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IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 60/251 OF 15 MARCH 2006 ENTITLED “HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL”

Progress on reports and studies relevant to the promotion of the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for different cultural identities

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council decision 2/102 of 6 October 2006, requesting the High Commissioner for Human Rights to “continue with the fulfilment of her activities, in accordance with all previous decisions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights and to update the relevant reports and studies”. Further developments on the issue of cultural rights and respect for different cultural identities are subject to a decision by the Human Rights Council. The present report recalls the latest activities and reporting on the subject matter.

Following the request of the Commission on Human Rights in paragraph 20 of its resolution 2005/20, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in collaboration with the Observatory for Diversity and Cultural Rights, a civil society network of research institutes and NGOs, had organized a one-day informal consultation on cultural rights on 26 October 2005. Fifty-five States participated in this consultation, as well as 16 non-governmental, international and regional organizations.

The discussions held suggested that there was ongoing interest on the part of some States, experts, and international, regional and non-governmental organizations in further discussing the issue of cultural rights and looking for ways of protecting and promoting these rights through existing human rights mechanisms.

In its resolution 2005/20, the Commission also requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on the results of those consultations to the Commission at its sixty-second session. The report of the High Commissioner (E/CN.4/2006/40) prepared for submission to the sixty-second session of the Commission concluded that there was an interest in continuing discussions on this theme and exploring ways of further protecting cultural rights. It also suggested that the Commission should request existing human rights mechanisms to give greater emphasis to cultural dimensions in their areas of work. More specifically, it was suggested that the Commission invite existing special procedures to take into account the cultural dimensions in the exercise of their mandates and include a relevant analysis in their future reports to the Human Rights Council and that treaty bodies, especially the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, be encouraged to pay greater attention to cultural rights in their analyses and questions to States.
