



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
7 December 2011

Original: English

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## Human Rights Council

### Nineteenth session

Agenda items 2 and 3

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## **Summary of the Human Rights Council panel discussion on the issue of human rights of victims of terrorism**

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

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## I. Introduction

1. On 1 June 2011, at its seventeenth session, the Human Rights Council, pursuant to its decision 16/116, held a panel discussion on the issue of the human rights of victims of terrorism, taking into account, *inter alia*, the recommendations of the Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism, convened by the Secretary-General on 9 September 2008, in New York. In its decision, the Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to liaise with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism and all concerned parties and stakeholders, including relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, with a view to ensuring their participation in the panel discussion.

2. The panel discussion was aimed at enhancing the understanding of issues regarding the human rights of victims of terrorism and offered an opportunity to exchange information on relevant efforts made at the international, regional and national levels, and to share good practices with a view to increasing the capacity of States to respond to the needs for protection of the rights of victims of terrorism and their families, while taking into account their international human rights obligations.

3. The panel discussion was moderated by the President of the Human Rights Council and opened by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The panellists were the Political Affairs Officer at the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, Department of Political Affairs, Anne Wu; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Martin Scheinin; the President of the Foundation for Victims of Terrorism of Spain, Maite Pagazaurtundúa; Rianne M. Letschert, Professor at the International Victimology Institute in Tilbourg (Netherlands); the Chief of the Specialized Terrorism Prevention Unit of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mauro Miedico; and former Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences and current member of the Committee on the Prevention of Torture of the Council of Europe, Yakin Ertürk. The present summary was prepared by OHCHR, as requested by the Council in decision 16/116.

## II. Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and contributions of panellists

4. In her opening statement, the High Commissioner stressed that the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the General Assembly in 2006,<sup>1</sup> recognized the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism. She emphasized that the Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism convened by the Secretary-General in 2008 offered a first occasion for victims of terrorism from around the world to discuss their loss and suggest ways of addressing their needs. The High Commissioner welcomed the fact that the Human Rights Council had requested that the panel discussion seek to build on the recommendations of the Symposium, and pointed out that it was an opportunity for States to share good practices and experience relating to national legislation and policies in responding to the multiple challenges involved when protecting the human rights of victims of terrorism. She highlighted the fact that terrorist acts caused a high number of direct and indirect victims who required immediate assistance and long-term medical and psycho-social support, as well as financial aid. As a point of departure for designing policies and

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 60/288, annex.

mechanisms to support victims, she referred to the importance of the right to effective remedies and reparation for the harm suffered by them, as embodied in international human rights standards, including the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power<sup>2</sup> and the Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law.<sup>3</sup> The High Commissioner emphasized that victims of terrorist acts should be provided with information, in a timely, truthful and transparent manner, about the facts and circumstances of the terrorist act and any ensuing investigations and judicial proceedings. The victims should be given the opportunity to effectively participate in judicial proceedings and other mechanisms with the appropriate protection against intimidation, retaliation and arbitrary interference with their right to privacy; victims should also be provided with equal access to justice and appropriate assistance throughout the legal proceedings. Concluding her presentation, the High Commissioner called upon States to put in place comprehensive policies and mechanisms to prevent further terrorist attacks, emphasizing that such measures should address effectively human rights violations, including discrimination, enhance respect for the rule of law and tackle the underlying causes of terrorism, such as the obstacles to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

5. In her presentation, the Political Affairs Officer at the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force pointed out that the panel discussion was an opportunity to recall the international community's unanimous condemnation of terrorism and to pay tribute to victims of terrorism. She referred to the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which offered a strategic framework, policy guidance and a plan of action for collective counter-terrorism efforts at all levels. She emphasized that the Strategy gave special importance to the promotion and protection of human rights, including the human rights of victims of terrorism. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force had been established to coordinate system-wide activities to assist States in implementing the Strategy. She emphasized that supporting the victims of terrorism remained one of the priorities of the Task Force, as the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy calls to build international solidarity with victims of terrorism. She referred to the importance of the recommendations of the Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism, and the recent initiatives of the Task Force in preparing a compendium of best practices for supporting victims of terrorist crimes and related offences, and in organizing a media training programme for victims of terrorism to give them a stronger voice. She concluded her presentation by recalling that terrorism was a challenge to human rights and pointed to the important role of States in countering it.

6. The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Mr. Scheinin, emphasized the importance of a victim's perspective in a comprehensive and holistic approach to his mandate. He pointed to the responsibility of States in implementing human rights and called for the creation of mechanisms for the effective implementation of human rights obligations, including with respect to non-State actors. The Special Rapporteur referred to his country visits and stated that there was no contradiction between defending the human rights of victims of terrorism and the human rights of persons affected by counter-terrorism measures. It appeared that those Governments ignorant of the human rights violations resulting from their counter-terrorism measures are often also ignorant about the human rights of victims of terrorism. The Special Rapporteur referred to his report submitted to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/16/51) on 10 areas of best practice in countering terrorism,

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<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 40/34, annex.

<sup>3</sup> General Assembly, 60/147, annex.

in particular practice 6, which stipulates that “damage to natural and legal persons and their property resulting from an act of terrorism or acts committed in the name of countering terrorism shall be compensated through funds from the State budget, in accordance with international human rights law.” The practice further provides that “natural persons who have suffered physical or other damage or have suffered violations of their human rights as a result of an act of terrorism or acts committed in the name of countering terrorism shall be provided with additional legal, medical, psychological and other assistance required for their social rehabilitation through funds from the State budget.” The Special Rapporteur emphasized that the work undertaken in the field of remedies for gross violations of human rights was applicable and presented best practices in relation to the promotion of the human rights of victims of terrorism, and referred in particular to the Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law. Furthermore, he discussed his country visits to Turkey and Peru, where he found valuable examples for effective collective and individual reparation programmes addressing the needs of both the victims of terrorism and the victims of abusive counter-terrorism measures by State authorities. The Special Rapporteur concluded his presentation by emphasizing that the strategy to bring together victims of terrorism and victims of counter-terrorism measures would help build bridges across political, geographical, religious and ethnic lines to achieve effective and sustainable results in combatting terrorism.

7. The President of the Foundation for Victims of Terrorism of Spain, Ms. Pagazaurtundúa, stated that counter-terrorism policies must scrupulously respect the rule of law. She emphasized that victims of terrorism and the analysis of their human rights were not considered a priority. As a consequence, she called upon the Human Rights Council, supported by OHCHR, to establish the necessary mechanisms to address this shortcoming. She referred to the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which states that “the acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy.” Ms. Pagazaurtundúa called for the adoption of provisions at the international level establishing a legal status for victims of terrorism, encompassing a catalogue of human rights and obligations for States regarding the provision of reparation, access to justice, the prohibition of impunity and victims’ participation in judicial proceedings. Such a step was necessary to avoid discrimination of the victims of terrorism vis-à-vis other categories of victims. Highlighting the need for the United Nations and Member States to increase their efforts in the protection of the human rights of victims of terrorism, she called upon the Council to continue its work to developing new standards in that field. The Foundation for Victims of Terrorism would support a resolution of the Council to ensure that the issue of the human rights of victims of terrorism is considered by United Nations human rights mechanisms and procedures. In particular, she called for the establishment of a special procedures mandate to examine the consequences of terrorist acts, the methods and practices of the strategies of terrorist groups and the situation of the human rights of victims of terrorism. In addition, she suggested that the international community fully recognize a universal right to be free of terrorists and terrorist acts of all kinds, and requested States to assess national practices that lead to impunity for terrorist acts and create obstacles for victims of terrorism to obtain reparation.

8. Professor Letschert pointed out that, while the issue of terrorism had been on the international agenda for years, less attention had been paid to the rights of the victims of terrorism. She referred to specific instruments that included provisions on the rights of victims of terrorism, such as the 2002 Framework Decision on combating terrorism of the European Union, the legislative initiative recently adopted by the European Commission aiming at the strengthening of victims’ rights, and the Council of Europe Guidelines on the Protection of Victims of Terrorist Acts, adopted in 2005. She introduced the work of a

consortium of research groups that had been requested by the European Commission in 2008 to conduct a study on the needs of victims of terrorism with the aim of identifying possible reasons for the adoption of a specific recommendation relating to the rights of victims of terrorism. The outcome of the analysis showed that the legal position of victims of terrorism was largely identical to that of victims of violent crimes, but that additional complexities may arise in implementing general victims' rights in the context of victimization by terrorist acts. The study demonstrated, for example, that the need for compensation might not be different in kind when comparing victims of terrorism and victims of crime. The assessment did not, however, rule out the possibility that the need might be different in degree, for example regarding its urgency. As a result of the study, a draft European Union recommendation for assistance to victims of acts of terrorism had been prepared, in which a more extensive approach was suggested to include, *inter alia*, provisions relating to psycho-social assistance, access to justice, compensation, information strategies and access for victims of terrorism to restorative justice practices and procedures. In addition, the draft recommendation called upon States to consider public inquiries in order to give full and public disclosure of the background and circumstances of the terrorist act, in addition to launching effective and independent criminal investigations. The draft recommendation also envisaged that States should consider additional reparative measures, such as commemorations and tributes to the victims or proper reburial of the bodies, in addition to financial compensation.

9. The Chief of the Specialized Terrorism Prevention Unit of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Miedico, referred to General Assembly resolution 64/168, in which the Assembly urged relevant United Nations bodies, including the Office, within its mandate related to the prevention and suppression of terrorism, to step up its efforts to provide, upon request, technical assistance for building the capacity of Member States in the development and implementation of programmes of assistance and support for victims of terrorism. To implement the resolution, the Office was developing a publication to give special recognition to support for victims as a key component of a successful domestic criminal justice system. Mr. Miedico noted the importance of collecting best practices to support victims of terrorism, including legislative measures and operational modalities. In this regard, he referred to the relevant human rights of victims of terrorism, such as the rights to recognition and information, participation in criminal proceedings, protection of security and privacy, compensation and assistance. Two expert meetings formed the basis of the publication, which was meant to serve as training material to build the capacity of criminal justice officials in their response to terrorism and as a tool to assist Member States in the development of their national programmes of assistance and support for victims of terrorism. Among the main issues dealt with by the forthcoming publication, Mr. Miedico referred to an analysis of international and regional standards on countering terrorism, the growing recognition of the role of victims in criminal proceedings, the importance of sharing knowledge on national criminal justice provisions and practices relating to support for victims, and the relevance of tailor-made assistance within the criminal justice response in support for victims.

10. Ms. Ertürk pointed to the importance of a broad understanding of the term "victimhood". She stated that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women contributed to this approach when it placed the right-holder at the centre of the analysis. Ms. Ertürk emphasized that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) had significantly expanded the consideration of gender issues and allowed for a closer look at the relationship between, and the intersection of the issues of terrorism and gender. In this connection, she expressed appreciation for the gender perspective related to countering terrorism as elaborated by the Special Rapporteur

on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism in his report submitted to the General Assembly in 2009.<sup>4</sup> She also recalled that the country visits she carried out as Special Rapporteur on violence against women demonstrated that, in situations affected by terrorism or armed conflict, women are often caught between being targeted by terrorist groups and the State's counter-terrorism measures, which may fail to prevent, investigate, prosecute or punish these acts. Ms. Ertürk referred to counter-terrorism measures that use gender stereotypes as a proxy for profiling on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin or religion. In this regard, she mentioned the practice of some countries of arbitrarily detaining women using headscarves or regarding them as suspects of terrorist acts. She pointed to the parallel danger of women rights being instrumentalized in environments affected by terrorism. She concluded her presentation by referring to the growing and comprehensive international framework on gender issues and women's human rights, including the creation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence adopted in 2011 by Member States of the Council of Europe.

### **III. Summary of the discussion**

#### **A. Need for a strengthened focus on the human rights of victims of terrorism**

11. Many delegations condemned the acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Several Member States recalled that, for years, international discourse focused on the perpetrators of terrorist acts and the human rights of victims of abusive counter-terrorism measures. In this connection, many delegations welcomed the fact that the panel discussion was specifically dedicated to the issue of human rights of victims of terrorism. Several delegations stated that terrorist acts infringed on a number of human rights, while some of them added that this was regardless of whether such acts were committed by State or non-State actors.

12. In accordance with the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, delegations pointed out that terrorism was a global phenomenon that could not and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. In this context, some delegations recalled that addressing the root causes of terrorism was a key issue, pointing to the particular relevance of preventive measures. Delegations also emphasized the importance of strengthening international cooperation to protect the human rights of victims of terrorism and recalled the provisions of relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council. In particular, they pointed to the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that recognized the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism.

13. Member States expressed support for the work accomplished to date, in particular the efforts made by the Working Group on Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. In this regard, delegations emphasized the specific role of victims and the important contribution of civil society to help to address the conditions conducive to terrorism by sensitizing society, building community resilience to terrorism and bringing alleged perpetrators to justice. Delegations also acknowledged the work undertaken by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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<sup>4</sup> A/64/211.

in developing programmes and providing Member States with technical legal and related assistance concerning specialized thematic areas, including terrorism, supporting victims of terrorism and building the capacity of criminal justice systems of Member States to bring perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice.

## **B. Regional and domestic practices for the protection of the human rights of victims of terrorism**

14. During the panel discussion, many delegations emphasized that reparation to victims of terrorism was a fundamental aspect of protecting and promoting their human rights, and referred to practices at the regional and national levels.

15. At the regional level, the Guidelines on the Protection of Victims of Terrorist Acts, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2005, recognized the suffering endured by victims and called for national and international solidarity and support. The Guidelines were further endorsed by the 2005 Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, the first binding instrument in Europe to address the issue of the prevention of terrorism and to contain a binding provision for States on protection, compensation and support for victims of terrorism. Pointing to the challenge to enforce the standards in all its Member States, it was highlighted that the Council of Europe had recently established a follow-up mechanism on the implementation of the Convention. Furthermore, it was stressed that the Council of Europe paid special attention to the right to recognition, the right to support and aid and the right to reparation, while advocating for the protection of the human rights of victims of terrorism.

16. The protection of victims in criminal proceedings was addressed in a number of European Union legislative instruments. It was noted that the Framework Decision on combating terrorism adopted by the Council of the European Union in 2002 represented an addition to the existing “general regime” on victims. It stipulated that “victims of terrorist offences are vulnerable, and therefore specific measures are necessary with regard to them.” The Decision also provided that “each Member State shall, if necessary, take all measures possible to ensure appropriate assistance for victims’ families.” Under the Framework, actions in support of victims include emergency assistance, continuing assistance and support to victim involvement, investigation and prosecution, access to justice, compensation and other reparative measures, restorative justice, protection of the private and family life, protection of dignity and security, the provision of information to victims and the public, and specific training for persons responsible for assisting victims. Moreover, the relevance of support for community-based initiatives, including the formation of groups of victims or relatives to stimulate mutual assistance, empower them and strengthen solidarity in society, was underlined. In this connection, reference was made to the Network of Associations of Victims of Terrorism, established by the European Commission, and its work to enhance transnational cooperation among associations of victims of terrorism and to increase the representation of victims’ interests at the European Union level.

17. In the light of the call of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy upon Member States to put in place “on a voluntary basis, national systems of assistance that would promote the needs of victims of terrorism and their families and facilitate normalization of their lives”, delegations shared their experience at the domestic level.

18. The representative of Turkey referred to the Law on the Compensation of Damages that Occurred due to Terror and the Fight against Terrorism (2004), which lays down the “principles and procedures for compensation of material damages suffered by persons due to terrorist acts or activities undertaken during the fight against terror.” Damages

compensated include those resulting from injury, physical disability and death and the expenses made for medical treatment and funerals, damage to movable and immovable property, agricultural damage, and material damage resulting from the inability of persons to have access to their assets because of the activities carried out in the context of the fight against terrorism. The representative pointed out that a total of 51 compensation commissions had been set up, and that 75 per cent of applications submitted up until November 2010 had been processed; in 60 per cent of cases, compensation had been granted.

19. In connection with the Law on Justice and Peace (2005), Colombia pointed to the work of the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation, which aimed to provide access to justice and truth, and reparation for victims of terrorism, without distinction on the basis of gender, age or ethnic group. In addition, the representative of Colombia referred to the recently adopted Victims and Land Restitution Act (2010), which would be applied for a period of 10 years and could provide reparation to some 350 families per day, or 1 million families per decade. It was noted that the Act regarded as victims those who had individually or collectively suffered harm from events occurring after 1 January 1985, as a consequence of violations of international humanitarian law, or grave and manifest violations of international human rights law occurring in the context of armed internal conflict.

20. The approach taken by Morocco to the human rights of victims of terrorism and their families focused on three main areas: prevention, assistance and sensitization. The preventive work includes adherence to all relevant international instruments and the Government's engagement in related matters at the international, regional and subregional levels. With regard to assistance, the support of authorities for victims of terrorism in the social, administrative, legal, medical, psychological and financial domains was highlighted. A third component was a global strategy focusing on the promotion of human rights, economic and social development, education and promotion of tolerance, as well as raising public awareness.

21. The representative of France, recalling the important role played by victims and civil society in addressing matters relating to the human rights of victims of terrorism and the fight against terrorism, referred to the establishment of a compensation fund and specific measures that guarantee access to justice and treatment for victims of terrorism.

22. In Algeria, the protection of victims of terrorism was addressed by Presidential decrees no. 06-93 of 28 February 2006, on the compensation of victims of the national tragedy, and no. 06-94 of 28 February 2006, on State assistance to impoverished families affected by the involvement of one of their relatives in terrorism. In order to implement these provisions, a national compensation fund and a national solidarity fund had been established to finance compensations paid to, other forms of reparation for and rehabilitation of victims.

23. In Peru, a series of measures aimed at acknowledging victims, ensuring restitution of their rights and providing for financial and moral reparations had been adopted. It was noted that the comprehensive plan for reparations contained a broad definition of the term "victim", allowing reparation not only for those who had been direct victims of terrorist attacks but also for others who became vulnerable or had their rights violated as a result of counter-terrorism measures. In this connection, Peru shared the view of the Special Rapporteur about the need to elaborate programmes of reparation that provide justice to victims of terrorism as well as to the victims of counter-terrorism measures, and their families. With regard to the reparation of victims of terrorism and their families, the implementation of the collective reparations programme for communities affected by violence was highlighted. When pointing to challenges encountered in relation to the

provision of individual reparations, Peru mentioned the difficulty in locating victims and verifying their identity in order to register them.

24. According to Israeli legislation, notably the Benefits for Victims of Hostilities Law (5730-1970) and the Invalids/Compensation and Rehabilitation Law (5719-1959), victims of hostilities and their families were entitled to monetary remuneration and various benefits designed to assist and support them in their recovery. In addition, a new protocol had been established for anxiety victims, which provides for immediate care to prevent the development of chronic symptoms and which separates reparation from care provision.

25. In Indonesia, national legislation provided not only for the protection of victims of terrorism, but also of witnesses of terrorist acts. In this respect, the delegation pointed to Law no. 13 on Witnesses and Victims Protection (2006) and Government Regulation no. 44 on Compensation, Restitution and Assistance to Witnesses and Victims (2008).

26. In Switzerland, the Federal Law on Assistance to Victims of Crimes (1991) had come in to force in 1993 together with the European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes (1983). Assistance was given to all persons who had been victim of a crime resulting from a direct attack on their physical, psychological or sexual integrity, and their family members. As the domestic legislation makes no distinction between different categories of victims of crimes, these provisions applied equally to victims of terrorism and to their families.

27. The Federal Law on counteraction against terrorism of the Russian Federation together with a series of regulations provided for compensation for damages incurred by physical or legal persons as a result of terrorist acts and for social rehabilitation of victims thereof. The main objective was the reintegration of victims into society. Medical, psychological and legal support was provided free of charge. In addition, victims had the right to professional retraining and assistance in finding employment, at the expense of the State. Housing was also provided by the State to those who had lost their homes as a result of terrorist acts.

### **C. Proposals to enhance the protection of the human rights of victims of terrorism**

28. Several States and non-governmental organizations supported the idea of a compilation of good practices to strengthen the human rights protection of victims of terrorism. One delegation referred in particular to reparation, compensation, protection of dignity, security, privacy, assistance in criminal proceedings and the rights to justice, truth and memory as areas in which the sharing of good practices was specifically needed.

29. There was also a need for more practical and concrete measures to be taken, especially with regard to compensation-related measures. In this connection, the importance of the creation of a voluntary fund to assist victims of terrorism was underlined by non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, it was emphasized that support at national level should take various forms and go beyond reparation; reference was also made to the importance of material, legal and psychological assistance.

30. Some States and non-governmental organizations recommended broadening the scope of the current mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism to include the issue of the human rights of victims of terrorism. One State called for the establishment of a separate mandate on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of victims of terrorism. It also suggested that the Human Rights Council adopt, at an upcoming session, a catalogue of the human rights of victims of terrorism. One non-

governmental organization proposed that specific legal status be granted to victims of terrorism.

31. The importance of awareness-raising and remembrance initiatives was highlighted throughout the panel discussion. Every year, the European Union commemorates on 11 March the European Day on Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism. One delegation suggested that 19 August be proclaimed the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the International Conference on Victims of Terrorism, held on 16 and 17 June 2011 in San Sebastian, Spain, and the seventh International Congress on Victims of Terrorism, held from 15 to 17 September 2011 in Paris, were mentioned as opportunities to assemble associations with the objective of sensitizing the population and raising awareness. One non-governmental organization expressed its intention to campaign for greater recognition, respect and fulfilment of the human rights of victims of terrorism in the coming years.

#### **IV. Comments and replies by the panellists**

32. The Political Affairs Officer at the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force pointed out that States could contribute to awareness-raising of the human rights of victims of terrorism by taking part in the series of regional workshops organized by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and organizing media campaigns on the experiences, needs and concerns of victims of terrorism, as recommended at the Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism and confirmed by the workshop on Compensating Victims of Terrorism, held in Syracuse, United States of America, in 2010. Ms. Wu added that the Working Group on Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism of the Task Force was planning to partner the Centre on Global Counter-Terrorism Cooperation and the Global Survivors Network in a series of projects, starting with a media training programme for victims of terrorism.

33. The Special Rapporteur suggested that the Human Rights Council request the mandate of Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism to prepare a thematic report on the issue of the human rights of victims of terrorism. Mr. Scheinin pointed out that greater support was needed in general from the Council to ensure that the recommendations of special procedures mandate holders were implemented, adding that, instead of creating new mandates, the Council should empower existing ones and strengthen them with follow-up mechanisms.

34. The President of the Foundation for Victims of Terrorism of Spain referred to the complex nature human rights violations resulting from terrorist acts and pointed out that the damage caused by terrorists was both public and private. Ms. Pagazaurtundúa emphasized that Terrorist acts left behind not only private but also public mourning; it was therefore the responsibility of the entire democratic society to stand up to terrorism and face its effects. She concluded by referring to the work undertaken in Spain by different organizations to propose to different United Nations mechanisms to move forward and defend the human rights of victims, a process in which victims could play a crucial role.

35. Professor Letschert acknowledged and welcomed the requests of States and non-governmental organizations for concrete recommendations regarding the follow-up. She pointed out that setting up a voluntary fund at the international level would be a concrete

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<sup>5</sup> See Human Rights Council resolution 17/8 .

step towards addressing the needs of victims of terrorism and urged States to take necessary measures in this regard.

36. The Chief of the Specialized Terrorism Prevention Unit of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime welcomed the proposal of participants to receive specific guidance and to collect good practices, and referred to the Office's collection of legislative and operational modalities in the field of criminal justice and in supporting victims of terrorism. As an example of a good practice, Mr. Miedico referred to the right to information, which had been addressed in the case of terrorist incidents with a large number of victims through the creation of a webpage for victims of those acts so that they could obtain information about the status of relevant criminal proceedings.

37. The member of the Committee on the Prevention of Torture of the Council of Europe and former Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences pointed to the necessary distinction between random victimization and targeted victimization by terrorist acts, which required different strategies with regard to the protection of victims. Ms. Ertürk endorsed the call of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism for greater support by the Human Rights Council in relation to the implementation of recommendations made by special procedures mandate holders, rather than creating new mandates.

## **V. Concluding remarks by the moderator**

38. The President of the Human Rights Council concluded that the discussion had been enlightening and had raise the awareness of participants of the fact that, in the determined effort to deal with the scourge of terrorism, addressing the human rights of victims of terrorism must be an essential component.

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