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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 49/213 of 23 December 1994, the General Assembly recalled its resolution 48/126 of 20 December 1993, by which it had proclaimed 1995 the United Nations Year for Tolerance, and requested the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to prepare for the conclusion of the Year a declaration of principles and a programme of action as a follow-up to the Year, and to submit them to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

2. The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly a letter addressed to him by the Director-General of UNESCO (see annex), in which he attaches a final report on the United Nations Year for Tolerance, which includes a Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and a Follow-Up Plan of Action for the United Nations Year for Tolerance (1995), adopted by acclamation by the General Conference of UNESCO, at its meeting on 16 November 1995, at its twenty-eighth session (25 October to 16 November 1995). The report should assist Member States in their discussion on the lines of action for the future, indicated by UNESCO in the Follow-Up Plan of Action for the promotion of tolerance, peace and solidarity among the peoples of the world.

* A/51/50.

ANNEX

Letter from the Director-General of UNESCO
to the Secretary-General

The General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session (25 October to 16 November 1995) adopted a Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and a Follow-Up Plan of Action for the United Nations Year for Tolerance.

I believe that this Declaration is a milestone in the world community's progress towards defining both the concept and the role of tolerance at the international and State levels, in civil society and in education. It was drafted through extensive consultations with member States, and makes use of the contributions of several meetings on tolerance held throughout the year. It recalls relevant human rights instruments, and addresses intolerance in its many forms, including violence, terrorism, injustice and exclusion.

The Follow-Up Plan indicates lines of action for the future, including educational initiatives, public awareness activities, social integration and development programmes, and continued mobilization of the United Nations system for the promotion of tolerance, peace and solidarity among the people of the world.

Article 6 of the Declaration proclaims 16 November the International Day for Tolerance. This day, the anniversary of the signing of the UNESCO Constitution, could serve as an annual occasion for discussion of tolerance issues and for related special events, both in educational institutions and among the wider public, in cooperation with the media.

The General Conference decided to submit the Follow-Up Plan of Action and the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session. It is to be hoped that at this session the Assembly would, in reviewing the Year, also assess the future course of the tolerance campaign, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/213.

It is therefore my privilege to transmit to you the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and the Follow-Up Plan of Action as approved by the General Conference of UNESCO. I should like to count on the cooperation of the United Nations in bringing about the widest possible distribution of these documents, particularly the Declaration, through all appropriate channels. The challenges posed by rising intolerance in every region call for a coordinated response by intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations working in partnership.

(Signed) Federico MAYOR