reply from governments, and identify clearly those responses which fail to meet these criteria;
- to highlight general recommendations on the protection of human rights in their public reports and on the website in order to facilitate increased reference to and use of their recommendations; and
- to highlight in public reports the outstanding mission requests where the State has systematically failed to give a positive response.

Finally, we urge the Commission to make better use of the analysis and recommendations of the Special Procedures in its work, which would help to depoliticize its examination of both thematic issues and country situations, and to pay particular attention to those States that fail to cooperate with its mechanisms.

¹This statement is also supported by Association for the Prevention of Torture, Human Rights Watch, International Commission of Jurists, International Federation of Human Rights Leagues, the International Service for Human Rights and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) but because of the restrictions on the number of oral statements they are unable to formally join in it.

²The full list of States having issued Standing Invitations is available on the OHCHR website.

³For more information see the joint NGO written statement in UN document E/CN.4/2005/NGO/1.