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QUESTION OF A CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Written statement submitted by the International Federation of Human Rights,
a non-governmental organization in consultative status (category II)

The Secretary-General has received the following communication, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[4 March 1987]

At the forty-first session of the Commission, the International Federation of Human Rights drew attention to the responsibility borne by the governments of countries which serve as a refuge for parents who have abducted their children following the separation or divorce of couples of different nationality.

Events in recent years show that States are reluctant to bind themselves by agreements, albeit specifically designed to settle these problems. However, in the Franco-Algerian dispute, symptomatic of the slowness of State-to-State negotiations, some progress has recently been made.

In addition, IFHR is gratified to note that the future convention on the rights of the child is to contain specific provisions under which signatory States will undertake to adopt appropriate measures to prevent the removal of children to a third country and their non-return from it.

Nevertheless, pending the adoption of a convention on the rights of the child, no-one can remain insensitive to the suffering that is experienced by the victims of these abductions, and of which the recent march from Paris to Geneva by mothers of abducted children provides clear evidence.

It would accordingly be appropriate for the Commission to request the States concerned to ensure the free movement of children, in accordance with article 2 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.