

far back in history. The principle of secularism, as laid down in its 1972 Constitution, provided a framework for accommodating religious and belief-related pluralism for all without discrimination. The adoption of certain restrictive legislative and administrative measures, however, had led to a shrinking space for religious or political dissent and frank public discourse—even when those measures were enacted with the intention to defend secular democracy—and could inadvertently erode the very principles that they were supposed to protect. The Special Rapporteur noted the positive commitment among different stakeholders to maintain the harmonious interreligious coexistence, open-mindedness and secular democracy, particularly in the face of rising religious polarization. He made recommendations to the Government, religious communities and civil society.

In January, Viet Nam [A/HRC/28/66/Add.4] and Kazakhstan [A/HRC/28/66/Add.3] submitted comments on the Special Rapporteur's 2014 mission to those countries [YUN 2014, p. 806].

Human Rights Council action. On 27 March [A/70/53 (res. 28/18)], the Council urged States to step up their efforts to promote and protect freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief; and to make use of the potential of education for eradicating prejudices against and stereotypes of individuals on the basis of their religion or belief. It also requested the Special Rapporteur to report annually to the Council and the Assembly.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 17 December [meeting 80], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/70/489/Add.2], adopted **resolution 70/158 (Freedom of religion or belief)** without vote [agenda item 72 (b)].

Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and incitement to violence

Report of High Commissioner. In accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 25/34 [YUN 2014, p. 809], the High Commissioner in January submitted a report [A/HRC/28/47] on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization of, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief, which summarized information received from 15 States on efforts and measures taken to foster a domestic environment of religious tolerance, peace and prosperity; promote the ability of members of all religious communities to manifest their religion; and counter religious profiling. The High Commissioner concluded that the steps taken by States were largely policy-oriented or legal in nature, with many of them enshrining protection against discrimination on the basis of religion or belief in national constitutions, criminal codes and other civil laws. Advocacy of in-

citement to hatred was for the most part criminalized and often prohibited on several grounds, including religion or belief.

Report of Secretary-General. In accordance with Assembly resolution 69/174 [YUN 2014, p. 810], the Secretary-General in October submitted a report [A/70/415] summarizing information received from 17 States on steps taken to combat intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief.

Human Rights Council action On 27 March [A/70/53 (res. 28/29)], the Council called on States to foster a domestic environment of religious tolerance, peace and respect; ensure that public functionaries did not discriminate against an individual on the basis of religion or belief; foster religious freedom and pluralism; encourage the representation and participation of individuals, irrespective of their religion, in all sectors of society; and counter religious profiling. It requested the High Commissioner to submit to the Council's thirty-fourth (2017) session a follow-up report on States' efforts and measures to implement the resolution.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 17 December [meeting 80], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/70/489/Add.2], adopted **resolution 70/157 (Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief)** without vote [agenda item 72 (b)].

Right to self-determination

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 69/164 [YUN 2014, p. 812], the Secretary-General in August submitted a report [A/70/314] on the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination. The report summarized the main developments relating to the consideration of that subject by the Human Rights Council, including by its special procedures, and incorporated the relevant jurisprudence of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which was based on their consideration of the periodic reports submitted by States parties to the International Covenants. It also summarized the main observations relating to the right to self-determination made by the Secretary-General in his report to the Security Council on the situation concerning Western Sahara (see p. 149).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 17 December [meeting 80], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/70/488], adopted **resolution 70/143 (Universal real-**