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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
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Agenda item 5

### HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS

**Andorra\*, Armenia\*, Australia\*, Austria\*, Croatia\*, Denmark\*, Finland\*, France, Germany, Greece\*, Hungary\*, Iceland\*, Ireland\*, Italy, Liechtenstein\*, Luxembourg\*, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway\*, Peru, Poland\*, Portugal\*, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden\*, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: draft resolution**

#### **6/... 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,

*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,

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\* Non-member States of the Human Rights Council.

*Recalling* Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/24 of 3 March 1995, Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/31 of 25 July 1995 and decision 1998/246 of 30 July 1998 on the mandate of the Working Group on Minorities of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights,

*Recalling also* Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, which calls upon the Council to decide at its sixth session on the most appropriate mechanisms to continue the work of the former working groups of the Sub-Commission,

*Taking note* of the final report of the Working Group on Minorities (A/HRC/Sub.1/58/19), in particular the recommendations on the future of the Working Group, which emphasizes the need for a mechanism to serve as forum for dialogue and mutual understanding on minority rights issues,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (A/HRC/4/109), in which he invites the Council to consider ways to maintain mechanisms offering opportunities for the meaningful participation of civil society,

*Commending* the important work undertaken by the independent expert on minority issues and recalling the complementarity of her mandate with that of the former Working Group on Minorities provided for in Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/79 of 21 April 2005,

*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,

*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 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 need to include in such a dialogue all stakeholders whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, based on the rules of participation according to the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Council and building upon the practical arrangements developed by the former Working Group on Minorities with regard to non-governmental organizations' participation,

1. *Decides* to establish a forum on minority issues to provide a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, which shall provide thematic contributions and expertise to the work of the independent expert on minority issues.<sup>1</sup> The Forum shall identify and analyse 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, with the aim of contributing to dialogue and the promotion of inclusive and stable societies at national level;

2. *Also decides* that the Forum shall be 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 non-governmental organizations, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to review of the mandate of the independent expert, as foreseen in resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007.

academics and experts on minority issues on the basis of an open and transparent accreditation procedure; the independent expert shall consult with the relevant stakeholders on questions relating to accreditation;

3. *Decides further* that the Forum shall meet annually for two working days allocated to thematic discussions with the possibility to extend by one more day for organizational matters;

4. *Decides* that the independent expert on minority issues shall convene the Forum and guide its work, including by identifying annual thematic subjects for discussion in consultation with the Forum, and invites her to include in her report a summary of the annual discussions of the Forum and recommendations for future thematic subjects, for consideration by the Human Rights Council;

5. *Expresses its expectation* that the Forum will contribute to the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to improve the cooperation among United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes on activities related to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including at regional level;

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

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

8. *Decides* to review the work of the Forum after four years.

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