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SOCIAL COMMITTEE CONTINUES CONSIDERATION OF FIVE HUMAN RIGHTS ITEMS

The Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) this afternoon continued its consideration of five human rights items by hearing six more statements.

Statements were made by Jordan, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, the Philippines and Tunisia.

In his statement, the representative of Jordan described the case of Ziad Abu Ein, a Jordanian national, who is going to be extradited from the United States to Jordan. The United States interrupted the statement, calling this a matter that did not fall within the agenda items under consideration.

Sir ANTHONY PARSONS (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community, said that the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion was one of the most fundamental human rights. The need to adopt a draft declaration on the subject was clear and urgent, he stated. In several areas of the world, people continued to be discriminated against, harassed, persecuted and even executed because of their religion or belief.

A disturbing example, he said, was the plight of the Bahai's in Iran, who had suffered persecution for generations; recently their situation had sharply and cruelly deteriorated. He urged the Government of Iran to grant the Bahai's and their religion the protection to which they were entitled under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran was a party.

Situations such as that, he said, illustrated the urgent need to establish more specific international standards to protect the right of freedom of religion and belief. He called on the Assembly to adopt the relevant draft Declaration at this session.

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