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STUDY OF DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has received the following communication dated 19 January 1959 from the Director-General of UNESCO, and has the honour to communicate it to the Commission.

"I have the honour to inform you that the General Conference of UNESCO had on the agenda of its tenth session an item entitled 'Desirability of preparing an international instrument (Recommendation or Convention) concerning discrimination in the field of education'.

"The Conference had before it a report by the Director-General on this subject (10 C/23 and Addendum) which gave inter alia an account of the action taken by the Commission on Human Rights and by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

"After a discussion which took place first in its Working Party on Education and then in its Programme Commission, the General Conference adopted the following resolution:

'The General Conference,

'Considering that a comprehensive study of discrimination in education has been completed for the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Fifth Session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/181, Rev.1) on the invitation of the Economic and Social Council,

'Considering that the Commission on Human Rights recognizes that this field is one in which UNESCO can provide constructive leadership and welcomes the decision that the General Conference considers what action it could appropriately take,

'Noting in the Director-General's Report on the subject (10 C/23 and 10 C/23 Add.) the many areas in which children, youth and adults may be subject to discrimination, through intent, lack of resources, place of residence, or through many other possible causes and,

'Realizing that in varying ways and degrees inequality of educational opportunity exists in many areas of the world,

'Decides that UNESCO shall take responsibility for drafting recommendations to Member States and an international convention on the various aspects of discrimination in education, and

'Authorizes the Director-General to prepare a preliminary report, draft recommendations and a draft convention to be circulated to Member States for comment, and to convene in 1960 a committee of technical and legal experts appointed by Member States with a view to submitting revised drafts of such recommendations and of a convention to the eleventh session of the General Conference.'

"I should appreciate it if you would kindly bring this resolution to the attention of the Human Rights Commission under the terms of Resolution 2 B adopted by the Commission at its XIVth session.

"The representative of UNESCO will not fail to give the Commission, as appropriate, further information about this decision of the General Conference and the plans for its implementation."

In this connexion the Secretary-General draws attention to the discussion which took place in the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities at its eleventh session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/SR.273) with regard to collaboration with UNESCO concerning the draft recommendations and draft convention on discrimination in education, as set forth in paragraphs 152-159, and resolution E, of the Sub-Commission's report (E/CN.4/778).
