

NEWS LETTER

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CONTENTS

- SPECIAL REPORT BY THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABOUT THE COMPLAINTS RELATED TO FORCED DISAPPEARANCES THAT TOOK PLACE DURING THE 70'S AND BEGINING OF THE 80'S
- RECOMENDACIONES
Recommendation number 26/2001
- DOMESTIC RELATIONS
Cycle of Conferences and Round Tables: Democratic Transition and Human Rights Protection
Training Courses
- INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Fourth Meeting of the Working Group of the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
- Formal visit of UNESCO Assistant General Director to the President of the CNDH
- PUBLICATION

"SPECIAL REPORT BY THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABOUT THE COMPLAINTS RELATED TO ENORCED DISAPPEARANCES THAT TOOK PLACE DURING THE 70'S AND BEGINING OF THE 80'S"

Dr. José Luis Soberanes, President of the National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH) on November 27, 2001, presented to the President of México, Vicente Fox Quesada, the "Special Report About The Complaints Related To Forced Disappearances That Took Place During The 70's And Begining Of The 80'" and a Recommendation adressed to the Federal Executive Branch so that responsibilities be established and legal action be exerted against those presumed persons responsible for the crimes identified in said Report.

As a result of a rigorous research methodology, the Special Report contains information about each one of the 532 cases that it had knowledge of, and brings forward all available evidence to hear about the guidelines followed by security forces.

More than 80 officials from the CNDH participated in the investigation, during almost 22 months. It is made up of 180,000 pages and it will be available to the families of those disappeared persons. A synthesis of the investigation was also made with 2,845 pages containing descriptive aspects of said research.

In order to integrate the corresponding files, the CNDH searched for direct contact with the families of the disappeared persons, and went to several in order to obtain evidence, proofs and pieces of evidence, and it reviewed over 80,000 000 cards in the archives of the National Center of Investigations and National Security (CISEN).

In the National General Archive, 3,308 boxes with reports, 132 boxes with loose files and 1,300 pages in relation to the investigation about the now extinct Federal Direction of Political and Social Investigations, were reviewed.

In all, some 11,300 official letters, requiring information, were sent out to several public offices. Among them: the Attorney General's Offices of many of the Mexican States, the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), the Workers of the State Institute of Social Security and Services (ISSSTE), the National Population Registry and the Civil Registry, as well as the Public Catastral and Commercial Registries.

The complete text of the Report can be found in the National Commission for Human Rights web page (www.cndh.org.mx).

RECOMENDACIONES

Recommendation No. 25/2001

November 22, 2001

Case: Challenge Appeal by Mr. José Luis Chavez Benitez, against the Municipal President and Treasurer of Axochiapan, Morelos, because he did not answer the Morelos State Commission for Human Rights dictated on September 20, 2000, and due to which the above mentioned is considered as not accepted.

Authority Addressed: President of the Board of Directors of the Honorable Congress of the State of Morelos, Cabildo del H. Ayuntamiento, Municipio de Axuchapan, Morelos.

Recommendation No. 26/2001

November 27, 2001

Case: Enforced Disappearances that took place in the decade of the 70's and beginning of the 80's. This Recommendation, which accompanies the Report above mentioned, tries to establish clearly what happened in the years during which a confrontation took place between civilian organizations and public security forces, during the decade of the 70's and beginning of the 80's, as a fundamental task for the affirmation of the State of Law, in accordance with the reality Mexico lives today.

This Recommendation was made based upon the legal and humanitarian premises that ordain the actions of the National Commission for Human Rights. Hence, it's strict adherence to historical and legal truth. The facts exposed have been validated according to the law in effect in Mexico.

Authority Addressed: Constitutional President of México.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Annual Cycle of Conferences and Round Tables: Democratic Transition and Human Rights Protection

The Mexican National Commission for Human Rights, in collaboration with the Law Faculty of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM in its Spanish acronym), held four roundtables during the month of November.

The first one took place on November 8, and dealt with "Environment and Human Rights." The participants were: the lawyer Federico Arce Navarro, Director of Sea Ports, Airports and Borders at the Assistant Attorney's Office for Natural Resources at the Federal Attorney's Office for the Protection of the Environment, and Prof. Rodolfo Godínez, Director of Mexican Cases at the Interamerican Commission for Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The second roundtable, on November 15, dealt with the subject of "The Defense of Human Rights in the context of scientific development: the human genome," and the participants were: Doctor Rubén Lisker, Research Director at the National Institute of Medical and Nutritional Sciences "Salvador Zubirán", Doctor Antonio Velázquez, from the Genetic Nutrition Unit at the Mexican National Autonomous University, and Doctor Manuel Ramos Kuri, of the Panamerican University. The third roundtable, on the 22nd of November, was devoted to the theme "The Defense of Human Rights in the context of technological development: The Cybernetic Crime." The participants were: the lawyers José Hernández García, General Assistant Director for the United Nations System at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Manuel Meján Carrer, Director of the Federal Institute of Specialists in Mercantile Contests. Finally, in the fourth roundtable, on November 29, dedicated to the subject of "The Defense of the Human Rights in the Context of Economical Development," the speakers were: Doctor Eugenia Correa of UNAM's Institute for Economic Investigations, and Doctor Clemente Ruiz Durán, from UNAM's Faculty of Economics.

Training Courses

The National Commission for Human Rights, following the spirit promoted by the institution of the Ombudsman, for the promotion of the study, teaching and diffusion of Human Rights, during the month of November 2001, undertook 99 activities related to Human Rights.

Personnel belonging to the training area of the Mexican National Commission for Human Rights gave 10 courses, 16 workshop-courses, 14 conferences, 11 workshops, and in collaboration with the State of Morelos Commission for Human Rights and the Social Security and Services Institute for Workers of the State (ISSSTE) in México City, carried out several conferences and roundtables about Human Rights, addressed to the general public. The CNDH also organized the First Regional Encounter with Non-Governmental Organizations with the participation of the Commissions for Human Rights of the Federal District, Guanajuato, State of México, Morelos and Querétaro.

Other meetings took place with members of several organizations such as "Organización Texcoco al Amparo del Menor, A.C."; "Asociación Civil Casa de San Miguel"; "Fundación de Apoyo Infantil"; "Casa Cuna Amigo Daniel"; "Casa Hogar Loyola"; "Asociación de Débiles Mentales"; "Madres Solteras GUMA", and members of "Red Nacional Contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres y los Hombres Jóvenes" (National Network Against Violence towards Young Women and Men), among others.

Other meetings were coordinated with the representatives of the State of Morelos' Commission for Human Rights and NGO's, as well as with the State of México's Commission for Human Rights and with members of several NGO's from that State.

The subjects of the training courses were varied, among them: "Childhood and its Rights", "Family Violence", "The Rights of Boys and Girls", "Domestic Violence and its Consequences", "Human Rights of Victims of Family Violence", "The Rights of Boys and Girls in the International System", "Family Mediation and the Rights of Children", "Family Mediation as an Alternative to Family Crisis", "The Rights of Indigenous Populations", "The Human Rights of Indigenous Populations and their Perspectives", "The Rights of Elderly Persons", "Woman as a Victim and her Human Rights", "The Rights of Persons with HIV or AIDS", "The Rights of Persons with some type of Incapacity". "Human Values, Ethics and Human Courage", "Teaching and Human Rights", "Basic Aspects of Human Rights and the Complaint Procedure", "Attributions and Competencies of the National Commission for Human Rights", "The Complaint and its Procedure in Visitorships", "Functions of the Technical Secretariat of the Consulting Council of the CNDH", "The Role of Civil Society in Public Security and Human Rights", "The Armed Forces and Human Rights", "The Rights and Duties of the Police", "The Use of Force, Firearms and Liability Exclusions", "The Non Jurisdictional System of the Protection of Human Rights", "Regional Mechanism of the Protection of Human Rights", and finally, "The Formation of Human Rights of Promoters".

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Fourth Meeting of the Working Group of the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the American Continent

According to the mandate given by the members of the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the American Continent, founded in México City on November 2000, the Working Group in charge of the project of preparing the Statutes, met for the fourth time in the city of Toronto, Canada, on November 19 of this year.

Present at that reunion were the representatives of the heads of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Honduras National Commissioner for Human Rights, and of the Mexican National Commission for Human Rights. The Public Defender for the Argentine Nation participated through an open line in Internet.

During this meeting they analyzed several issues, among which, the final version of the Statutes, the strategic plan for the functioning of the Network, as well as establishing the dates for the calling of the General Assembly and the organization of a Seminar/workshop on Indigenous Communities.

During the celebration of the VI Annual Congress of the Ibero-American Federation of Ombudsman (FIO), which will take place from December 5 to 8, 2001, the National Commission, as Secretary pro tempore of the Network, will call for a meeting, parallel to the work of FIO, with the representatives of the national institutions of the American Continent there present, to inform them about the advances and activities of the Network, and about the agreements reached by the Working Group during their meetings.

Formal visit of UNESCO's Assistant General Director to the President of the CNDH

On the 29th of November the Assistant General Director of UNESCO, Mr. Pierre Sané, made a visit to the President of the CNDH, Doctor José Luis Soberanes Fernández.

On said occasion, both officers talked about the future of the relations between both institutions and made special emphasis in carrying out, with the help of the United Nations, several training and research activities in the field of the defense of the fundamental guarantees. Mr. Pierre Sané thanked Doctor José Luis Soberanes for all the help that the CNDH has always given to that international organization, especially for the carrying out of promotional activities in favor of a culture of Human Rights.

Both officers agreed also to strengthen a world network of National Institutions for Human Rights and to promote the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, about which structured programs do not yet exist in Latin America.

At the petition of Mr. Pierre Sané, who has also been Secretary General of Amnesty International, the head of the CNDH explained to him the details of the Special Report of the CNDH about disappeared persons during the decade 1970-1980 which had been presented a few days before to the President of México.

Panama's People's Defender met with officers of the CNDH

On November 30, Panama's People's Defender, Mr. Antonio Tejada Espino, accompanied by the Director of Education for Life of said institution, visited the offices of Mexico's National Commission for Human Rights.

During their meeting with the Executive Secretary of the CNDH they talked about diverse aspects of future mechanisms of cooperation between both institutions. The officers of Panama's Public Defender's stated their interest in having information about the work done by the CNDH regarding the forced disappearances and the possibility of training its personnel in this and other aspects in which the National Commission has already acquired a strong experience.

PUBLICATIONS

Gaceta, the National Commission for Human Rights' official monthly publication, No. 134, corresponding to the month of September, 2001.

Miradas de México (Pictures of Mexico) (new edition) National Commission for Human Rights, November, 2001. México, Leaflet.

Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Individuals, Groups and Institutions for Promoting and Protecting the Human Rights and Universally Recognized Freedoms. National Commission for Human Rights, México, November 2001. Leaflet.

¿Sufriste un daño por algún delito? (Were you harmed by a crime?) National Commission for Human Rights. México, November 2001. Leaflet.

Los Derechos Humanos de las Niñas y los Niños (The Human Rights of Young Girls and Young Boys). (New edition) National Commission for Human Rights. México, November 2001. Memoranda.

Informe especial sobre las quejas en materia de Desapariciones Forzadas ocurridas en la década de los 70 y principios de los 80 (Special Report About the Complaints Related to Enforced Disappearances That Took Place During the 70's and Beginning of the 80's) National Commission for Human Rights. México, November 2001.

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