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SPECIFIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

MINORITIES

Afghanistan*, Albania*, Australia*, Austria*, Bangladesh, Belarus*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Bulgaria*, Cameroon*, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica*, Croatia*, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Denmark*, Ecuador, Eritrea*, Estonia*, Ethiopia*, Finland*, Georgia*, Guatemala, Hungary*, Iceland*, Ireland*, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein*, Lithuania*, Malta*, Nicaragua*, Norway*, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia*, Slovenia*, Sri Lanka, Sweden*, Switzerland*, Thailand*, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Ukraine*, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay*: draft resolution

2000/... Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, as well as subsequent resolutions of the Assembly on the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/24 of 3 March 1995 and Economic and Social Council decision 1998/246 of 30 July 1998,

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

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, as well as full and effective participation in matters affecting them, contribute to the prevention and peaceful solution of human rights problems and situations involving minorities,

Acknowledging that national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to the diversity of societies and that minority rights promote tolerance within societies, and recognizing that promoting a culture of tolerance through human rights education shall be advanced by all States,

Concerned at the growing frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts regarding minorities in many countries, and their often tragic consequences, and that persons belonging to minorities are particularly vulnerable to displacement through, inter alia, population transfers, refugee flows and forced relocation,

Concerned also at instances of victimization or marginalization of persons belonging to minorities in situations of political or economic instability,

Taking note of Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights resolution 1999/23 of 26 August 1999 on prevention of discrimination against and the protection of minorities,

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,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (E/CN.4/2000/79) and of the report of the Working Group on Minorities on its fifth session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/21), in particular the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;

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

accordance with the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

3. 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, including through the facilitation of their participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development of the country;

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

5. Recommends that the human rights treaty bodies, when considering reports submitted by States parties, give particular attention to the implementation of articles relating to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

6. Calls upon special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission to continue to give attention, within their respective mandates, to situations involving minorities;

7. 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 and to include in his report to its fifty-seventh session information on relevant projects and activities in this regard;

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

9. Invites the High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue her efforts to improve the coordination and cooperation of United Nations programmes and agencies active in the field of the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and invites the United Nations programmes and agencies to continue to give attention within their respective mandates to situations involving minorities;

10. Welcomes the holding of expert seminars, in accordance with the recommendations of the Working Group on Minorities, on the effective participation of minorities from 30 April to 2 May 1999 in Flensburg, Germany, and on intercultural and multicultural education from 29 September to 2 October 1999 in Montreal, Canada;

11. Takes note of the considerations of the Working Group on Minorities during its fifth session, in particular the emphasis on questions of the effective participation by minorities and the work on a manual on the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

12. Requests the Working Group, within its mandate, to contribute to, and participate in, the preparations for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and to intensify its activities in this regard;

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

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

15. Also calls upon States to facilitate the effective participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations and persons belonging to minorities in the work of the Working Group on Minorities, and invites the High Commissioner for Human Rights to seek voluntary contributions in this regard;

16. Invites the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to consider favourably the recommendation of the Working Group to organize a seminar for representatives of international and regional organizations, treaty bodies and specialized agencies, to discuss issues concerning their respective work on the protection of minorities, improve coordination so as to reduce duplication and parallel activities, exchange information and seek ways of better protecting the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

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

18. Decides to continue its consideration of this question at its fifty-seventh session under the same agenda item.
