



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
19 March 2012

Original: English

Human Rights Council

Nineteenth session

Agenda item 5

Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Albania*, Armenia*, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Cameroon, Cape Verde*, Chile, Colombia*, Costa Rica, Croatia*, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark*, Ecuador, Finland*, Georgia*, Germany*, Greece*, Guatemala, Honduras*, Hungary, Ireland*, Italy, Japan*, Liechtenstein*, Luxembourg*, Malta*, Mexico, Montenegro*, Nicaragua*, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Serbia*, Slovakia*, Slovenia*, Somalia*, Switzerland, Timor Leste*, Uganda, United States of America: draft resolution

19/.. Forum on Minority Issues

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities adopted by consensus by the General Assembly by its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, and taking into consideration article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as other relevant existing international standards and national legislation,

Recalling also all resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, in particular Council resolution 6/15 of 28 September 2007, in which the Council established the Forum on Minority Issues and decided to review its work after four years,

Noting that 2012 marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,

Affirming that the above-mentioned anniversary offers an important opportunity to reflect on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as on achievements, best practices and challenges with regard to the implementation of the Declaration,

Commending the Independent Expert on minority issues for the work done and the important role in raising the level of awareness of, and in giving added visibility to, the

* Non-Member State of the Human Rights Council.

rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and for the ongoing efforts to promote and protect their rights in order to ensure equitable development and peaceful and stable societies, including through close cooperation with Governments, the relevant United Nations bodies and mechanisms and non-governmental organizations,

Emphasizing the need for reinforced efforts to meet the goal of the full realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by addressing their economic and social conditions and marginalization, as well as to end any type of discrimination against them,

Affirming that effective measures and the creation of favourable conditions for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, ensuring effective non-discrimination and equality for all, as well as full and effective participation in matters affecting them, contribute to the prevention and peaceful solution of human rights problems and situations involving minorities,

Underlining the need to pay specific attention to the negative impact of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance on the situation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and drawing attention to the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted in September 2001 by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, including the provisions on forms of multiple discrimination,

Emphasizing the importance of dialogue among all relevant stakeholders on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as an integral part of the development of society as a whole, including the sharing of best practices, such as for the promotion of mutual understanding of minority issues, managing diversity by recognizing plural identities, and promoting inclusive and stable societies, as well as social cohesion therein,

Emphasizing also the importance of national processes aimed at promoting and strengthening dialogue between all relevant stakeholders on issues relating to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities with a view to ensuring the realization of their rights without discrimination and to help build stable societies,

Emphasizing further the important role that national institutions can play in the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as in early warning and awareness-raising measures to address problems regarding minority situations,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Independent Expert on minority issues,¹ which contains, inter alia, an update on the work of the Forum on Minority Issues;

2. *Also takes note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;²

3. *Expresses its appreciation* for the successful completion of the first four sessions of the Forum on Minority Issues, addressing the right to education, the right to effective political participation, the right to effective participation in economic life and the

¹ A/HRC/19/56.

² A/HRC/19/27.

rights of minority women and girls and which, through the widespread participation of stakeholders, has provided an important platform for promoting dialogue on these topics, and encourages States to take into consideration, as appropriate, relevant recommendations of the Forum;

4. *Commends* the Forum for its contribution to the efforts of the High Commissioner to improve cooperation among United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes on activities relating to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including at the regional level, and expresses its expectation that the Forum will continue to contribute to these efforts;

5. *Reaffirms* the role of the Forum as an important platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, which provides thematic contributions and expertise to the work of the Independent Expert and identifies best practices, challenges, opportunities and initiatives for the further implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

6. *Decides* that the Forum shall remain open to the participation of States, United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes, intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations and mechanisms in the field of human rights, national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies, academics and experts on minority issues and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; the Forum shall also remain open to other non-governmental organizations whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, based on arrangements, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, and practices observed by the Commission on Human Rights, through an open and transparent accreditation procedure in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Human Rights Council, which will provide for the timely information on participation and consultations with States concerned;

7. *Invites* States, United Nations mechanisms, bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions, as well as academics and experts on minority issues, to continue to participate actively in the sessions of the Forum;

8. *Decides* that the Forum shall continue to meet annually for two working days allocated to thematic discussions;

9. *Requests* the President of the Human Rights Council to continue to appoint for each session, on the basis of regional rotation, and in consultation with regional groups, a chairperson of the Forum among experts on minority issues, nominated by members and observers of the Council; the chairperson, serving in his/her personal capacity, shall be responsible for the preparation of a summary of the discussion of the Forum, to be made available to all participants of the Forum;

10. *Decides* that the Independent Expert shall continue to guide the work of the Forum and prepare its annual meetings, and invites him/her to report on the thematic recommendations of the Forum and make recommendations for future thematic subjects, for consideration by the Human Rights Council;

11. *Requests* the High Commissioner to provide all the necessary support to facilitate, in a transparent manner, the convening of the Forum and the participation of relevant stakeholders from every region in its meetings, giving particular attention to ensuring the broadest possible and equitable participation, including, in particular, the representation of women;

12. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Forum, from within existing resources of the United Nations, with all the services and facilities necessary to fulfil its mandate;

13. *Invites* the High Commissioner to continue to seek voluntary contributions to the Forum to facilitate participation, in particular of those coming from developing countries, and in doing so to give particular attention to ensuring the participation of young people and women;

14. *Decides* to continue consideration of this important matter at a future session in conformity with its annual programme of work.
