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United Nations Human Rights Commission

The United Nations Human Rights Commission is a group of delegates representing countries from around the globe that convenes to examine human-rights violations. They examine very difficult cases, including those that involve the trafficking in women or children, child prostitution, or children soldiers (like forcing 13- and 14-year-olds to take up arms in places like Sierra Leon and Sudan).

The job for the Human Rights Commission is to identify those countries that continue to violate human rights and introduce and debate resolutions condemning them for this behavior. It is a way, in the world's-eye view, to shed an intense spotlight on countries' abuses of human rights in hopes that these debates, international embarrassment, or even moral suasion will influence the perpetrators to do the right thing and stop all human-rights violations.

These violations can be as physical as torture or selling children into prostitution, or they could be more indirect, such as denying freedom of speech or freedom of demonstration.

The Human Rights Commission's charter, as part of the United Nations, is to convene, review, debate, expose, and pass resolutions condemning the behavior of these countries in committing or allowing these human rights violations to be committed.

President Bill Clinton appointed me to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in 2000 and I participated again in 2003. I spent six weeks in Geneva examining abuses and violations, and helping to draft some of the resolutions condemning violations by certain countries, the timeliest of which was one criticizing Russia for their invasion of Chechnya. Although there were unfortunately many other cases we reviewed, the experience was very rewarding, particularly when our ruling had a visible impact.

I was proud that the United States was a real leader, not only in investigating violations, but also in drafting strong resolutions in condemnation of countries that were denying civil and human rights around the world.

– Dick Batchelor

Dick J. Batchelor, Michael J. Murphy, and Dustin A. Watkins prepared this case. DBMG cases are developed solely as the basis for marketing. Cases are not intended to serve as endorsements, sources of primary data, or illustrations of effective or ineffective management.

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