



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.4/1996/L.34
10 April 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 16

RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL OR ETHNIC,
RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

Afghanistan*, Albania*, Argentina*, Austria, Australia, Belarus,
Benin, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica*, Croatia*, Czech Republic*,
Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia*, Ethiopia, Finland*,
Guatemala*, Honduras*, Iceland*, Liechtenstein*, Mongolia*,
Norway*, Nicaragua, Poland*, Portugal*, Republic of Korea,
Russian Federation, Rwanda*, San Marino*, Slovakia*, Slovenia*,
Sweden*, Switzerland*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*,
and Ukraine: draft resolution

1996/ ... Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic,
Religious and Linguistic Minorities

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, by
which the Assembly adopted without a vote the Declaration on the Rights of
Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,

Conscious of the need to promote and protect effectively the rights of
persons belonging to minorities, as set out in the Declaration,

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

Recalling its resolution 1995/24 of 3 March 1994 on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, in which the Commission, inter alia, decided to authorize the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to establish, initially for a three-year period, an inter-sessional working group consisting of five of its members, to meet each year for five working days in order to promote the rights of persons belonging to minorities,

Noting that the Working Group held its first session from 28 August to 1 September 1995, and that its report has been made available to the Commission on Human Rights,

Concerned by the growing frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts concerning minorities in many countries, and their often tragic consequences,

Also concerned that persons belonging to minorities are particularly vulnerable to displacement through, inter alia, population transfers, refugee flows and forced relocation,

Considering that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to political and social stability and peace and enrich the cultural heritage of society as a whole,

Affirming that effective measures and the creation of favourable conditions for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, ensuring effective non-discrimination and equality for all, contribute to the prevention and peaceful solution of human rights problems and situations involving minorities,

Convinced that the development of a culture of human rights and tolerance is a sound foundation for any civil society and for peace,

Reaffirming the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may exercise fully and effectively all their human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law, in accordance with the Declaration,

Noting the positive initiatives and measures undertaken by many countries, as well as regional organizations, to protect minorities and promote mutual understanding,

Acknowledging that the United Nations has an increasingly important role to play regarding the protection of minorities by, inter alia, taking due account of and giving effect to the Declaration,

Also noting that special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights have continued to give due regard, within their mandates, to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities,

Aware that non-governmental organizations can play an important role regarding the protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (E/CN.4/1996/88),

1. Urges States and the international community to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, including through the facilitation of their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development of their country;

2. Also urges States to take, as appropriate, all the necessary constitutional, legislative, administrative and other measures to promote and give effect to the Declaration;

3. Appeals to States that so wish to consider making bilateral and multilateral arrangements or agreements in order to protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in their countries, in accordance with the Declaration;

4. Recognizes that respect for human rights and the promotion of understanding and tolerance by Governments, as well as between and among minorities, including through programmes of human rights education and public information are central to the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

5. Calls upon the Secretary-General, to make available, at the request of Governments concerned, qualified expertise on minority issues, including the prevention and resolution of disputes, to assist in existing or potential situations involving minorities;

6. Requests the Secretary-General, in the implementation of the present resolution, to provide human and financial resources for such advisory services and technical assistance of the Centre for Human Rights, within existing resources;

7. Calls upon High Commissioner for Human Rights to promote, within his mandate, the implementation of the Declaration and to continue to engage in a dialogue with Governments concerned for that purpose;

8. Urges all treaty bodies and special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights to continue to give due regard, within their respective mandates, to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

9. Invites States, interested governmental and non-governmental organizations, special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights to continue to submit, as appropriate, contributions as to how they promote and give effect to the Declaration;

10. Calls upon States and the Secretary-General to give due regard to the Declaration in their respective training programmes for officials;

11. Encourages intergovernmental, as well as non-governmental, organizations to continue to contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

12. Expresses its expectation that the Working Group on Minorities of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities will continue to carry out its mandate as set out in Commission resolution 1995/24, with the involvement of a wide range of participants;

13. Requests the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to continue to make available to the Commission on Human Rights the annual report of the Working Group;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the Working Group, within existing resources, with all the necessary services and facilities to fulfil its mandate;

15. Calls upon States, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to participate actively in the work of the Working Group, including through written contributions;

16. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

17. Decides to continue consideration of this issue at its fifty-third session under the same agenda item.
