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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on the Promotion
and Protection of Human Rights
Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 4

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

**Mr. Alfredsson, Mr. Bengoa, Mr. Bíró, Mr. Chen, Ms. Chung,
Mr. Guissé, Ms. Motoc, Ms. O'Connor, Mr. Salama, Mr. Sattar,
Ms. Wadibia-Anyanwu, Ms. Warzazi and Mr. Yokota:
draft resolution**

2004/... The Social Forum

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

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the indivisibility,
interdependence and interrelated nature of economic, social and cultural rights and civil and
political rights,

Recalling also the reports and studies on the realization of economic, social and cultural
rights submitted by several special rapporteurs to the Sub-Commission and the Commission on
Human Rights, in particular those submitted by Mr. Danilo Türk, Mr. Asbjørn Eide,
Mr. Mustapha Mehedi, Mr. Leandro Despouy, Mr. El-Hadji Guissé, Mr. Joseph Oloka-Onyango,
Ms. Deepika Udagama, Mr. David Weissbrodt and Mr. José Bengoa,

Recalling further Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/53 of 27 April 1999 and decision 2000/107 of 26 April 2000, and Sub-Commission resolutions 1999/10 of 25 August 1999, 2000/6 of 17 August 2000, 2001/24 of 16 August 2001, 2002/12 of 14 August 2002 and 2003/14 of 13 August 2003 on the establishment of a forum for economic, social and cultural rights, to be called the Social Forum,

Welcoming Commission on Human Rights decision 2001/103 of 25 April 2001 authorizing the Sub-Commission to hold the Social Forum during its fifty-third session and decision 2003/107 of 22 April 2003 to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that it authorize the Sub-Commission to convene an annual intersessional forum on economic, social and cultural rights, to be known as the "Social Forum", for two days on dates that would permit the possible participation of 10 members of the Sub-Commission, to be appointed by the regional groups of the Sub-Commission, and that the Council also authorize the provision of all the necessary facilities for the preparation and servicing of the event, and of Council resolution 2003/264 of 23 July 2003,

Recalling the holding of the preparatory panel meeting on the Social Forum during the fifty-third and the first meeting before the fifty-fourth session of the Sub-Commission, in which the participants unanimously recognized the need for a new process/mechanism within the United Nations system with broad participation, reflecting the current structure of international society,

Considering that a deeper discussion of issues relating to poverty eradication and the realization of economic, social and cultural rights would require a longer period of time than is available in the two days allocated to the Social Forum,

Considering also the new challenges of globalization, of the changes in the international order and of the emergence of new actors in the international, regional and national economic and financial areas,

Considering further the need to listen to the most vulnerable and their advocates and to ensure a meaningful and effective participation of those who are not heard, and to have a constructive dialogue with officials of international institutions and governmental representatives,

Bearing in mind that the reduction of poverty, especially rural poverty, remains an ethical and moral imperative of humankind, based on respect for human dignity, and noting the report of the Chairman-Rapporteur of the second Social Forum, held on 22 and 23 July 2004, which focused on “Poverty, rural poverty and human rights”,

Taking into account that a human rights perspective is necessary for the fight against poverty and extreme poverty, which affects overwhelmingly the rural population, because of its emphasis on non-discrimination and participation,

Considering that poverty entails powerlessness and that, in implementing a human rights approach to poverty eradication, emphasis should be placed on the political and economic empowerment of the poor,

1. *Expresses its satisfaction* at the holding of the second Social Forum on 22 and 23 July 2004 and welcomes the report of its Chairman-Rapporteur (E/CN.4/Sub.2/2004/26);
2. *Notes* the comprehensive nature of the conclusions and recommendations of the Social Forum and calls upon States, international organizations, in particular those with a mandate for poverty eradication, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, trade unions and other relevant actors, to take them into account when designing and implementing poverty-eradication programmes and strategies;
3. *Reiterates* its decision that the Social Forum shall meet every year, with the mandate laid down in previous Sub-Commission resolutions, and decides that the next meeting of the Social Forum will be held during 2005 in Geneva on dates suitable for the participation of Sub-Commission members and of the broadest possible range of other stakeholders, and decides that the theme for the Social Forum in 2005 will be “Poverty and economic growth: challenges to human rights” and that it will be addressed within the context of the five-year assessment of the goals set in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;
4. *Reiterates* its invitation to participate in the Social Forum to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and other non-governmental organizations outside Geneva, and in particular newly emerging actors, such as smaller groups and rural associations of the South, grass-roots organizations, peasants’ and

farmers' organizations and their national and international associations, pastoralist associations, fishermen's/women's organizations, voluntary organizations, youth associations, community organizations, trade unions and associations of workers, representatives of the private sector, United Nations agencies, the relevant functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the regional economic commissions, international financial institutions and development agencies;

5. *Invites* United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, the relevant functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the regional economic commissions, the international financial institutions, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, special rapporteurs and independent experts, non-governmental organizations, scholars, trade unions and associations of workers to participate in and to submit studies to the Social Forum;

6. *Invites* all Governments to participate in the Social Forum and invites States that have not ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to consider submitting reports to the Social Forum on the obstacles encountered in their efforts to eradicate poverty;

7. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to seek effective means of ensuring consultation and the broadest possible participation in the Social Forum, including by entering into partnership with coalitions of non-governmental organizations, the private sector and international organizations;

8. *Requests* the Commission on Human Rights to recommend to the Economic and Social Council the establishment of a voluntary fund to facilitate the participation of grass-roots groups and similarly disadvantaged organizations in the Social Forum;

9. *Requests* Mr. Alfredsson, Mr. Bengoa and Ms. Motoc each to prepare a working paper for consideration at the Social Forum 2005;

10. *Invites* Governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and specialized agencies, to submit

information and their views on the theme of the 2005 Social Forum to the High Commissioner for Human Rights for inclusion in a compilation for distribution and consideration during the Forum.

11. *Also invites* Governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations and United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and specialized agencies, to submit to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights information about best practices in poverty-eradication policies and programmes incorporating a human rights perspective, and requests the High Commissioner to maintain a database in the web page of the Social Forum of those practices;

12. *Invites* the Social Forum to submit to the Sub-Commission at its fifty-seventh session a separate report containing a comprehensive and detailed summary of the discussions, including recommendations and draft resolutions;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to adopt the appropriate measures to disseminate information about the Social Forum, invite the relevant individuals and organizations to the Social Forum and take all practical measures required for the success of this initiative.
