

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Public statement by Amnesty International in support of a Second United Nations Decade on Human Rights Education

Amnesty International welcomes the call for a Second UN Decade for Human Rights Education (HRE) to begin on 1 January 2005, and the recommendation for an International Plan of Action for HRE for the decade 2005-2014, as proposed by Costa Rica at this year's session of the Commission on Human Rights. An International Plan of Action for HRE will be an important step to further promote and develop understanding of HRE in the wider civil society, and will provide a useful framework for HRE work. In order to further strengthen this initiative, Amnesty International invites governments, UN agencies and civil society to consider the following points:

The International Plan of Action must contain realistic, measurable targets for Member States, envisage close cooperation with HRE non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and aim at implementing HRE within the formal and non-formal education sectors, including adult and professional sectors.

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education should be renewed and expanded to include the promotion and monitoring of HRE programs in both the formal and non-formal education sectors, and receive adequate funding.

The provisions related to education enshrined in international instruments, in particular the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (article 13), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (article 7), and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (article 10), should be used to encourage governments to establish HRE programs and to report on such initiatives through their periodic reports to the relevant treaty monitoring bodies.

Joint HRE initiatives should be encouraged between NGOs and UN agencies, including UNESCO, UNICEF and UNIFEM.

An annual review of progress in implementing the International Plan of Action should be conducted by member states and submitted to the Commission on Human Rights. In addition, mid-term and end of term reviews should be undertaken, with the full participation of NGOs and civil society.

Member States should consider increasing their financial contribution to the UN to support the development and promotion of HRE programs.

