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Item 5
Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Human Rights Education and Training

Mr. President,

Amnesty International believes that human rights education is fundamental for addressing the underlying causes of human rights violations, preventing human rights abuses, combating discrimination, promoting equality, and enhancing people's participation in democratic decision-making processes.¹

We welcome the substantive progress made by the Advisory Committee in the drafting process of the *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training*, and appreciate the open consultation process with diverse members of civil society to date.

Amnesty international offers the following preliminary key points on the draft Declaration, which we encourage the Council to consider:

The Right to Human Rights Education

First, Amnesty International supports the articulation of the right to human rights education in the draft Declaration as a distinct and 'fundamental right inherent in the dignity of the human person'.

The Declaration must be fully consistent with and build on existing human rights law. The right to human rights education is not a 'new' right. States are obliged under various international and regional human rights treaties to provide human rights education to all persons.² This obligation

¹ Amnesty International's statement on the draft UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training is drawn from our work in human rights education which spans formal and non-formal education sectors across all continents. Our international human rights education projects focus on: enabling diverse individuals, groups and communities to understand and express their personal and collective concerns in human rights terms; challenging and enabling people to act to demand, support and defend human rights and use human rights as a tool for social change; sensitizing duty-bearers to human rights issues and of their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights; and raising awareness of the importance of human rights education for the protection and promotion of human rights.

² Article 26 of the UDHR states that: "*Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.*" The importance of human rights education is also recognized in other international treaties and standards, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13), the Convention on

extends to ensuring that the content of education in all sectors - formal, non-formal, informal, and lifelong learning - promotes and is consistent with human rights. Various treaty bodies have also emphasized the need to extend human rights education to the police, legal professionals and others involved in the administration of justice.³ Human rights education also has a recognized role in challenging and changing discriminatory attitudes and practices.⁴

The draft *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* is a significant opportunity to consolidate, reaffirm and reinforce these existing standards by providing a common understanding of the elements of human rights education and a unified framework for its effective implementation.

Formal, Non-formal and Informal Education

Second, human rights education is not only integral to the work of schools and formal learning institutions. In non-formal settings, educating people about their human rights is the first step in empowering individuals and their communities and ensuring their active participation in the realization of their rights. The Declaration should therefore balance the emphasis on formal, non-formal, and informal education sectors.

Conclusion

Further elaborations of Amnesty International's contribution to the work on the draft *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* can be found in our two written submissions to the Advisory Committee, as well as our oral statements made during their 3rd and 4th sessions.

Finally, we suggest to the Council that experts, in particular the Rapporteur of the Advisory Committee's drafting group, continue to play a central role in the process of drafting and finalizing the Declaration, and that the drafting process continues with careful elaboration and inclusive consultations with all stakeholders, including NGOs.

Thank you, Mr. President.

the Rights of the Child (Article 29), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Article 10), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Article 7), the Convention against Discrimination in Education (Article 5), the American Convention on Human Rights (Article 12(4)), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 12), and the First Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 2). The Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights (1993) has also highlighted the need for human rights education, followed by global initiatives such as the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) and the first (2005-2009) and second (2010-2015) phases of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

³ See e.g. Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations on the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, CCPR/C/79/Add.119, 25 April 2000, para 9, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding Observations on the Czech Republic, E/C.12/1/Add.76, 5 June 2002, para 45.

⁴ For instance, see the obligation under Article 7, Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, to adopt immediate and effective measures in the field of education to combat prejudices which lead to racial discrimination. See e.g. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding Observations on Ghana, CERD/C/62/CO/4, 2 June 2003. Similarly, Article 10 (c) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women requires States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods. See e.g. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Concluding Observations on Ukraine, CEDAW/C/UKR/CO/7, 5 February 2010, para 25, Concluding Observations on Lebanon, CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/3, 8 April 2008, para 25, Concluding Observations on Kazakhstan, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/2, 2 February 2007, para 14. See also Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations on the Philippines, CCPR/CO/79/PHL, 1 December 2003, para 18.