

Speaker

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JOINT STATEMENT, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INDIAN COUNCIL OF SOUTH AMERICA

Reports of the Special Rapporteurs on Racism and Summary Execution

Our organizations first note the preliminary report following Rapporteur Alston's visit to the Philippines. We have grave concerns that indigenous organizations there are classified as "fronts" or "enemies of the state" and thus considered legitimate targets for military operations against them by the national armed forces. This is clearly racist and thus also under Rapporteur Diene's mandate. Targeting civilians in armed conflicts is always a violation of humanitarian law. We await Rapporteur Alston's final report on this issue.

We also ask Rapporteur Alston what he intends regarding follow-up to his mission to Sri Lanka, especially in light of the surge of large scale military operations against Tamil civilians, the assassination of another Tamil member of Parliament, and the still unresolved cases of the killings of humanitarian aid workers.

We strongly support the concern of Rapporteur Diene on the racist platforms of an increasing number of political parties or governments. This is evident in Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, India (in relation to Kashmir), the United States (including strongly anti-Alaskan Native rhetoric from Alaskan politicians and parties), France, Switzerland, and Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, for example, several political parties such as the JHU and JVP have overt and very strong anti-Tamil platforms. These parties, part of the governing coalition, seek a Sinhala-Buddhist state for Sri Lanka rather than an ethnically neutral State that respects the rights of all racial/ethnic groups. We ask Rapporteur Diene what further plans he has in regard to these situations.

We also ask Rapporteur Alston what he intends to do regarding unresolved cases. For example, our organizations brought Mr. Andrabe from Indian-occupied Kashmir to the Human Rights Commission more than 10 years ago. He was assassinated as we awaited his attendance at the following session. To date, there is no resolution of this case.

We conclude with concerns about persons who meet with Special Rapporteurs and who subsequently face adverse consequences. The case of Mr. Andrabe is one, as is the recent case of a Tibetan, Jigme Gyatso, who has been kept in solitary confinement as a result of speaking with the Special Rapporteur on Torture in 2005. We ask both Mr. Diene and Mr. Alston what they propose to prevent human rights violations against persons who meet with mandate holders in the course of country visits.