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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Fifty-fifth session  
Agenda item 19

ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Argentina, Australia\*, Austria, Belgium\*, Brazil\*, Bulgaria\*, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica\*, Dominican Republic\*, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia\*, Finland\*, France, Germany, Greece\*, Guatemala, Honduras\*, Japan, Madagascar, Mexico, Netherlands\*, New Zealand\*, Nicaragua\*, Paraguay\*, Peru, Portugal\*, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain\*, Togo\*, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela: draft resolution

1999/... Assistance to states in strengthening the rule of law

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling that, by adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Firmly convinced that, as stressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the rule of law is an essential factor in the protection of human rights and should continue to attract the attention of the international community;

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\* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Convinced that through their own national legal and judicial systems States must provide appropriate civil, criminal and administrative remedies for violations of human rights;

Recognizing the importance of the role that can be played by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in supporting national efforts to strengthen the institutions of the rule of law;

Bearing in mind that, in its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, the General Assembly entrusted the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with, inter alia, providing, including through other appropriate institutions, advisory services and technical and financial assistance in the field of human rights, enhancing international cooperation for the promotion and protection of all human rights and coordinating human rights activities throughout the United Nations system;

Recalling the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna in 1993, that a comprehensive programme be established within the United Nations and under the coordination of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with a view to helping States in the task of building and strengthening adequate national structures that have a direct impact on the overall observance of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law;

Recalling also its resolution 1997/48, of 11 April 1997 and noting General Assembly resolution 53/142 of 9 December 1998,

1. Notes with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (A/53/309);

2. Takes note with appreciation of the increasing number of Member States seeking assistance in strengthening and consolidating the rule of law and of the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General for strengthening the programme of advisory services and technical assistance of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in order to comply fully with the recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights concerning assistance to States in strengthening their institutions which uphold the rule of law;

3. Praises the efforts made by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to accomplish its ever-increasing tasks with the limited financial and personnel resources at its disposal;

4. Expresses its deep concern at the scarcity of means at the disposal of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the fulfilment of its tasks;

5. Notes that the programme of advisory services and technical assistance does not have sufficient funds to provide any substantial financial assistance to national projects that have a direct impact on the realization of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law in countries that are committed to those ends, but which face economic hardship;

6. Welcomes the deepening of the ongoing cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant bodies and programmes of the United Nations system, with a view to enhancing system-wide coordination of assistance in human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and, in this context, takes note of the cooperation between the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in providing technical assistance at the request of States in the promotion of the rule of law;

7. Affirms that the High Commissioner for Human Rights remains the focal point for coordinating system-wide attention for human rights, democracy and the rule of law;

8. Welcomes the consultations and contacts initiated by the High Commissioner for Human Rights with relevant bodies and programmes of the United Nations system aimed at the enhancement of inter-agency coordination and cooperation in providing assistance for the strengthening of the rule of law;

9. Encourages the High Commissioner for Human Rights to pursue those consultations and to continue the dialogue between her Office and other organs and agencies of the United Nations system, taking into account the need to explore new synergies with a view to obtaining increased financial assistance for human rights and the rule of law;

10. Also encourages the High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to explore the possibility of further contact with and support from financial institutions, acting within their mandates, with a view to obtaining technical and financial means to strengthen the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner to provide assistance to national projects aimed at the realization of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law;

11. Requests the High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to accord high priority to the technical cooperation activities undertaken by her Office with regard to the rule of law;

12. Expresses its appreciation of the efforts made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights to undertake an analysis of the technical cooperation provided by the United Nations in the field of human rights with the aim of formulating recommendations for inter-agency coordination, funding and allocation of responsibilities in order to improve efficiency and complementarity of action concerning, inter alia, assistance to States in strengthening the rule of law;

13. Decides to continue its consideration of the question of assistance to States in strengthening the rule of law at its fifty-seventh session in the light of the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session pursuant to Assembly resolution 53/142 and any relevant information that may be provided by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on this matter.

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