



**United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Geneva, September 22, 2009**

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**Statement concerning Item 4**

**- General debate -**

**by**

**H.E. Ambassador Reinhard Schweppe**

**Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the United Nations**

Thank you, Mr. President,

For brevity of time, I will highlight the following situations of concern:

1. Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran, Germany expresses its deep concern over a further deterioration of the human rights situation. Germany denounces the excessive use of force against peaceful demonstrators. We call upon Iran to ensure the protection against arbitrary detention, the right to freedom of expression, and the right to peaceful assembly. Germany also likes to draw the international community's attention to the continued imprisonment of Iranian Bahá'í and calls on the Iranian Government to ensure their rights.

2. Regarding the situation in Sri Lanka, Germany stresses that reconciliation is strongly based on the full respect of human rights. We also urge the Sri Lanka Government to create conditions which ensure the safe and dignified return of all IDPs. We call upon the Government of Sri Lanka to extend full cooperation to the United Nations, the ICRC and international and national NGOs. Moreover, the freedom of the press and the independence of justice are high values. The disproportionate sentencing of journalist J.S. Tissainayagam to 20 years of hard labour raises serious concern in this respect.

3. Regarding the Democratic Republic of Congo, Germany expresses deep concern about the continuously deteriorating situation for human rights and the freedom of expression, as exemplified by the shutting down of Radio France International, or the detention of the NGO "ASADHO" leader Golden Misabiko. Germany is preoccupied about the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the east of the DRC. Atrocities are committed against the population by armed factions, including members of the Congolese army. We strongly urge the DRC government to end impunity for perpetrators within the government forces.

4. Regarding the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Germany sees a continued systemic violation of human rights. Germany is deeply concerned about the fate of some 200.000 people who are inmates in secret forced-labour and prison camps. Germany is also concerned about the fate of foreign citizens still held in the DPRK against their will. The fate of at least 12 abducted Japanese citizens remains uncertain; the number of South Korean citizens held in the DPRK might exceed 500. Germany calls on the DPRK government to take measures to improve the country's human rights record.

Thank you.