Marieme Helle-Lucas

Ms Bennoune reports on Cultural Rights clarify the fact that those are universal rights which apply equally, among others, to women, and that universal rights do not allow for some rigths - such as religious rights - to supersede women 's rights. There is clearly an ideological battle raging now between communalists who want to restrict  the scope of universal rights to imagined or selected traditions specific to their own communities, and universalists who respect the spirit of the first Declaration of Human Rights and refuse to endorse a hierarchy of rights, in which, among others, women's rights would come last after minority rights, religious rights and cultural rights.

Ms Bennoune's reports also help disentangle religious rights (as the right not to be prosecuted due to one's religious affiliation, the right to freedom of belief and to freedom of practice) from cultural rights which have been repeatedly used and abused at the hands of religious fundamentalists through the promotion of some traditional practices which contravene to the enjoyment of universal rights.