Part B

International Human Rights Law
Chapter IV

‘Extraordinary Renditions’, Diplomatic Assurances and the Principle of Non-Refoulement

by Manfred Nowak*

1 Introduction

As first Chairperson of the United Nations Committee against Torture, Joseph Voyame contributed more than anybody else to the shaping of the Committee’s practice in the State reporting, individual complaints and inquiry procedures. As a diplomat strongly dedicated to the eradication of torture worldwide, he was very well aware of the highly sensitive nature of any allegation of torture and used all his diplomatic skills to establish a constructive dialogue even with Governments responsible for a systematic practice of torture.

Since the individual complaints procedure under Article 22 of the Convention against Torture (hereinafter referred to as CAT) is optional and had been accepted primarily by Western States, most individual complaints submitted during the first years of the Committee’s existence were addressed to Western Governments. They did not raise issues of torture or other forms of

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