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**PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL,
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS,
INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT**

**Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including
its causes and consequences, Gulnara Shahinian***

* The present report was submitted after the deadline owing to the brief period between the appointment of the Special Rapporteur and the deadline for submission of her first report.

Summary

At its sixth session, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 6/14 of 28 September 2007 and appointed, for a three-year period, a Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences. This is a new mandate, replacing the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. Pursuant to resolution 6/14, on 26 March 2008 Gulnara Shahinian was appointed Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences. Ms. Shahinian took up her mandate on 1 May 2008; this is her first report.

Contemporary forms of slavery affect the lives of millions of people around the world. According to scholarly estimates, based on the definition of the Slavery Convention of 1926, there are 27 million enslaved people throughout the world.¹ There is no country immune to its proliferation; of special concern is the situation of children, who are denied the fundamental right to be born free and to be protected from enslavement.

The Special Rapporteur welcomes the decision of the Human Rights Council to establish a mandate on issues related to slavery, and notes that no other United Nations special procedures mandate provides an opportunity to apply a holistic approach to issues such as forced labour, which are related to slavery.

The Special Rapporteur greatly values the consultations she held in Geneva with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other important actors in the fight against contemporary forms of slavery. These consultations gave her a firm understanding of current debates and issues arising in this field of work.

The consultations helped to develop the Special Rapporteur's thematic direction for the next three years. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur will focus on the causes and consequences of forced labour and how it has an impact on men, women and children. She will take a particular focus on domestic labour and on child labour as it pertains to the economic exploitation of children. She will also strive to directly address the protection, prevention and the restoration of human rights and the dignity of victims of contemporary forms of slavery.

¹ See Kevin Bales, *Ending Slavery: how we free today's slaves*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2007.

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Introduction

1. At its sixth session, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 6/14 by which it established, for a three-year period, a Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, its causes and consequences, to replace the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. In accordance with the resolution, the Special Rapporteur will “focus principally on aspects of contemporary forms of slavery, which are not covered by existing mandates of the Human Rights Council; promote the effective application of relevant international norms and standards on slavery; request, receive and exchange information on contemporary forms of slavery from Governments, treaty bodies, special procedures, specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations and other relevant sources, including on slavery practices and, as appropriate, and in line with the current practice, respond effectively to reliable information on alleged human rights violations with a view to protecting the human rights of victims of slavery and preventing violations; and recommendations and measures applicable at the national, regional and international levels to eliminate slavery practices wherever they occur, including remedies which address the causes and consequences of contemporary forms of slavery, such as poverty, discrimination and conflict as well as the existence of demand factors and relevant measures to strengthen international cooperation”. The Council also requested that the Special Rapporteur “give careful consideration to specific issues within the scope of the mandate and to include examples of effective practices as well as relevant recommendations”, and “take into account the gender and age dimensions of contemporary forms of slavery”.

2. In resolution 6/14 the Council also requested that the Special Rapporteur “cooperate fully and effectively with other existing human rights mechanisms and treaty bodies, including but not limited to the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on children in armed conflict and the Special Rapporteur on human rights of migrants, as well as the Board of Trustees for the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and take full account of their continuation and avoid duplication of their work”.

3. In the same resolution the Council requested the Special Rapporteur to submit an annual report to the Council on the activities of the mandate and proposed measures and recommendations to combat and eradicate modern forms of slavery and slavery-like practices and to protect the human rights of victims of modern slavery.

4. Pursuant to that resolution, on 26 March 2008 Gulnara Shahinian was appointed Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences. Ms. Shahinian took up her mandate on 1 May 2008.

I. DEFINITION OF THE MANDATE

5. In performing her functions, the Special Rapporteur will refer to the definitions set out in article 1 (1) of the Slavery Convention of 1926 and in article 1 of the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956.

6. Article 1 (1) of the Slavery Convention defines slavery as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised”. Under article 1 (2) it defines the slave trade as “all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or disposal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery”.

7. The Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956 used the definition of the 1926 Convention, but further extended and broadened it. The provisions of its article 1 oblige States to abolish certain institutions and practices analogous to slavery, which is referred to as “servile status”. These include:

“(a) Debt bondage, that is to say, the status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or of those of a person under his control as security for a debt [...];

“(b) Serfdom, that is to say, the condition or status of a tenant who is by law, custom or agreement bound to live and labour on land belonging to another person and to render some determinate service to such other person, whether for reward or not, and is not free to change his status;

“(c) Any institution or practice whereby:

“(i) A woman, without the right to refuse, is promised or given in marriage on payment of a consideration in money or in kind to her parents, guardian, family or any person or group; or

“(ii) The husband of a woman, his family, or his clan, has the right to transfer her to another person for value received or otherwise; or

“(iii) A woman on the death of her husband is liable to be inherited by another person;

“(d) Any institution or practice whereby a child or young person under the age of 18 years, is delivered by either or both of his natural parents or by his guardian to another person, whether for reward or not, with a view to the exploitation of the child or young person or of his labour.”

8. In the light of changing of social and economic realities, the Special Rapporteur will also take the three following definitions into consideration when carrying out her mandate. First, over the years, the United Nations has added to the definition of slavery. For example, in a 1982

report by Benjamin Whitaker, Special Rapporteur of the then Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, slavery was defined as “any form of dealing with human beings leading to the forced exploitation of their labour”.² In addition, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (A/CONF.183/9), in its article 7 (2) (c), defines “enslavement” as “the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person ... and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children”.

9. Second, Kevin Bales, an expert on slavery, defines it as “a state marked by the loss of free will where a person is forced through violence or the threat of violence to give up the ability to sell freely his or her own labour power”. In this definition, slavery has three key dimensions: control by another person, the appropriation of labour power, and the use or threat of violence.³

10. Third, the status of a slave has been defined as a “social death”. The enslaved person effectively loses any cultural, social and personal history and future, and the slave status is created or socialized only in relationship to the slaveholder.⁴

II. SCOPE OF THE MANDATE

11. As one of the oldest forms of human relationship, slavery has evolved and manifested itself in different ways throughout history. Today some old traditional forms of slavery still persist in their earlier forms, others transmute into new ones. Analysis of worldwide annual applications to the United Nations Trust Fund on Slavery, reports of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, as well as reports written by United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations, document the persistence of the old forms of slavery that are embedded in traditional beliefs and customs. These forms of slavery are a result of long-standing discrimination against the most vulnerable groups in societies such as: those regarded as being of low caste, tribal minorities and indigenous peoples.

A. Forced labour

12. Research at the International Labour Organization shows that forced labour is a global issue to which no country is immune.⁵ Time and realities may have changed but the core essence of slavery has persisted. Alongside traditional forms of forced labour such as bonded labour and

² E/CN.4/Sub.2/1982/20/Add.1, of 7 July 1982.

³ Kevin Bales and Peter T. Robbins, “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: a critical analysis of international slavery agreements and concepts of slavery”, *Human Rights Review*, 2001.

⁴ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and social death: a comparative study* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1982).

⁵ See International Labour Organization, *ILO Minimum Estimate of Forced Labour in the World*, by Patrick Belser, Michaëlle de Cock and Farhad Mehran, 2005.

debt bondage there now exist more contemporary forms of forced labour such as migrant workers who have been trafficked for economic exploitation of every kind in the world economy: work in domestic servitude, the construction industry, the food and garment industry, the agricultural sector and in forced prostitution.

13. Forced labour, a human rights violation, is also recognized as an international criminal offence, irrespective of whether a Government has ratified the relevant conventions prohibiting it. Furthermore, where forced labour is used, a range of associated human rights abuses frequently take place, including rape, torture and murder.⁶

14. Recent data presented by ILO shows that the estimated minimum number of persons involved in the world of illicit forced labour is 12.3 million. In relation to the total world labour force the minimum estimate corresponds to about 4 persons in forced labour per 1,000 workers.⁷

15. ILO also states that global minimum estimates of forced labour in its main forms show that 64 per cent of forced labour is for economic exploitation by private economic agents. ILO shows that a further 11 per cent are in forced labour for commercial sexual exploitation and 3 per cent are in mixed undetermined forms of forced labour. In total, 80 per cent of victims of forced labour are enslaved by private economic agents and 20 per cent of victims of forced labour are imposed by States or the military. Analysis conducted by ILO of trends in forced labour demonstrates two important themes: that forced labour is present in all regions of the world and that most contemporary forms of forced labour are extracted by private agents.⁸

16. In spite of the tremendous work done by international organizations, NGOs and academia to raise awareness and develop comprehensive knowledge on contemporary forms of slavery-like practices such as forced labour, much more work needs to be done in order to raise awareness and end these practices.

17. In performing her functions, the Special Rapporteur will build on existing work and devote special attention to the issues of forced labour, its causes and consequences. According to ILO estimates, women and girls represent 56 per cent of victims of forced economic exploitation; men and boys represent 44 per cent.⁹ The Special Rapporteur will also look at the impact that forced labour has on gender disparities.

⁶ See David Weissbrodt and Anti-Slavery International, *Abolishing Slavery and its Contemporary Forms*, 2002 (HR/PUB/02/4).

⁷ See International Labour Organization, *ILO minimum estimate of forced labour in the world*, by Patrick Belser, Michaëlle de Cock and Farhad Mehran, 2005.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ International Labour Conference, ninety-third session, 2005, Geneva, *A Global Alliance against forced labour*, Report 1B, in the International Labour Office.

B. Child labour

18. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” In many forms of slavery, which are hereditary, children are denied the basic right to be born free. According to data provided by UNICEF, globally, one child out of every six works.¹⁰

19. The Special Rapporteur will focus on issues of child labour as they pertain to economic exploitation. This is because the majority of the child labour that occurs today is for economic exploitation. ILO studies show that 69 per cent of child labourers work in the agricultural sector, 22 per cent in the services sector and 9 per cent in the industrial sector.¹¹ In addition, the Special Rapporteur considered that other forms of child labour, such as sexual exploitation, are covered by existing mandate-holders. Therefore, focusing on economic exploitation of child labour will avoid duplication of work. Notwithstanding this, wherever possible, the Special Rapporteur will seek to complement or do joint work with other mandate-holders.

20. Irrespective of the fact that the number of child labourers, especially in hazardous work, decreased by 26 per cent globally due to the efforts of important stakeholders, the figures are still extremely alarming.¹²

21. Article 32 of Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes “the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development”.

22. As stated above, child labour impedes access of children to their basic needs. This means that, unless child labour is addressed, over half of the Millennium Development Goals (the Goals) are unlikely to be achieved by 2015. The Special Rapporteur would like to highlight the following Millennium Development Goals that are under threat:

(a) Goal 1 (To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.) Poverty and hunger are one of the main causes of child labour. Increased globalization coupled with rising inequalities serves to increase the incidences of child labour around the world;

(b) Goal 2 (To ensure that all boys and girls complete primary schooling.) In the majority of child labour cases, children working are missing out on education and therefore a chance to break out of the vicious poverty cycle;

¹⁰ See UNICEF, www.unicef.org/protection/index_childlabour.html.

¹¹ See International Labour Conference, ninety-fifth session, Geneva, 2006, in the International Labour Office, *The end of child labour; within reach*.

¹² Ibid.

(c) Goal 3 (To promote gender equality and empower women.) The target under this goal is for the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary schools. ILO figures show that over half of those who are forced into commercial economic exploitation are women and girls,¹³ almost all of whom will not be attending school;

(d) Goal 4 (To reduce child mortality.) UNICEF reports that 126 million children perform hazardous work,¹⁴ which constitutes one of the worst forms of child labour. Working under these conditions is harmful for the physical health of children;

(e) Goal 6 (To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.) Children whose rights have been taken away and are in conditions of slavery are unlikely to get the basic health care they need let alone for major diseases such as HIV/AIDS or malaria.

23. In addition, if Goal 7 (To ensure environmental sustainability.) is not achieved, it would further devastate households and significantly increase conditions that foster child labour.

24. The Special Rapporteur will look into structural factors that can explain the persistence of forced labour practices of children and apply a holistic, comprehensive child-rights-centred approach to the protection of children.

C. Domestic work

25. Abusive and unprotected working conditions of domestic workers around the world have been documented by ILO and other organizations. For example, the report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities between Men and Women of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) defined domestic slavery as the situation of a vulnerable individual forced, by physical and/or moral coercion, to work without any real financial reward, deprived of liberty and in a situation contrary to human dignity. Domestic workers are especially vulnerable to forced labour because of the unprotected nature of their work, the highly personalized relationship between the worker and his or her employer and their insecure legal status in the host country. Domestic work takes place in the private household and the worker has to resort to clandestine means of communication with the outside world, which is typically excluded from where he or she is confined. Migrant domestic workers are especially vulnerable because of their insecure legal status in the country in which they work. Domestic service is used as a cover mainly to lure women and girls into employment abroad, while deceiving them about the real nature of their work.¹⁵ For many, seeking employment away from their homes or outside their country of origin is the only means to escape poverty.

¹³ See International Labour Organization, *ILO minimum estimate of forced labour in the world*, by Patrick Belser, Michaëlle de Cock and Farhad Mehran.

¹⁴ See UNICEF, Child Protection Information Sheet: *Child Labour* (www.unicef.org/protection/files/Child_Labour.pdf).

¹⁵ See International Labour Organization, *ILO minimum estimate of forced labour in the world*, by Patrick Belser, Michaëlle de Cock and Farhad Mehran.

III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK: REFERENCE TO EXISTING REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

26. In performing her functions, the Special Rapporteur will refer to fundamental human rights instruments such as article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms”. She will also rely upon its article 23 which states that “everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests”. Article 24 states: “Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.”

27. The other main international human rights instruments that the Special Rapporteur shall refer to are: article 8 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which prohibits slavery, the slave trade, servitude and forced labour; and articles 6 and 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which protects the right to just and favourable conditions of work. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights directly prohibits slavery and servitude in its article 8 in words similar to those of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It goes on to expound on slavery as being a non-derogable right under article 4, paragraph 2. In addition, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid adopted in 1973 outlaws a number of inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group over any other, including exploitation of the labour of the members of a racial group or groups by subjecting them to forced labour.

28. The Special Rapporteur will also refer to regional human rights treaties such as article 4 (2) of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights, article 5 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and article 6 of the American Convention on Human Rights.

29. As basic legal instruments, the Special Rapporteur will rely on the Slavery Convention of 1926, the Protocol amending the Slavery Convention, the Supplementary Convention on the abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956, the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

30. The Special Rapporteur will also draw upon the ILO Conventions which seek to eliminate forced labour. These are the ILO Forced Labour Convention of 1930 (No. 29) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), which provide for the immediate and complete eradication of forced labour.

31. In addition to the above, with regard to the eradication of child labour in economic sectors such as in domestic servitude and in industrial and agricultural sectors, the Special Rapporteur will rely on article 32 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which protects the child from economic exploitation. She will also use the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182), which bans the slavery-like practices of child labour such as sale and debt bondage, forced labour, recruitment for armed forces, prostitution, drug trafficking or other illicit activities, or other work which harms the health, safety or morals of children. She will also use the ILO Minimum Age Convention of 1973 (No. 138).

32. Violation of human rights related to slavery are so numerous and widespread that the Special Rapporteur will continuously refer to: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice.

IV. METHODS OF WORK

33. In carrying out her duties, the Special Rapporteur will work at the national, regional and international levels in order to ensure the effective fulfilment of her mandate. She will work to collate, promote and distribute examples of best practice at the national, regional and international levels in order to eliminate slavery.

34. The Special Rapporteur believes that to effectively monitor the causes and consequences of slavery, such as poverty, discrimination and conflict, she will have to work closely with organizations at the national level. It is by taking a closer look at the work going on at the national level that the Special Rapporteur will be able to have a clearer picture of how the causes and consequences of slavery have an impact on men, women and children. The Special Rapporteur shall conduct country visits so as to collect information about best practice and provide relevant policy and/or practical recommendations to eliminate slavery. She will have continuous dialogue with individuals, governments, national human rights institutions, local civil society organizations and relevant United Nations country offices.

35. The Special Rapporteur will also look at regional trends and their impact on the causes and consequences of slavery. At the regional level she will seek to work with organizations, including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the African Union, the African Commission on Human Rights, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and relevant United Nations regional offices.

36. At the international level, the Special Rapporteur will work with United Nations agencies, special procedures and treaty bodies, international NGOs, academia and the private sector in order to ensure that minimum international standards are set and are implemented to prevent contemporary forms of slavery.

37. The Special Rapporteur will have a gender- and age-sensitive approach to all her work. The following sections outline the main methods of work that the Special Rapporteur will use in her work.

A. Raising awareness about contemporary forms of slavery

38. The Special Rapporteur believes that a commonly shared understanding about what constitutes contemporary forms of slavery does not exist. Based on initial work in this area, the Special Rapporteur has come to realize that, despite the fact that many NGOs and United Nations agencies work on issues such as forced prostitution and forced labour, which constitute slavery or slavery-like practices, few organizations perceive these issues as being slavery or refer to them as slavery-like practices.

39. The Special Rapporteur shall begin by issuing and promoting materials which shall help specialists and generalists understand her mandate, the main international instruments that support her work and what constitutes slavery and slavery-like practices. This shall be done by producing a new factsheet on contemporary forms of slavery and by developing Internet pages on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) website that are dedicated to contemporary forms of slavery and to promoting the effective application of relevant international norms and standards on slavery. The website link will then be circulated as widely as possible within and outside the United Nations system. She will also promote relevant materials produced by other public and private organizations.

40. In its resolution 6/14, the Human Rights Council requests that the Special Rapporteur, in the discharge of her duties, “request, receive and exchange information on contemporary forms of slavery from Governments, treaty bodies, special procedures, specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations and other relevant sources, including on slavery practices and, as appropriate, and in line with the current practice, respond effectively to reliable information on alleged human rights violations with a view to protecting the human rights of victims of slavery and preventing violations”.

41. The Special Rapporteur shall therefore continue to have a dialogue with Governments, various United Nations specialized agencies, treaty bodies, intergovernmental organizations, academia, private sector and non-governmental organizations in order to further understand the work currently being done on contemporary forms of slavery, to create awareness about the mandate, promote effective use of relevant international norms and standards on slavery and explore ways of complementing each other’s work.

42. The Special Rapporteur will also take action in cases where reliable allegations of slavery or slavery-like practices are likely to, or have, already taken place. The Special Rapporteur will communicate with Governments or any other relevant actors such as private entities that may be of importance to the allegations that she will receive. Due to the broadness of the mandate and the need to avoid duplication of work, the Special Rapporteur will coordinate with other special procedures and, wherever possible, send joint communications.

43. The Special Rapporteur will also participate in conferences, seminars and workshops to create awareness about the mandate. As far as possible, the Special Rapporteur shall encourage dialogue with a wide group of relevant stakeholders in order to develop sustainable policy and practical solutions to end contemporary forms of slavery.

44. In order to ensure consistency and coherence in the work of OHCHR on contemporary forms of slavery, the Special Rapporteur will work closely with the Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

B. Joint initiatives with other existing human rights mandate-holders, mechanisms, treaty bodies, Governments, specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant sources

45. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 6/14, requests the Special Rapporteur to “cooperate fully and effectively with other existing human rights mechanisms and treaty bodies, including, but not limited to, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on children in armed conflict, and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, as well as the Board of Trustees for the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, taking full account of their contribution while avoiding duplication of their work”. In addition, the Special Rapporteur believes it important to work with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples and the independent expert on minorities.

46. The Special Rapporteur recognizes that the root causes and consequences of slavery may have synergies with areas in which other existing human rights mechanisms and treaty bodies are working. Consequently, the Special Rapporteur will endeavour to complement the work of the existing mandate-holders, mechanisms and treaties in order to avoid duplication. Where possible, the Special Rapporteur will seek to work jointly with other existing mandate-holders, human rights mechanisms and treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW) and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

V. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT SINCE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR

47. From 16 to 18 June 2008, the Special Rapporteur travelled to Geneva to hold a number of consultations with: Governments including those of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Armenia, the Russian Federation and Norway; United Nations agencies, including the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on Migrant Workers, the Committee on the Elimination

of Racial Discrimination; senior officials within OCHCR and staff there who worked or are working on the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery; and NGOs such as Save the Children, Franciscans International, Antislavery International, World Vision and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The main purpose of these meetings was to introduce the mandate and to also gather information that would help form the scope of the work of the Special Rapporteur.

48. From 19 to 20 June 2008, the Special Rapporteur participated in the information session in Geneva organized by OHCHR for new mandate-holders. The meeting served as an introduction to the structure, work of the international human rights mechanisms and the assistance provided by the OHCHR to Special Rapporteurs.

49. From 23 to 27 June 2008, the Special Rapporteur attended the 15th annual meeting of special rapporteurs, representatives, independent experts and chairpersons of working groups of the Human Rights Council. This meeting offered a unique opportunity to meet with other mandate-holders, finalize the methods of working for mandate-holders and learn in more detail about the work of OHCHR, integrating human rights approaches and mechanisms in the work of special procedures and have a consultation with NGOs and national human rights institutions.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

50. Over the period of her mandate, the Special Rapporteur will propose concrete recommendations to address the prevention of slavery for those who are at risk of being enslaved and the restoration and protection of the human rights and dignity of enslaved persons.

51. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery realizes the complexity of the mandate and acknowledges that there are many cross-cutting issues and overlaps with the mandates of other special procedures and other human rights mechanisms. She will therefore focus on working on forced labour, child labour as it relates to the economic exploitation of children, and domestic work where she will seek, as far as possible, to do joint work, for example, with treaty bodies and other special procedures.

52. The Special Rapporteur will work on contemporary forms of child labour for economic exploitation. She will analyse the structural causes in modern forms of slavery, such as children working in sweatshops. In doing this she will seek to cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises and other relevant actors.

53. The Special Rapporteur will also look at traditional forms of slavery such as bonded labour and serfdom. The Special Rapporteur acknowledges that these practices are still very real today despite various efforts made by Governments and NGOs to eradicate them.

54. The Special Rapporteur hopes that she will be able to establish a constructive dialogue and count on the cooperation of all stakeholders (such as NGOs, academia,

private sector, Governments) in order to jointly identify measures to promote and protect the human rights of enslaved persons, in particular victims of forced labour, child labour as it relates to the economic exploitation of children, and domestic work.

55. The Special Rapporteur will count on the cooperation of Governments, NGOs, national human rights institutions, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations and other independent experts, regional organizations and concerned individuals to carry out her functions and, in particular, to receive information, cooperation and support during her country visits and in connection with her communications on individual cases, and for the preparation of reports on thematic issues.

56. The Special Rapporteur will rely on the support of Governments, NGOs, national human rights institutions and intergovernmental organizations, including regional organizations and NGOs, to give concrete follow-up to her future recommendations at the country level.
