

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/Sub.2/NGO/23
22 January 1962

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION
OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION
OF MINORITIES
Fourteenth session
Agenda item 9

FUTURE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMISSION

Statement submitted by the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations, Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, Friends World Committee for Consultation, International Commission of Jurists, International Council of Women, International League for the Rights of Man, International Union of Christian Democrats, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, World Jewish Congress, World Union for Progressive Judaism and the International Humanist and Ethical Union, non-governmental organizations in consultative status, Category B and Register

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 28 and 29 of the Economic and Social Council resolution 288 B (X).

Dated: 22 January 1962

Received: 22 January 1962

1. As the Sub-Commission nears completion of the last of its five major studies of discrimination, the question of its future becomes important. We believe that in initiating and carrying out these studies into discrimination, the Sub-Commission has made a significant contribution to the realization of the ideal set forth in Art. 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, establishing for all mankind the right to be protected against discrimination on the ground of "race, color, sex, religion, political or other opinion, national or social

origin, property, birth or other status." The Sub-Commission should continue to make further contributions to the advancement of this ideal.

2. In the memorandum (E/CN.4/Sub.2/195) on the future programme of the Sub-Commission submitted by the Secretary-General to the eleventh session (January 1959), Part IV called the Sub-Commission's attention to certain rights in the Universal Declaration, heretofore not studied from the standpoint of discrimination, which might be considered as subjects for future studies. The Sub-Commission was reminded that some of its members, as well as members of the Commission on Human Rights, had "suggested that 'rights in the legal, social, economic, cultural, scientific and health fields' could usefully be studied from the point of view of prevention of discrimination ...". It also suggested "that the Sub-Commission should consider what action should be taken to follow up, in the future, studies of discrimination already carried out."

3. Clearly, the problems which form the subjects of the Sub-Commission's major studies, are not amenable to an immediate and permanent solution. The making of invidious distinctions between and among groups on the grounds cited in Article 2 of the Declaration, is an omnipresent temptation and danger in human society and only constant vigilance can prevent or ameliorate it. It is hardly to be doubted that, though with time, many existing manifestations of discrimination will be eradicated or reduced, new ones will arise or existing ones will be exacerbated.

4. Therefore, we respectfully urge the Sub-Commission to accept as a key part of its future programme, the task of periodically reviewing and supplementing its completed studies, in the light of subsequent developments. We suggest that, to aid in implementing these undertakings, it continue the procedure of designating special rapporteurs who would base their reviews on the same sources as have been utilized in the preparation of the original studies, namely, "Governments, The Secretary-General, Specialized Agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the writings of recognized scholars and scientists." We remind the Sub-Commission that the practice of a periodic review of developments as they bear upon earlier studies, has been pursued by the Commission on the Status of Women, whose precedent can prove particularly useful.

5. Our suggestion for such periodic review is particularly relevant to the areas of religious rights and practices, political rights, and the right to leave any

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country and to return. In contrast to the areas of education and employment, for which UNESCO and ILO have assumed certain responsibilities in the matter of review and follow-up, no specialized agencies exist with particular responsibility or proficiency in regard to these areas. However, the Sub-Commission can also make further contributions in the areas of education and employment.

6. We also suggest that a periodic review of developments might be warranted in respect of other problems to which the Sub-Commission has given special attention, even though it did not deal with them in full-length studies, such as "manifestations of anti-Semitism and other forms of racial prejudice and religious intolerance of a similar nature."

7. We note the resolution on periodic reports on human rights, adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its seventeenth Session (Spring 1961), in which the Secretary-General was requested to transmit the summaries of the periodic reports received for the years 1957-59, "... to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, for use, in particular, in connection with its studies in the field of discrimination." We suggest that the periodic reports, supplemented by information from non-governmental sources, can be a useful information source on which the rapporteurs may draw in carrying out the periodic reviews which we propose.

8. Finally, the Sub-Commission might undertake studies of techniques, in the areas of education and information, law, and civic and community action, for combating prejudice and discrimination. The subject of techniques in these areas was discussed on two occasions by the United Nations Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations Interested in the Eradication of Prejudice and Discrimination. The report of the second (1959) of these conferences, which was discussed at last year's session of the Sub-Commission, can provide valuable suggestions for such studies.

9. In this statement we have dealt primarily with the question of periodic review, because we understand that individual non-governmental organizations will present suggestions for specific new studies. Therefore, the suggestions that we have put forward here are in no way intended to be exclusive.
