

United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995–2004)

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION 2002/74

The Commission on Human Rights,
Guided by the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration
of Human Rights,

Reaffirming article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in accordance with which education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Recalling the provisions of other international human rights instruments, including article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which reflect the aims of the aforementioned article,

Taking into account its resolution 1993/56 of 9 March 1993, in which the Commission recommended that knowledge of human rights, both in its theoretical dimension and in its practical application, should be established as a priority in education policies,

Believing that every woman, man and child, to realize their full human potential, must be made aware of all their human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social,

Believing also that human rights education constitutes an important vehicle for the elimination of gender-based discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities through the promotion and protection of the human rights of women,

Convinced that human rights education should involve more than the provision of information and should constitute a comprehensive

lifelong process by which people at all levels of development and in all societies learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies,

Convinced also that human rights education and information contribute to a concept of development consistent with the dignity of women and men of all ages which takes into account particularly vulnerable segments of society such as children, youth, older persons, indigenous people, minorities, rural and urban poor, migrant workers, refugees, persons with human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and disabled persons,

Recognizing the role of education in constructing a culture of peace, in particular the teaching of the practice of non-violence, which will promote the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations,

Affirming that human rights education is a key to changing attitudes and behavior based on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to promoting tolerance and respect for diversity in societies, and that such education is a determining factor in the promotion, dissemination and protection of the democratic values of justice and equity, which are essential to prevent and combat the spread of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as was recog-

nized at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September 2001,

Bearing in mind the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action adopted in June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights (A/CONF.157/23), in particular Part II, paragraphs 78 to 82 thereof,

Recalling the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to coordinate relevant United Nations education and public information programs in the field of human rights,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 49/184 of 23 December 1994, in which the Assembly proclaimed the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 1995 the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, welcomed the Plan of Action for the Decade (A/51/506/Add.1, appendix) and requested the High Commissioner to coordinate the implementation of the Plan of Action,

Noting General Assembly resolution 56/147 of 19 December 2001 in which the Assembly invited all Governments to reaffirm their commitments and obligations to develop national strategies for human rights education which are comprehensive, participatory and effective and which can be embodied in a national plan of action for human rights education, and invited the United Nations, intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other relevant intergovernmental organizations to adopt a system-wide approach to the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004,

Welcoming the efforts to promote human rights education made by educators and non-governmental organizations in all parts of the world, as well as by intergovernmental organizations, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Interna-

tional Labour Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme,

Recognizing the invaluable and creative role that non-governmental and community-based organizations play in the promotion and protection of human rights by disseminating public information and engaging in human rights education, especially at the grass-roots level and in remote and rural communities,

Noting with appreciation the efforts undertaken so far by the Office of the High Commissioner to increase information-sharing in the area of human rights education through the development of a database and resource collection on human rights education and to disseminate human rights information through its web site and its publications and external relations programs,

Welcoming the initiative of the Office of the High Commissioner to develop further the project entitled "Assisting Communities Together," launched in 1998, supported by voluntary funds and designed to provide small grants to grass-roots and local organizations carrying out practical human rights activities,

Recognizing the value of information and communications technologies in human rights education to promote dialogue and understanding of human rights, and in that context welcoming, inter alia, the "CyberSchoolBus" and the United Nations Children's Fund "Voices of Youth" initiatives,

Recalling the mid-term global evaluation of progress made towards the achievement of the objectives of the Decade undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner, in cooperation with all other principal actors in the Decade, which was presented in the relevant report of the High Commissioner to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (A/55/360),

1. *Takes note* with appreciation of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004 (E/CN.4/2002/104);

2. *Welcomes* the steps taken by Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to implement the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004, as indicated in the report of the High Commissioner;

3. *Urges* all Governments to contribute further to the implementation of the Plan of Action, in particular by:

(a) Encouraging the establishment, in accordance with national conditions, of broadly representative national committees for human rights education responsible for the development of comprehensive, effective and sustainable national plans of action for human rights education and information, taking into consideration the recommendations of the mid-term global evaluation of the Decade and the guidelines for national plans of action for human rights education developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

(b) Encouraging, supporting and involving national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in the implementation of their national plans of action;

(c) Initiating and developing cultural and educational programs aimed at countering racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and supporting and implementing public information campaigns and specific training programs in the field of human rights, as emphasized at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance;

4. Encourages Governments to consider, within their national plans of action for human rights education:

(a) The establishment of public access human rights resource and training centers capable of engaging in research, including the gender-sensitive training of trainers;

(b) The preparation, collection, translation and dissemination of human rights education and training materials;

(c) The organization of courses, conferences, workshops and public information campaigns and assistance in the implementation of internationally sponsored technical cooperation projects for human rights education and public information;

5. *Urges* States to intensify their efforts in the field of education, including human rights education, in order to promote an understanding and awareness of the causes, consequences and evils of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and also urges States, in consultation with educational authorities and the private sector, as appropriate, and encourages educational authorities and the private sector, as appropriate, to develop educational materials, including textbooks and dictionaries, aimed at combating those phenomena and, in this context, calls upon States to give importance, if appropriate, to textbook and curriculum review and amendment, so as to eliminate any elements that might promote racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance or reinforce negative stereotypes, and to include material that refutes such stereotypes;

6. *Encourages* States, where such national public access human rights resource and training centers exist, to strengthen their capacity to support human rights education and public information programs at the international, regional, national and local levels;

7. *Encourages* Governments to support further, through voluntary contributions, the education and public information efforts undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner within the framework of the Plan of Action;

8. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to support national capacities for human rights education and information through its technical cooperation program in the field of human rights, including the organization of training courses and peer education initiatives and the development of targeted training materials for professional audiences, as well as the dissemination of human rights information materials as a component of techni-

cal cooperation projects, to develop further its database and resource collection on human rights education and to continue to monitor developments in human rights education;

9. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue the implementation of and to expand the “Assisting Communities Together” project and to consider other appropriate ways and means to support human rights education activities, including those undertaken by non-governmental organizations;

10. *Invites* the specialized agencies and relevant United Nations programs and funds to continue to contribute, within their respective spheres of competence, to the implementation of the Plan of Action and the World Public Information Campaign and to cooperate and coordinate with each other and with the Office of the High Commissioner in that regard;

11. *Encourages* the relevant organs, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, all human rights bodies of the United Nations system, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to provide training in human rights for all United Nations personnel and officials;

12. *Encourages* the human rights treaty bodies, when examining reports of States parties, to place emphasis on the obligations of States parties in the area of human rights education and to reflect that emphasis in their concluding observations;

13. *Encourages* all relevant mechanisms of the Commission, i.e. working groups and special rapporteurs, representatives or experts, to include systematically in their reports a specific section on human rights education, as relevant to their mandate, as well as to include human rights education as an item on the agenda of their annual meetings, with a view to strengthening their contribution to human rights education;

14. *Encourages* Governments, regional organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to explore the po-

tential support and contribution to human rights education of all relevant partners, including the private sector, development, trade and financial institutions and the media, and to seek their cooperation in the development of human rights education strategies;

15. *Invites* the International Telecommunication Union to include the contribution of information technology to human rights education in the preparatory process of the World Summit on the Information Society, as well as at the Summit itself, to be convened in Geneva in December 2003;

16. *Encourages* international and regional organizations to develop strategies for the wider distribution of materials on human rights education through regional networks and to develop region-specific programs to maximize the participation of national entities, whether governmental or non-governmental, in programs on human rights education;

17. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to develop and submit to the Commission at its fifty-ninth session, in cooperation with all relevant actors, a study on the follow-up to the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education which will include, inter alia, the following issues:

(a) Possible means of strengthening human rights education at the national, regional and international levels;

(b) Elaboration of the concept of a series of intersessional workshops to take place in 2003/2004 to address major current human rights education issues, inter alia the question of assessing the impact of human rights education activities and criteria for “best practices”; the contribution of human rights education to the mainstreaming of a human rights-based approach into the work of inter-governmental organizations, development agencies, financial institutions and the private sector; and the role of human rights education in combating racism and all forms of discrimination and intolerance, and specifically in promoting religious tolerance;

18. *Requests* the High Commissioner to bring the present resolution to the attention of all members of the international community and of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights education and public information and to report to the Commission at its fifty-ninth session on progress made towards its implementation.

56th meeting
25 April 2002
[Adopted without a vote.
E/2002/23-E/CN.4/
2002/200, see chap. XVII.]

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