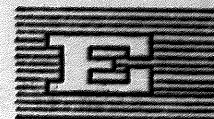


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Agenda item 13

QUESTION OF A CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Written statement submitted by the International  
Federation of Business and Professional Women, a  
non-governmental organization in consultative  
status (category I)

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

[27 February 1985]

Abduction of children by foreign fathers

In recent decades many children have been separated, without permission, from their mother.

The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations have frequently been asked to intervene to secure the ending of situations which are often intolerable, in any event inhumane and in most cases unlawful.

States concerned have been invited to conclude bilateral agreements with each other. Nevertheless, this situation persists and distressed mothers come up against a wall of inertia.

Our present intervention is an attempt to shake this wall. As a non-governmental organization, we wish to remind governments of their responsibility with regard to a situation which violates the principles of both the International Bill of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

This attitude of governments could be explained in the past by their ignorance of the extent of the phenomenon and of its tragic consequences, as well as by the absence of a model of legal co-operation among States on this subject.

It has become inexcusable, however, in the light of Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/39, which:

"1. Calls the attention of States to the proliferation of cases of removal and retention of children and invites them to co-operate actively with a view to preventing the occurrence of such cases and to solving them speedily, out of concern for the interest of the child;

2. Invites States to organize such co-operation through the conclusion of bilateral arrangements or through accession to regional conventions or international conventions such as The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction of 25 October 1980, which is open to all States;

3. Invites the Commission on Human Rights, when drafting the convention on the rights of the child, to take into consideration the protection of the rights of the child in cases of unauthorized international removal."

In view of the foregoing, we take the liberty of inviting the Commission on Human Rights to pay special attention to this situation which violates all the principles the Commission upholds and we request it to take all necessary steps to ensure that the General Assembly of the United Nations, seized of the matter by the normal procedures, invites the States concerned to observe the rules in force and to put an end to forms of action which are contrary to law and morality.