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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on the Promotion
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ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

**Mr. Bengoa, Mr. Chen Shiqu, Mr. Decaux, Mr. Dos Santos Alves,
Mr. Guissé, Ms. Koufa,, Ms. Motoc, Ms. O'Connor, Ms. Rakotoarisoa,
Mr. Rodríguez Cuadros, Mr. Sattar, Mr. Weissbrodt, Mr. Yokota
and Ms. Zerrougui: draft resolution**

**2003/... Implementation of existing human rights norms and standards
in the context of the fight against extreme poverty**

The Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights,

Recalling that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international covenants on human rights recognize that the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can be achieved only if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his or her economic, social and cultural rights, as well as his or her civil and political rights,

Recalling in particular that article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of him/herself and of his/her family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his/her control,

Recalling that the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/211 of 18 December 2002, reaffirmed (a) that extreme poverty and exclusion from society constitute a violation of human dignity and that urgent national and international action is therefore required to eliminate them; (b) that it is essential for States to foster participation by the poorest people in the decision-making process in the societies in which they live, in the promotion of human rights, and in efforts to combat extreme poverty; and (c) that appropriate attention must continue to be given to the links between human rights and extreme poverty,

Recalling the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, reaffirmed during the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the World Summit, held in Geneva in June 2000, which provide the substantive framework for eradicating poverty by setting specific targets, drawing up plans and implementing programmes,

Mindful that in its resolution 2001/31 of 23 April 2001 the Commission also requested the Sub-Commission to consider the need to develop, on the basis of the various relevant international instruments, the ongoing work in other forums, the conclusions and recommendations of the Expert Seminar on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty organized in accordance with Commission resolution 2000/12 of 17 April 2000 and any other relevant inputs, in particular those received from Governments, guiding principles on the implementation of existing human rights norms and standards in the context of the fight against extreme poverty, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-ninth session,

Recalling also with satisfaction Commission resolution 2003/24 of 22 April 2003, in which the Commission expressed itself deeply concerned that extreme poverty continued to spread in all countries of the world, regardless of their economic, social and cultural situation,

and said it was essential for States to foster participation by the poorest people in the decision-making process in the societies in which they lived and in the realization of human rights,

Aware that, in its resolution 2003/24, the Commission encouraged the ad hoc working group of the Sub-Commission established to prepare a study to contribute to the drafting of an international declaration on extreme poverty and human rights to adopt an approach to human rights and extreme poverty based on the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelation of all human rights,

Recalling its own resolutions 1999/15 on women and the right to development and 1996/23 on human rights and extreme poverty, resolution 1996/22 and decision 1998/105 on the right to development and the follow-up thereto contained in resolution 1999/9,

Mindful of the definition of extreme poverty given in the final report on human rights and extreme poverty submitted by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Leandro Despouy (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/13, annex III), which underscores both the similarity and the difference between situations of poverty and extreme poverty, both appearing to be due to similar phenomena varying essentially in number, extent and duration,

Taking note of the reports by the independent expert, Ms. Anne-Marie Lizin, on human rights and extreme poverty (E/CN.4/1999/48, E/CN.4/2000/52, E/CN.4/2001/54 and Corr.1, E/CN.4/2002/55, E/CN.4/2003/52), in particular her suggestions for bringing together people in extreme poverty and those working beside them on policy implementation, and her recommendation of yearly round tables bringing together all parties concerned,

Recalling the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/Sub.2/2000/14 and Add.1) on promoting the right to development in the context of the United Nations Decade for the Elimination of Poverty (1997-2006), submitted in accordance with Sub-Commission resolution 1999/9,

Noting with interest the Draft Guidelines: a Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies, prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Bearing in mind the importance of international programmes against poverty in a human rights setting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the new poverty agenda indicated by the International Monetary Fund and other international agencies, the projects and policies of the World Bank and other international financial bodies, and other relevant declarations and international programmes,

Bearing in mind also that the fight against poverty is one of the agreed international development goals and the importance of placing the issue at the centre of discussions in the Sub-Commission's Social Forum,

Aware of the need to apply human rights norms and standards in the context of the fight against extreme poverty,

1. *Reaffirms* that the existence of widespread extreme poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and might, in some situations, constitute a threat to the right to life, and that its immediate alleviation and eventual eradication must remain a high priority for the international community;

2. *Re-emphasizes* that extreme poverty is a major issue to be addressed by Governments, civil society organizations and the organs and agencies of the United Nations system, including international trade and financial institutions, and in this context reaffirms that political commitment is a prerequisite for the eradication of extreme poverty;

3. *Requests* Ms. Iulia-Antoanelle Motoc, Mr. Emmanuel Decaux, Mr. Yozo Yokota, Mr. El-Hadji Guissé and Mr. José Bengoa, with Mr. Bengoa as coordinator, to prepare, without financial implications, a joint working paper in three stages; submitting a progress report at the fifty-sixth session and a final report at the fifty-seventh session, on the need to develop, on the basis of the various relevant international instruments, the ongoing work in other forums, the conclusions and recommendations of the Expert Seminar on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty and any other relevant inputs, in particular those received from Governments, guiding principles on the implementation of existing human rights norms and standards in the context of the fight against extreme poverty;

4. *Requests* the authors to work with a view to the creation of a specific instrument that does not overlap with existing treaties such as the Slavery Convention or the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid;

5. *Also requests* the authors to address extreme poverty specifically, in accordance with the terms of reference given to them by the Commission in its resolutions 2001/31 and 2003/24, as a violation of human dignity and all human rights, civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural;

6. *Approves* the underlying principles of a conceptual framework set out in document E/CN.4/Sub.2/2003/17, in particular the argument that a rights-based approach compels policy-makers to focus on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, those who are often excluded by “average progress”;

7. *Requests* Governments to cooperate with this research by providing information, resources and invitations to the experts to visit their countries to examine programmes and experiences concerning the eradication of poverty;

8. *Requests* the authors to consider specifically the situations of poverty in various parts of the world in the light of international jurisprudence, treaties, covenants and other relevant instruments with a view to putting an end to extreme poverty and social exclusion, and to consider the policies of the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and other international bodies for fighting poverty;

9. *Also requests* the authors to present conclusions and recommendations in order to contribute to work on the draft declaration on extreme poverty and human rights and other international and regional initiatives;

10. *Encourages* the authors to adopt an operational approach to extreme poverty based on the principle of justiciability of rights and the need to give States clear obligations and objectives, assigning all countries collective responsibility for combating extreme poverty all over the world;

11. *Requests* the authors to favour an approach towards extreme poverty which strengthens bonds of solidarity and social inclusion mechanisms, giving the very poorest people the capability to exercise all their rights and enjoy respect for their human dignity;

12. *Encourages* the establishment, with input from the various parties and population groups concerned, of a range of indicators for keeping track of situations of extreme poverty, the related needs and changes in them;

13. *Invites* non-governmental organizations to contribute to the study by making their experience, practical knowledge and support available to the Sub-Commission's working group;

14. *Invites* the secretariat to assist in the preparation of the study, the seminars and other activities suggested in the programme of work;

15. *Requests* Governments to provide data, including statistics and information on the legal, economic or other measures they have taken to address the issue of poverty;

16. *Requests* regional specialized bodies in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America and international agencies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to collaborate and provide information for the study.
