VI. Resolutions adopted on the reports of the Third Committee

35/172. Arbitrary or summary executions

The General Assembly,

Having regard to the provisions bearing on capital punishment in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, particularly its articles 6, 14 and 15,

Recalling its resolution 2393 (XXIII) of 26 November 1968, in which it invited Governments of Member States, inter alia, to ensure the most careful legal procedures and the greatest possible safeguards for the accused in capital cases in countries where the death penalty obtains,

Alarmed at the incidence in different parts of the world of summary executions as well as of arbitrary executions,

Concerned at the occurrence of executions which are widely regarded as being politically motivated,

1. Urges Member States concerned:

(a) To respect as a minimum standard the content of the provisions of articles 6, 14 and 15 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, where necessary, to review their legal rules and practices so as to guarantee the most careful legal procedures and the greatest possible safeguards for the accused in capital cases;

(b) To examine the possibility of making automatic the appeal procedure, where it exists, in cases of death sentences, as well as the consideration of an amnesty, pardon or commutation in these cases;

(c) To provide that no death sentence shall be carried out until the procedures of appeal and pardon have been terminated and, in any case, not until a reasonable time after the passing of the sentence in the court in the first instance;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to use his best endeavours in cases where the minimum standard of legal safeguards referred to in paragraph 1 above appears not to be respected;

3. Further requests the Secretary-General to seek from Member States, specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental organizations and concerned nongovernmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council views and observations concerning the problem of arbitrary executions and summary executions, and to report to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its seventh session.

96th plenary meeting
15 December 1980


The General Assembly,

Taking into account the significance and the results of the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Caracas from 25 August to 5 September 1980,


96th plenary meeting
15 December 1980

62 Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.