



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.4/1996/L.62
16 April 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 9 (b)

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF
THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Australia, Austria, Cameroon, Canada, Costa Rica*, Honduras*,
India, Latvia*, Malawi, Mongolia*, New Zealand*, Netherlands,
Papua New Guinea*, Philippines, Russian Federation*, Senegal*,
Slovakia*, Spain*, Sweden* and Tunisia*: draft resolution

1996/... National institutions for the promotion and protection
of human rights

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and its own
relevant resolutions concerning national institutions for the promotion and
protection of human rights, notably General Assembly resolution 48/134 of
20 December 1993, Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/50 of
3 March 1995 and General Assembly resolution 50/176 of 22 December 1995,

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

Welcoming the growing interest shown worldwide in the creation and strengthening of national institutions, that is, independent and pluralistic national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, expressed during the regional preparatory meetings for the World Conference on Human Rights and at the Conference itself, as well as at the various international meetings of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights held since 1991,

Convinced of the important role national institutions play in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and in developing and enhancing public awareness of those rights and freedoms,

Recognizing that the United Nations has played and should continue to play an important role in assisting the development of national institutions,

Recalling that, in General Assembly resolution 48/134, the Assembly welcomed the Principles relating to the status of national institutions, annexed to that resolution,

Welcoming the decision, announced recently by several States, to establish, or consider establishing national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recognizing that it is the prerogative of each State to choose, for the establishment of a national institution, the framework that is best suited to its particular needs and circumstances to ensure that human rights are promoted and protected at the national level in accordance with international human rights standards,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, in which was reaffirmed the important and constructive role played by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular in their advisory capacity to the competent authorities, and their role in remedying human rights violations and in the dissemination of human rights information and education concerning human rights,

Recalling also the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, in which Governments were urged to create or strengthen independent national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the human rights of women, as recommended by the World Conference on Human Rights,

Recalling that, at the World Conference on Human Rights, representatives of national institutions who attended as observers played a positive and constructive role in the deliberations of the Conference,

Noting with satisfaction the convening of the third International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Manila, from 18 to 21 April 1995 and the first African Conference on Human Rights National Institutions in Yaounde from 5 to 7 February 1996,

Taking note of the decision by one Government to provide funding for the appointment of a special adviser to the High Commissioner for Human Rights on national human rights institutions,

Noting with satisfaction the constructive participation of representatives of a number of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in international seminars and workshops organized or sponsored by the United Nations and its Member States and in other United Nations activities,

Noting the importance of finding an appropriate form of participation by national institutions in relevant United Nations meetings dealing with human rights, and noting that a number of national institutions have for some time taken part in such meetings as part of the delegations of Member States,

1. Reaffirms the importance of the development of effective national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in keeping with the Principles relating to the status of national institutions annexed to General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993;

2. Encourages Member States to establish or, where they already exist, to strengthen national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, as outlined in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and, where appropriate, to incorporate the elements identified in that Declaration and Programme of Action in national development plans or in their preparation of national action plans;

3. Also encourages all Member States to take appropriate steps to promote the exchange, in particular by national institutions, of information and experience concerning the establishment and operation of national institutions;

4. Emphasizes in this regard the need to disseminate the Principles relating to the status of national institutions, annexed to General Assembly resolution 48/134, as widely as possible, and calls upon the Secretary-General to undertake this task;

5. Affirms the role of national institutions, where they exist, as appropriate agencies for the dissemination of human rights materials and other public information activities, including those of the United Nations;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to give a high priority to requests from Member States for assistance in the establishment and strengthening of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights as part of the programme of advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights;

7. Requests the Centre for Human Rights, with the assistance of national institutions and their Coordinating Committee, to continue to provide technical assistance for States wishing to establish or strengthen their national institutions and to organize training programmes for national institutions which request them, and invites Governments to contribute additional funds to the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights for these purposes;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to take measures to ensure that national institutions are informed effectively, including through diplomatic channels, about the activities of the Centre for Human Rights involving national institutions;

9. Commends the intensified activities of the High Commissioner in promoting and strengthening national institutions;

10. Commends the Centre for Human Rights for the preparation and publication of the handbook National Human Rights Institutions (HR/P/PT/4);

11. Takes note of the role of the Coordinating Committee created by national institutions at the second International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, held in Tunis from 13 to 17 December 1993, in close cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights, to assist Governments and institutions, when requested, to follow up on relevant resolutions and recommendations concerning the strengthening of national institutions;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide, from within existing resources, the necessary assistance for holding meetings of the

Coordinating Committee during the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, under the auspices of and in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights;

13. Takes note of the report of the third International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, held in Manila from 18 to 21 April 1995 (E/CN.4/1996/8), and the declaration and recommendations therein, in particular its recommendations relating to the participation of national institutions in the work of United Nations human rights bodies;

14. Also takes note of the report of the Secretary-General concerning possible forms of participation by national institutions in United Nations meetings dealing with human rights (E/CN.4/1996/48 and Add.1), and notes the corresponding recommendation therein;

15. Considers that it would be appropriate for national institutions to be able to participate in an appropriate manner in their own right in meetings of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies, that consideration should be given to a definitive resolution of this question and that appropriate practices should be adopted in the interim to provide for their participation;

16. Requests the Secretary-General again to invite Member States which have not yet done so to inform him of their views concerning possible forms of participation by national institutions in meetings of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies and, in particular, to address themselves to possible measures which could provide for such participation, and to include the information provided by Governments in his report to the Commission at its fifty-third session;

17. Encourages Governments and national institutions to take account, in their policy and practice in this area, of the provisions contained in the Principles relating to the status of national institutions;

18. Encourages Governments to devise an information strategy to raise awareness among the general public and among all elements of civil society on the need to promote and protect human rights;

19. Requests the Secretary-General to convene a fourth international workshop on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, to be held, if possible, in Latin America during 1996 or 1997, and to

invite Governments and intergovernmental organizations to contribute to the Voluntary Fund for the purpose of financing, where necessary, attendance by representatives of national institutions;

20. Recognizes the important and constructive role that non-governmental organizations can play, in cooperation with national institutions, for the better promotion and protection of human rights;

21. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Commission at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution;

22. Decides to continue its consideration of this question at its fifty-third session.
