

Draft UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

English version of January 29, 2010



Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council

Recommendation 4/2. Draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training

The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee,

Bearing in mind the mandate set out in Human Rights Council resolution 6/10 of 28 September 2007 requesting the Advisory Committee to prepare a draft declaration on human rights education and training, as well as Human Rights Council resolution 10/28 of 27 March 2009,

Recalling its recommendations 1/1 of 14 August 2008, 2/1 of 30 January 2009 and 3/3 of 7 August 2009 on the work of the drafting group on human rights education and training, as well as the preparatory documents submitted by the rapporteur of the drafting group,³

Welcoming the particularly high response to the questionnaire sent by the drafting group to all stakeholders, who provided the drafting group with a wealth of information for its work,

Welcoming the contribution of the various stakeholders to the debate, including at the seminar on a draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training, held in Marrakech, Morocco, on 16 and 17 July 2009, which was attended by the Chairperson and rapporteur of the drafting group,

Expressing its gratitude for the steadfast support of the States members of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training,

Highlighting the active participation of national human rights institutions at each stage of the collective debate,

Expressing its satisfaction with the continued work of the drafting group, and particularly the draft declaration submitted by the special rapporteur of the drafting group in document A/HRC/AC/4/3,

Desiring to pursue the close cooperation with the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other relevant international and regional organizations in the work in progress,

Taking due note of the in-depth discussions on the draft declaration during the interactive debate at the fourth session of the Advisory Committee, as well as the further work carried out by the drafting group at the same session,

³ A/HRC/AC/2/CRP.1, A/HRC/AC/3/CRP.4 and Corr.1, and A/HRC/AC/4/3.

1. *Endorses* the draft declaration on human rights education and training annexed to this recommendation, as revised;
2. *Transmits* the draft declaration to the Human Rights Council for consideration at its thirteenth session, in accordance with the request contained in Human Rights Council resolutions 6/10 and 10/28;
3. *Recommends* that the draft declaration be disseminated widely and encourages further initiatives by the various stakeholders to promote collective consultations on the draft declaration;
4. *Expresses the hope* that the rapporteur of the drafting group on human rights education and training, Mr. Decaux, will be able to participate in the discussions of the Human Rights Council on the draft declaration submitted to it;
5. *Recommends* that the drafting group be kept informed of the follow-up to the work of the Human Rights Council and that it might be involved, in appropriate ways, in the ongoing debate and in the work of awareness-raising in the area of human rights education and training.

Annex

Proposed draft declaration on human rights education and training, as revised by the rapporteur of the drafting group of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee

[*The General Assembly*]

Bearing in mind Article 13 of the Charter of the United Nations, which charges the General Assembly with “promoting international co-operation in the ... cultural, [and] educational ... fields, and assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion”,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which sets “a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance”,

Drawing on article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms in paragraph 1 that “everyone has the right to education” and stipulates in paragraph 2 that “education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”,

Reaffirming that, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other human rights instruments, States are required to ensure that education is directed to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Aware of the international commitments of States under the various universal and regional human rights treaties and various international instruments,

Aware, in particular, of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted on 25 June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights, which

addresses the implementation of the right to education both as a right inherent in the dignity of the human person and as a means of promoting and ensuring respect for all human rights,

Stressing that the World Conference on Human Rights called on “all States and institutions to include human rights, humanitarian law, democracy and rule of law as subjects in the curricula of all learning institutions”, stating that “human rights education should include peace, democracy, development and social justice, as set forth in international and regional human rights instruments, in order to achieve common understanding and awareness with a view to strengthening universal commitment to human rights”,

Taking into account the progress made in the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995–2004) and the World Programme for Human Rights Education through the implementation of the plan of action for the first phase (2005–2007), which was extended to 2009, and the launch of a new phase of the World Programme for the period 2010–2014,

Encouraging the effective implementation of the goals set for 2015 in the Millennium Declaration, including equal access for girls and boys to all levels of education,

Recalling the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,

Bearing in mind the numerous initiatives undertaken within the framework of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other international and regional organizations, as well as at the domestic level by public authorities and civil society organizations,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in which Heads of State and Government supported “the promotion of human rights education and learning at all levels, including through the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education”, and encouraged all States “to develop initiatives in this regard”,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 60/251 establishing the Human Rights Council, in particular paragraph 5 (a), on the importance of human rights education and learning,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 62/171 and Human Rights Council resolution 12/4 relating to human rights education and training,

Desiring to strengthen the efforts undertaken and to encourage awareness and a collective commitment by all stakeholders, by providing a coherent and practical overview of the guiding principles that should govern the effective provision of human rights education and training for all, without distinction,

Motivated by the desire to send a strong signal to the international community about the fundamental importance of human rights education and training in the promotion and protection of human rights,

Hereby declares:

I. Definitions and principles

1. Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information and learning activities aimed at promoting a universal culture of human rights.

2. The right to human rights education and training is a fundamental right inherent in the dignity of the human person and is intimately related to the effective enjoyment of all human rights, in accordance with the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights.

3. Human rights education and training concerns all levels — preschool, primary, secondary and university — and all forms of education, training and learning, whether in a public or private, formal, informal or non-formal setting. It includes vocational training, particularly the training of trainers, continuing education, popular education, and public information and awareness activities.

4. Human rights education and training is an essential component of the right to education for all, as recognized in both the international and regional framework and the domestic law of different States. It is related to the full implementation of the right to education, particularly free compulsory primary education, and the widespread provision of basic education for all, including for illiterate persons, as well as to the development of secondary education, including technical and vocational education, and higher education.

5. Human rights education and training should be based on the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant instruments, with the aim of:

(a) Raising awareness of human rights, including international, regional and national standards, principles, legislation and applicable guarantees;

(b) Pursuing the realization of all human rights;

(c) Developing a universal culture of human rights, in which everyone is aware of their own rights and duties in respect of the rights of others, and promoting the development of the individual as a responsible member of a free, peaceful, pluralist and tolerant society;

(d) Ensuring equal opportunities, through access for all to a quality education, without any discrimination; and

(e) Ensuring that education is developed in a spirit of participation, inclusion and responsibility that addresses both the content and the methods.

6. Human rights education and training is based on the principle of equality, particularly equality between girls and boys and between women and men, including in access to school, in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals.

7. Human rights education and training should take full account of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, persons living in poverty, foreigners and migrants, by ensuring effective access to basic education, as well as to human rights education, in order to eliminate the causes of exclusion or marginalization and to enable everyone to exercise all their rights effectively.

8. Human rights education and training should also take into consideration the specific expectations of indigenous peoples, as well as those of persons from national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

9. Human rights education and training is an ongoing process that begins at school or preschool age and that concerns all ages, all situations and all parts of society.

10. Human rights education and training should embrace and enrich the diversity of civilizations, religions, cultures and traditions, which contribute to the universality of human rights.

11. Human rights education and training should use languages and methods suited to the target groups and should take into account the basic needs of the population, stressing the interdependence of all human rights so as to become a development tool.

12. Human rights education and training is closely related to the implementation of freedom of expression and the right to information. It should promote access for all to, and the participation of everyone in the development of, the media, including the press, radio and television, and the strengthening of the educational function of these different media.

13. Human rights education and training should embrace the possibilities of the digital age so as to encourage the development of new educational forums, with a view to achieving true equality in access to information and communications technologies.

14. Human rights education and training involves close links between schools, families, local communities and society as a whole, so as to create a favourable environment for the promotion and protection of human rights.

15. Human rights education and training contributes to the prevention of human rights violations and aims to eradicate domestic violence, particularly against women and girls, and other forms of social violence such as violence in schools, as well as discrimination, stereotyping and hate speech.

II. Implementation measures at the country level

16. The State has primary responsibility in respect of the right to human rights education and training. The State has not only an obligation to respect the right to human rights education and training, but also an obligation to achieve progressively the full realization of this right by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures. It has an obligation to incorporate universal standards in its legislation and to pursue actively policies to fulfil its commitments in the area of human rights education and training, through its institutions and officials.

17. The State also has an obligation to protect and implement human rights education and training, by setting out the legal framework for the action of other public or private entities, including schools and universities, ensuring the professional training of trainers, establishing minimum guarantees and promoting best practices, particularly in the areas of non-discrimination and true equality.

18. The State has a particular responsibility for ensuring the effective enjoyment of the right to human rights education and training by vulnerable groups, by mobilizing its resources according to the criteria of accessibility, acceptability, adequate funding and suitability of the education and training.

19. The State also has responsibility for the initial and continuing professional training of its own officials, including judges, police officers, prison guards and all law enforcement officers. It should also ensure adequate training for members of its armed forces and uniformed services, including in international humanitarian law and international criminal law. It should also concern itself with private personnel acting on behalf of the State.

20. All members of the educational community, including educational institutions and teachers, pupils and students, as well as their families, have an important role to play in helping to better realize the right to human rights education and training through their own initiatives or through joint projects with the public authorities.

21. Human rights education and training, which is an important factor in democratization and knowledge-sharing, must be supported by a strong political will, as clearly demonstrated by an overall implementation strategy and the mobilization of human and financial resources, with specific commitments and goals.

22. The full implementation of such a strategy, drawn up on the basis of the country's needs and priorities, implies effective inter-ministerial coordination and the establishment of specialized administrative bodies.

23. The development and strengthening of national human rights institutions should enable them to play a particularly useful leading role in raising awareness and mobilizing all public and private actors, as well as, where necessary, a coordinating and evaluation role.

24. The conception, implementation and monitoring of this strategy should involve all stakeholders, including civil society bodies, by promoting, where appropriate, multi-stakeholder coalitions.

25. Human rights education and training requires the mobilization of the public authorities, particularly local authorities, and all organs of society, civil society and the private sector. The various actors of civil society, religious institutions, community associations, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, professional associations, youth workers and pupils' parents also have a vital role to play. Companies, especially multinational companies, cultural institutions and industries, the media and new media should assume their full responsibility in the area of human rights education and training.

26. Human rights education and training must be seen as a long-term exercise; its effective implementation will require progressive and continuous efforts aimed at achieving long-term goals.

27. Human rights education and training should aim for the participation of every person and the strengthening of their capabilities, taking into account different economic, social and cultural circumstances, while promoting local initiatives in order to encourage ownership of the common goal of the fulfilment of all human rights for all.

28. An ongoing assessment of action taken at the national level is vital to the effectiveness of human rights education and training, and requires the establishment of specific goals and quantitative and qualitative indicators.

29. Progress in human rights education and training is nurtured by the initial and in-service training of teachers at all educational levels and by theoretical and practical research in the fields of education and teaching methods, as well as international human rights law, thanks to cooperation and networking among specialized institutes and research centres, with a view to producing a definition of common concepts and teaching methods.

30. Particular care must be taken to guarantee the academic freedoms and protect the human rights of those responsible for human rights education and training, in their role as human rights defenders, whether in the formal, informal or non-formal sector.

31. Human rights education and training should draw on the cultural and traditional riches of different countries. The arts, including the theatre, music, the graphic arts and audio-visual works, should be encouraged as a means of training and raising awareness in the field of human rights.

32. Human rights education and training is a matter of communication. As such, it should feature prominently in the field of new technologies, through awareness campaigns suited to a networked world.

III. Implementation measures at the international level

33. The United Nations should promote human rights education and training for its civil and military personnel. It has a special responsibility in crisis situations to make human rights education and training a priority in its peacebuilding and State reconstruction programmes, including in respect of the rule of law and a democratic culture.

34. International and regional organizations should promote human rights education and training for their civil and military personnel. They should, in their sphere of responsibility, include human rights education and training in their activities and cooperation programmes.

35. International non-governmental organizations also have an important role to play in human rights education and training, both internally, with regard to their membership, and in their programmes in the field.

36. International cooperation at the multilateral and bilateral levels, including decentralized cooperation, should support and reinforce national efforts through incentives and pilot schemes, as an extension of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

37. The full implementation of human rights education and training, as well as of the right to education itself, requires complementary international, regional, national and local efforts, with a constant focus on coordination, coherence, synergies and interdependence.

38. International follow-up to the full implementation of human rights education and training entails the universal ratification of the international human rights instruments and the implementation of a true mainstreaming process by the competent bodies and mechanisms.

39. The treaty-monitoring bodies should, inter alia, adopt general comments on human rights education and training, if they have not already done so, and systematically highlight human rights education and training in the list of issues submitted to States parties and in their concluding observations.

40. Human rights education and training should also be given due prominence in the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council, as well as in the guidelines on the information required and in the commitments and recommendations made. The process could be strengthened by involving experts in progress assessments.

41. An international centre for human rights education and training could also be set up to facilitate and coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the present Declaration.

42. The establishment of a voluntary international fund for human rights education and training should help finance initiatives and innovative projects in the field.

43. International or national goodwill ambassadors, celebrities, artists and sports men and women can also make a useful contribution to the promotion of a culture of human rights among very different audiences.

*Adopted by consensus
8th meeting
29 January 2010*