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### **REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND REPORTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**Public information activities in the field of human rights, including  
activities being undertaken throughout the sixtieth anniversary of  
the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

**Joint progress report of the Secretary-General and the Office  
of the High Commissioner for Human Rights\***

#### **Summary**

The following report covers public information activities in the field of human rights and on global activities undertaken within the framework of the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The report does not contain any specific recommendations. It includes activities performed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat. It describes a variety of products, services, and activities addressed to the general public and different audiences, with a special emphasis in the use of modern tools of communication.

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\* The present report was submitted after the deadline in order to incorporate the most recent developments.

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## **Introduction**

1. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 6/9, requested the Secretary-General and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) “to submit to the Council, prior to its seventh session, a joint progress report, from within the regular budget of the United Nations, on public information activities in the field of human rights, including activities being undertaken throughout the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by the United Nations system, internationally and at the national level, and, particularly, by the field presences of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights”.
2. In its resolution 6/9, the Council also encourages the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat and OHCHR “to continue to support, within their respective responsibilities and in consultation with States, the development of national capacities for human rights education and public information, inter alia by involving national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations, and to launch, within the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights sixtieth anniversary activities, specific initiatives for widening public information in the field of human rights”. The Secretary-General submitted a comprehensive biannual report (A/HRC/4/106) to the fourth session of the Human Rights Council, which addressed the issue of public information activities in the field of human rights, including the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights until the end of 2006. This report complements it with activities and information in 2007.
3. The coordination of the United Nations education and public information programmes in the field of human rights was specifically mentioned in General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, as part of the mandate of the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
4. On 10 December 2007, a year-long United Nations system-wide human rights advocacy campaign, an initiative of the Secretary-General and coordinated by OHCHR, was launched to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 60).
5. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has repeatedly stressed the importance she attaches to the implementation of activities for increasing awareness of human rights among the general public. To meet this objective she stressed in her Strategic Management Plan 2006-2007 the need to enhance the Office’s communication capacity. Since then, a Communications Section composed of three units - the Media Unit, the Editorial and Publications Unit, and the Web and Audiovisual Unit - has been established and manages communications and public information strategies and activities of OHCHR.

## **I. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

### **A. Publications programme**

6. The goal of the publications programme of OHCHR is to raise awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to publicize ways of promoting and protecting them worldwide. Another aim is to encourage debate on human rights issues under discussion in United Nations bodies.

7. Since the last report of the Secretary-General, the Office distributed more than 120,000 copies of human rights publications in addition to the 2,000 copies of each publication which are regularly distributed by the Distribution Section at the United Nations Office at Geneva through the mailing list established jointly by OHCHR and the Distribution Section. OHCHR also increased the number of publications, making most of them available on its website to enhance their dissemination.

### **1. Fact Sheets**

8. OHCHR Fact Sheets provide information on a wide range of human rights subjects. By researching and focusing on an issue, a Fact Sheet helps readers understand human rights and related topics, and the international machinery that has been established to promote and protect them.

9. In 2007, Fact Sheet No. 24/Rev.1, *The International Convention on Migrant Workers and its Committee*, was issued in Arabic; No. 30, *The United Nations Human Rights treaty system: An introduction to the core human rights treaties and the treaty bodies*, was issued in Arabic and Spanish.

### **2. Training and educational material**

10. The OHCHR training and educational material consists of handbooks and manuals intended to raise awareness of international human rights standards. It is directed at audiences that are able to influence the human rights situation in their countries. These publications also serve as practical tools for organizations that provide human rights education to professional groups (e.g. police, prison officials, judges, parliamentarians, human rights monitors, election monitors and social workers) and educational institutions.

11. In 2007, the following items of the Professional Training Series were published: No. 13, *Human Rights - Handbook for Parliamentarians*, was published in Arabic and Spanish, jointly with the Inter-Parliamentary Union; No. 14, *From Exclusion to Equality: Realizing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, was published in English, jointly with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs.

12. The human rights education series consists of publications aimed at supporting general human rights education efforts. It includes information on the World Programme for Human Rights Education, a study on human rights education and human rights treaties, and a practical book to support human rights education in schools. In 2007, No. 4/Rev.1, *ABC: Teaching Human Rights - Practical activities for primary and secondary schools*, was issued in Chinese; No. 5, *Plan of Action for the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education*, was published jointly with UNESCO, in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish.

### **3. Special-issue papers**

13. Special issue papers explore selected subjects in greater depth. Several issue papers were published in 2007: *International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights - 2006 Consolidated Version* (published jointly with UNAIDS, in French); *Frequently asked questions*

on a human rights-based approach to development cooperation (in Russian); *Assessing the effectiveness of national human rights institutions* (jointly with the International Council on Human Rights Policy in Arabic); *Principles and Guidelines for a Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies* (in Arabic and Chinese, Web-based); *Rule-of-law tools for post-conflict States: Monitoring legal systems* (in Spanish); *Handbook on Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons: Implementing the “Pinheiro Principles”* (jointly with various United Nations agencies in English); *The Rights of Non-citizens* (in Chinese, English and Russian); *Dimensions of Racism* (jointly with UNESCO in French and Spanish); *Human Rights and World Trade Agreements* (in Spanish); *Good Governance Practices for the Protection of Human Rights* (in English); *Handbook on HIV and Human Rights on National Human Rights Institutions* (jointly with UNAIDS in English).

#### **4. Reference material**

14. Reference material gives researchers and human rights law practitioners access to key human rights instruments and other essential information. The material includes jurisprudence from human rights treaty bodies. The following titles were published in 2007: *Selected Decisions of the Human Rights Committee under the Optional Protocol (vol. VI)*, in Spanish; *Selected Decisions of the Human Rights Committee under the Optional Protocol (vol. VII)*, in Russian; *Selected Decisions of the Human Rights Committee under the Optional Protocol (vol. VIII)*, in English; *Core International Human Rights Treaties*, in English, Arabic and French; *New Core International Human Rights Treaties*, in English and Spanish; *Legislative History of the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (jointly with Save the Children), in English.

#### **5. Promotional material**

15. The purpose of this material is to inform the general public about United Nations human rights work. “The United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery” is now available in Spanish. The “*Plan of Action for the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education*”, a leaflet published jointly with UNESCO, was issued in English, French and Spanish.

### **B. Use of electronic technology**

16. In 2007, OHCHR redesigned its external website to present OHCHR and human rights information with a more user-friendly approach. During the redesign, a new structure was approved by senior management and implemented. Content for new entry pages and homepage sections and new visual elements were also developed.

17. In January 2007, OHCHR decided to implement the new website using a Content Management system (CMS) and selected Microsoft Share Point 2007 to be used as that platform.

18. Given the large amount of material on the OHCHR website, its contents are being moved to the new structure through different phases.

19. The launch of the new OHCHR website coincided with the launch of a year-long advocacy campaign to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. With the implementation of the new website, the average number of pages viewed every day has reached 80,000.

20. The use of the new CMS will also facilitate the design of new web pages in accordance with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) recommendations regarding access by disabled people, and the design of a template to be used by field offices to develop their own local websites which will still have the “look-and-feel” of the main site and whose content can also be in the local language.

### **C. Media liaison**

21. The Office has continued to strengthen its capacity to communicate the human rights message through the media. OHCHR staff responsible for media liaison brief the international press regularly on the activities of the Office and on the human rights programme in general. The media liaison staff participate in elaborating the communication strategy of OHCHR; accompany the High Commissioner in her field visits; draft press statements and background notes; organize media events for the High Commissioner; assist the special procedures mechanisms and the treaty bodies with their media liaison needs; and help draft and place opinion pieces and other articles in major international publications.

22. The Communication Section assisted in the placement of nine opinion articles by the High Commissioner. Thematic information kits were developed and distributed for use of the media and partners on the human rights issues of Indigenous Peoples (in English) and UDHR 60 (in all official languages). In the reporting period the Unit worked with the United Nations Information Service (UNIS), Geneva and the Treaties and Council Branch of OHCHR on two seminars to train journalists from around the world on the work of the Office in the promotion and protection of human rights.

### **D. Public outreach programmes**

#### **1. Briefings**

23. The Communications Section regularly organizes briefings for students, diplomats, journalists, public officials, academics, professors and NGOs. It also provides speakers for human rights briefings organized by UNIS Geneva. Seventy-seven briefings were delivered by OHCHR staff to more than 1,900 participants in 2007 on a variety of issues and in different languages. A general OHCHR PowerPoint presentation was developed as an introduction to be used by speakers in briefings.

24. In 2007, the Communications Section also coordinated and organized the Human Rights programme section of the forty-fifth Graduate Study Programme, organized annually by UNIS Geneva.

#### **2. Public information materials**

25. In the course of 2007, the Communications Section produced a series of public information materials such as electronic and print brochures distributed to partners, including

non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions, academia, the media, OHCHR field presences, United Nations bodies and the general public. These materials included a brochure on racism and discrimination as obstacles to development on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; a flyer on the online Human Rights and Business Learning Tool to promote an e-learning course on the occasion of the Global Compact Leaders Summit held in July 2007 in Geneva; and a brochure in English, French, Russian and Spanish to promote the OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship Programme brochure among indigenous communities. A generic information kit on OHCHR is also being prepared.

26. The Communications Section provides and manages content in OHCHR's home page. It has also created a new section called "Human face of human rights" with human-interest stories, and developed the content for the new "About us" section.

27. The Communications Section drafts statements and forewords by the High Commissioner on the occasion of particular international days and commemorations, and for publications respectively; prepares statements for the Secretary-General in conjunction with the Department of Public Information (DPI) on human rights issues; and, drafts background notes and fact sheets.

28. A photo library is being developed and photographic material is being produced to enhance OHCHR's audiovisual capacity. A short video on OHCHR was produced. OHCHR's Communications Section works in collaboration with the United Nations system to produce video news releases about the Office's activities and the High Commissioner.

### **3. Exhibitions and events**

29. A three-week exhibition of paintings by artists from the Mexican School of Down Art was organized at Palais Wilson. The exhibition, inaugurated by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on 21 March 2007, was organized in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Mexico in Geneva to mark the World Down Syndrome Day and the signing of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocols.

30. A ceremony to unveil a bust outside Palais Wilson, in memory of the late High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and the 21 colleagues who lost their lives in the bombing of United Nations headquarters in Iraq on 19 August 2003, was organized on 28 June 2007. A brochure on the bust was produced, and later sent to families of the victims.

### **4. Human Rights Day and the launch of the year-long campaign to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

31. A United Nations system-wide human rights advocacy campaign for the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 60) is the focus of OHCHR outreach efforts for 2007 and 2008. The campaign, an initiative of the Secretary-General and coordinated by OHCHR, involves United Nations agencies, departments and funds, and other

international and local partners commemorating UDHR 60 by advocating specific areas of human rights that are most pertinent to their work under the overarching message: “Dignity and justice for all of us”.

32. The initiative of the Secretary-General has been endorsed by the Chief Executives Board and a UDHR 60 task force under the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG), set up by the Communications Section of OHCHR, facilitates the coordination of system-wide outreach activities throughout the anniversary year. The goal of the campaign is to provide civil society, national institutions, educators and a wide range of audiences with guidance, ideas and materials on the campaign. Since September 2007, the Communications Section has issued a monthly newsletter entitled *Info60*, with this purpose.

33. A number of public information materials were produced by the Communications Section for Human Rights Day 2007 and for the launch of the UDHR 60 campaign; i.e., an information kit in six official languages, a statement by the High Commissioner, a web page, two posters and a UDHR 60 commemorative logo. The emblem is available with text in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, and will be widely used from 10 December 2007 to 31 December 2008. A Christmas card and a 2008 calendar on UDHR 60 were also produced with the assistance of the office in Colombia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

34. The Communications Section also worked together with DPI to develop a special-edition Universal Declaration of Human Rights booklet, and an electronic A4-size Universal Declaration. Briefings on UDHR 60 were also given to civil society organizations and other partners.

### **Human Rights Day 2007**

35. Exhibitions, debates, film screenings, seminars, marches and other events were among the activities held on 10 December 2007 across the world to mark Human Rights Day and to launch the year-long campaign leading up to the UDHR 60 on 10 December 2008.

36. The Secretary-General launched the year-long campaign at the OHCHR Regional Office in Bangkok, where he inaugurated a Human Rights Day exhibition. An official event was held in Geneva, which coincided with the first day of the resumed sixth session of the Human Rights Council. The Secretary-General (via video message), the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, representatives of Member States, human rights experts and civil society representatives all spoke on the launch and the importance of the Universal Declaration.

37. OHCHR field presences celebrated Human Rights Day and launched the campaign in unique ways and styles. In Beirut, a commemorative event organized by the Regional Office of OHCHR saw 400 participants marking Human Rights Day and the launch of the UDHR 60 campaign with a film screening and a musical performance. In Nepal, a Human Rights Day message was broadcast via Radio Nepal countrywide. In Mexico, the OHCHR office hosted an event at which its 2007 publications were presented. In Bogotá, an event was organized to present the UDHR 60 campaign with the participation of some 450 people. A group of children handed out red and yellow roses representing the colours of the UDHR 60 logo. Banners, stickers, a calendar and an agenda were produced for the event. A 5-minute video featuring

women explaining the significance of the Declaration was shown. The event closed with a rock music show. In Bucaramanga, Cali and Medellín, Colombia, OHCHR offices launched the campaign with art events.

38. Exhibitions, film screenings, musical performances, seminars, panel debates, and other official events at which the United Nations system participated were organized in Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Montenegro, Portugal, Somalia, Spain, Timor-Leste and Turkey.

### **UDHR 60 commemorative activities planned for 2008**

39. The year-long UDHR 60 commemoration is intended to be as inclusive as possible. It will encompass the United Nations family, the public and private sectors, media, educators, schools, artists and other representatives of civil society throughout the world. Activities for the commemoration are already being planned by many of these partners. Some United Nations-affiliated projects planned for 2008 are as follows:

- Internationally renowned directors film human rights: OHCHR has collaborated with the NGO Art for the World, Dorje Films and the European Commission on a series of short films specially made for the UDHR 60. Award winning film-makers from different regions will direct 15 to 20 short films on human rights, which will be shown back to back as one medium-length feature in various locations throughout 2008, and will premier at the Rome Film Festival. The films will be distributed as public service announcements (PSAs) in cinemas and on television networks worldwide;
- Book based on human rights films: A book on the short films specially made for the UDHR 60 will be launched and available for sale a month before the film presentation;
- The sixty-first annual DPI/NGO conference in Paris: The United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) is preparing for the conference, which will be hosted for the first time outside New York, at UNESCO headquarters, from 3 to 5 September 2008. “A celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights” is the theme of the conference;
- Interactive dialogues on human rights in New York: The Permanent Mission of Switzerland in New York, in collaboration with OHCHR and the NGO Committee on Human Rights, is organizing a series of interactive dialogues on human rights from October 2007 to December 2008. Speakers will discuss new challenges and approaches to human rights in the context of improving synergy between the United Nations in New York, the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Member States, United Nations agencies and civil society.

## **5. Internship programme**

40. OHCHR offered internships to 111 graduate and undergraduate students to enable them to gain first-hand knowledge of United Nations actions and procedures in the field of human rights. Internships are awarded without financial commitment of any kind on the part of OHCHR or other United Nations bodies.

## **II. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

41. The Department of Public Information (DPI) publicized the work of the United Nations in the field of human rights using the various tools of communication and information dissemination at its disposal. New technologies have accelerated the dissemination of information through electronic means. In support of the Plan of Action of the High Commissioner's Office, the Department continued its close working relationship with OHCHR.

### **A. Activities of the Department of Public Information**

42. The Department continued to cover the human rights-related work of the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the human rights treaty bodies. It applied a multimedia approach to information dissemination, with information materials distributed to the media through press conferences, press briefings and other media outreach activities, on the United Nations website, in radio and television programmes, at exhibits, special events and in connection with activities with educational and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and through services for visitors as well as responses to inquiries from the general public. Information materials were produced in the six official languages of the United Nations and disseminated worldwide, including through the network of United Nations Information Centres and Services and United Nations regional offices. Many materials were also adapted in local languages.

43. The main activities undertaken by the Department from January to December 2007 are summarized below.

#### **1. Media products and coverage**

44. Human rights remained a key theme on the Department's UN News Centre portal ([www.un.org/news](http://www.un.org/news)), one of the most heavily visited areas on the United Nations website. Stories by the associated UN News Service covering all major United Nations activities, events and issues related to human rights appeared regularly on the news portal in all official languages and, in addition, were distributed to more than 50,000 subscribers to the UN News Centre's e-mail news alerts service (English and French). Further expanding the reach of this coverage, human rights-related stories from the UN News Centre received heightened visibility on search engines and were continuously republished on an increasing number of websites, including those of media outlets, popular news aggregator sites as well as NGOs and educational institutions. With the expanding use of the UN News Centre's RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feeds, its human rights-related stories also received ever-wider circulation in non-traditional online outlets, such as web logs (blogs) and personal pages.

45. The United Nations webcast team has been providing live and on-demand webcast coverage of all sessions of the Human Rights Council, since its inception in June 2006. Furthermore, the webcast team has developed a comprehensive website ([www.un.org/webcast/unhrc](http://www.un.org/webcast/unhrc)) where all Council sessions are available and at which they have been updated on a continuous basis.

46. The Department's Meetings Coverage Section in New York issued, during the reporting period, a total of 284 releases - 146 in English and 138 in French - including summaries of meetings and press conferences of intergovernmental human rights bodies as well as statements and messages by the Secretary-General.

47. United Nations Television covered various aspects of human rights and related issues in its current affairs, broadcast news magazine programme and its live and webcast footage of intergovernmental bodies and press conferences held at Headquarters. United Nations Television also provided regular coverage through Unifeed ([www.un.org/unifeed/](http://www.un.org/unifeed/)), its six-day-a-week satellite transmission service. During the reporting period, five "UN in Action" stories and 12 items in the "21st Century" programmes were on issues related to human rights.

48. United Nations Radio extensively covered the work of the Human Rights Council in its news bulletins and current affairs magazines in the official and non-official languages. United Nations Radio produced news and features on a broad range of related subjects, with special programmes for the start of UDHR 60 on 10 December.

49. For the first anniversary of the Human Rights Council, a fact sheet on the Council's activities during its first year was issued and disseminated to the press in Geneva and made available at United Nations Headquarters, as well as posted on the Council website and sent with guidance to the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs).

50. During the High Commissioner's three visits to United Nations Headquarters, the Department's focal point provided communications support in the form of arranging interviews with CBC Radio, CNN International, BBC World TV and Reuters on subjects including Myanmar, the International Criminal Court, the Sudan, and the High Commissioner's visit to the Great Lakes region in Africa.

51. In 2007, seven press conferences were arranged for human rights special rapporteurs during their presentations to the Third Committee of the General Assembly and at other times during the year.

## **2. Human Rights Day**

52. The Department designed the website for Human Rights Day 2007 ([www.un.org/events/humanrights/2007/](http://www.un.org/events/humanrights/2007/)) and for the sixtieth anniversary year in all six official languages, translated public information materials prepared by OHCHR into all official languages, and disseminated them to target audiences electronically and through the network of UNICs. An op-ed piece by the High Commissioner on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was placed in *Le Monde* (France), the *Buenos Aires Herald* (Argentina) and *Folha de S. Paulo* (Brazil) in December 2007. Media analysis of articles published on the occasion of Human Rights Day 2007 is still ongoing. More than 40 articles have been identified thus far, the majority of which include portions of both the message of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General.

53. A cartoon exhibit highlighting UDHR 60 entitled "Sketching human rights" was launched in the visitors' lobby at United Nations Headquarters on Human Rights Day 2007.

54. On the UN News Centre website, special attention was devoted to the coverage of Human Rights Day, with a range of news stories highlighting United Nations commemorative events and activities in different parts of the world.

55. The Department's booklet containing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (DPI/876/Rev.3) continues to be in demand. It was updated in 2007 with new forewords by the Secretary-General as well as the High Commissioner, and reprinted in all six official languages. A special sixtieth anniversary edition (DPI/876/Rev.4) was prepared and printed in all six official languages. Also designed for use during the anniversary year were a two-page, easy-to-print version in all six languages as well as a template for local language versions and a CD-ROM collection of historical photographs and artwork to be used by UNICs. A brochure outlining ideas to celebrate the anniversary year, to be shared with civil society, business, governments and academia, was also published.

56. In early 2007, judging was completed for the Human Rights Day essay contest in partnership with OHCHR organized in 2006 and hosted by the Department's CyberSchoolBus Unit. Prizes and certificates were compiled and award ceremonies and presentations were held by the United Nations Information Service in Bangkok, and the UNICs in Accra, Cairo, Islamabad, Kathmandu, Moscow and Nairobi.

### 3. Publications

57. The Department's Academic Initiative Section produced an issue of *UN Chronicle* on the theme of racism and racial discrimination titled "The solidarity of peoples", containing 26 articles on the present state of the international debate on racism and racial discrimination. The contributors analysed present and past forms of social exclusion, affected groups and populations, and the multiple dimensions of racial discrimination and related forms of intolerance, among a myriad of related issues. The magazine featured an important essay by the High Commissioner, "Looking beyond Durban: the significance of racial discrimination on the international human rights agenda", and an overview of the role of the United Nations in fighting racism and racial discrimination over the past six decades, based on the historical records of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*. Also featured are special contributions to the *UN Chronicle* to mark the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the trans-atlantic slave trade.

58. A special issue of the *UN Chronicle* on the theme of human rights is planned for mid-2008 and will be an in-depth look at this top priority of the United Nations through the lens of high-profile personalities at the national, regional and international levels, human rights experts, NGOs and senior United Nations officials.

59. A major part of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* is devoted to covering in a comprehensive manner the activities of the former Commission on Human Rights and the current Human Rights Council and its subsidiary organs, the work of the Office of the High Commissioner, as well as that of all human rights treaty bodies.

60. *Africa Renewal*, a quarterly magazine produced by the Department in English and French, carried more than 35 articles on human rights issues in Africa during the reporting period. The articles covered a wide-range of topics in the areas of media freedom, women's rights and the rights of children. Major articles looked at the impact of rape on women in the war

in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the rights of Africa's indigenous peoples. The Department also maintains the *Africa Renewal* website in English and French ([www.un.org/AR](http://www.un.org/AR)).

#### **4. Public and educational outreach**

61. During 2007, eight NGO briefings were devoted to human rights issues, including discrimination, indigenous rights, and extreme poverty, with the remainder relating to International Women's Day, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the trans-atlantic slave trade, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, World Press Freedom Day and Human Rights Day.

62. The Department has begun planning for the sixty-first Annual DPI/NGO Conference in commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. DPI has invited UNESCO, the Government of France and OHCHR to be co-organizers of the event, which is expected to be held in Paris in September 2008.

63. During the reporting period, the Department's Public Relations Section organized 33 in-house briefings with a total attendance of 1,027 participants and two outside speaking engagements with a total attendance of 260 participants on the subject of human rights.

64. The Department's Public Inquiries Unit and CyberSchoolBus Unit host an annual multimedia human rights conference for students drawn from the United States and around the world. The conference seeks to promote awareness and to prompt action among student leaders about human rights in general. The 2007 Student Conference focused on recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples. In addition to producing the background document and developing the conference website, the CyberSchoolBus Unit added a new feature on its site - live video chats. The Public Inquiries Unit responded to 24,331 e-mails, petitions, walk-in enquiries, letters and telephone calls specifically on human rights.

65. The CyberSchoolBus Unit also launched its first WebQuest on a human rights topic: the use of child soldiers. WebQuest is an educational tool which seeks to build knowledge and then offers options to test this knowledge through the online presentation of study resources and ready-made quizzes. The WebQuest on child soldiers includes an examination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol, and looks at the involvement of children in armed conflict. In November, the Unit also launched an additional site on the Convention to highlight its eighteenth anniversary, which includes a new curriculum on the Convention, along with a multimedia slide show developed in partnership with Magnum Photos. This launch was accompanied by a live video chat with a representative of UNICEF who spoke about the Convention with teachers and students.

66. The Department's Dag Hammarskjöld Library has begun work on a web page that will highlight the early documents that led up to the adoption of the resolution containing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. These will include the documents of the Nuclear Committee, the Drafting Committee and the first session of the Commission on Human Rights, and Third Committee of the General Assembly documents.

## **5. Information support on indigenous issues**

67. Communications support was provided for the sixth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in May, including development of a comprehensive press kit using a new masthead; guidance to UNICs; organization of four press conferences; media monitoring; and the arrangement of more than 20 interviews. Highlights of the media coverage for the session included: significant coverage of the opening press conference, most of which reproduced material from the press kit, including 75 placements of an Associated Press article (in *The Guardian*, the *International Herald Tribune* and at [www.Aljazeera.net](http://www.Aljazeera.net), among others); approximately 15 articles in English and Spanish on the closing session; and approximately 40 Spanish articles throughout the session.

68. During the negotiations leading up to the adoption by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007 of resolution 61/295 containing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Department worked closely with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to conduct media outreach, including arranging interviews and background briefings. After its adoption, the Department worked to publicize the Declaration and its significance resulting in a large number of interviews and print articles.

## **6. Special information activities**

69. The Department's annual Training Programme for Palestinian Media Practitioners in November and December included briefings by OHCHR officials in New York and Geneva. The participants also covered the work of the resumed sixth session of the Human Rights Council during their visit to Geneva.

70. The Department's annual six-week Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme, which acquaints young journalists from developing countries with the work of the United Nations, included a briefing on human rights provided by the New York Office of the High Commissioner.

71. DPI's Outreach Division organized several exhibits at United Nations Headquarters covering a wide-range of human rights issues such as racism, slavery, genocide, gender equality, education for girls and the rights of women. Exhibits were also developed for World Press Freedom Day, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, and on the subject of human trafficking.

72. The Department's Holocaust Programme and the United Nations Outreach Programme maintain a comprehensive gateway website with links to resources and educational materials on the Holocaust, human rights and the prevention of genocide. Holocaust and genocide scholars from Australia, China, France, Ghana, Israel and the United States of America have drafted position papers on the issues that can lead to genocide, including intolerance, human rights abuses, hatred, racism, bigotry and prejudice. The Holocaust Programme organized three seminars at United Nations Headquarters on the topic of Holocaust awareness, genocide prevention and combating hatred. Three week-long seminars were held in Washington, D.C., Jerusalem and Paris to better equip UNIC information officers to implement the Holocaust Remembrance mandate.

73. As part of the General Assembly-mandated programme, “Lessons from Rwanda: The United Nations and the prevention of genocide”, the Department launched an exhibit at United Nations Headquarters in April. The exhibit travelled to locations in Burkina Faso, Canada, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. Information kits and posters were produced in English, French and Kinyarwanda. Several workshops and conferences were held in Accra, Brazzaville and Bujumbura on such topics as the role of media in preventing genocide, peacebuilding and sexual violence. A photo project, “Visions of Rwanda”, was undertaken in November with both genocide survivors and perpetrators in Rwanda. Photographs from the project are expected to be disseminated widely in 2008. Work on related UNTV and UN Radio productions is ongoing, and a website in six official languages was launched in mid-December.

74. Activities in observance of other special days related to human rights were organized by the Department at Headquarters and by UNICs. These included International Women’s Day (8 March), International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March), the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the trans-atlantic slave trade (25 March), World Press Freedom Day (3 May), International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (26 June), International Day of the World’s Indigenous People (9 August), International Day for Tolerance (16 November) and World AIDS Day (1 December). The Department prepared backgrounders and fact sheets and collaborated with OHCHR and other partners in the organization of media or other special events for many of these Days.

## **B. Activities of the United Nations Information Services and Information Centres**

### **1. Media products and coverage**

75. Of the 1,025 press releases issued by United Nations Information Service (UNIS) in Geneva from January through October, 708 - or roughly 70 per cent - were directly on human rights themes. These included meeting summaries of the sessions of human rights treaty bodies or the Human Rights Council, statements by the High Commissioner and special procedures, or releases providing information about upcoming missions of human rights bodies, such as field missions of special procedures and human rights working groups.

76. In addition, UNIS Geneva has dedicated an information officer to work closely with the President of the Human Rights Council, and to serve as a liaison between OHCHR, the Council and the Information Service. UNIS press officers also finalize all press releases and statements issued by OHCHR, the High Commissioner and the special procedures. Council sessions always include a series of press briefings, organized by the service, by the Council President and human rights mandate-holders and, where possible, the service provides Headquarters with highlights or summary transcripts of these briefings. During the reporting period, 26 press briefings were held on human rights subjects, including briefings by the High Commissioner and Special Rapporteurs.

77. The Radio and Television Section in Geneva continued to provide extensive radio, television and photo coverage of meetings of the Human Rights Council, human rights-related press conferences and the human rights treaty bodies meeting in Geneva. It also filmed and/or taped interviews with key players in the field of human rights. Recently, the Section produced

radio and television interviews with the High Commissioner on the situations in Myanmar and in Pakistan. It also compiled archival video selections on themes such as the Human Rights Council and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for use in various documentaries. During this period, the section continued to provide production and transmission facilities and other assistance to broadcasting companies and journalists covering human rights issues. It also supplied television pictures and assisted with the narration of a video on the Office of the High Commissioner.

78. UNIS Vienna was also very active in media outreach regarding human rights and distributed press releases in its client countries (Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia).

79. The op-ed piece by the High Commissioner entitled “UN Convention on Enforced Disappearance asserts rights of victims’ families” was placed in media outlets by United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) in Beirut, New Delhi, and Tokyo in February. The Secretary-General’s op-ed on “Migration and development” was placed by the UNICs in Asunción, Brazzaville, Bucharest and Cairo, and by the United Nations Office in Kyiv. UNIC Bujumbura arranged the publication in a daily newspaper of the Secretary-General’s message on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. UNIC Khartoum arranged the publication of the Secretary-General’s message on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in March. In August, UNIC Lima arranged for the publication in the daily *El Peruano* of the Secretary-General’s message on the occasion of the International Day of the World’s Indigenous People.

80. UNIC Moscow was interviewed in April about a United Nations report on the human rights situation in Iraq, and gave a TV interview related to human rights in May. UNIC Prague gave a radio interview on the 200th anniversary of the abolition of trans-atlantic slave trade in March. For the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination UNIC Rio de Janeiro gave a radio interview, and UNIC Lima arranged an interview at a prominent national radio station in Peru for the OHCHR Spokesperson in Geneva.

81. UNIC Nairobi’s “Timiza Ahadi” (“Keep the promise”) radio programme produced instalments on the following topics: UNIFEM’s training programme on human rights, especially on rights of women and children; indigenous peoples; the Joint Global Initiative on Sexual Violence, and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime programme on child trafficking, among others. UNIC Ouagadougou produced a TV programme about xenophobia and racial discrimination. UNIC Bujumbura produced radio programmes on MONUC’s report on human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; child labour in agriculture; and on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

## **2. Human Rights Day**

82. In connection with Human Rights Day 2007, the United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC) in Brussels organized conferences in Portugal together with the Pro Dignitate Foundation, the Portuguese Youth Institute and a school in Cascais, launching a series of events to mark UDHR 60. In Athens, UNRIC organized conferences with the Greek National Committee for Human Rights and a human rights foundation as well as a press conference to launch the anniversary year. In Rome, UNRIC supported a “Cartooning for human rights” event, at which the Italian version of “Everything you always wanted to know about the UN” was

launched. The publication, produced by the Government of Italy with UNRIC support, will be distributed to more than 10,000 educational institutions. Together with journalists, government officials and NGOs, UNRIC participated in a panel organized by the German Institute for Human Rights.

83. To mark UDHR 60, UNRIC started a public information campaign entitled “Know your rights 2008”, in cooperation with UNIS Geneva and UNIS Vienna. Central to the campaign is a website ([www.KnowYourRights2008.org](http://www.KnowYourRights2008.org)) launched simultaneously in several European capitals on 10 December 2007. The website is a marketplace of ideas, projects and initiatives in text, audio and video formats that can be uploaded and downloaded so that people across Europe can post their projects and see what others are doing to mark the sixtieth anniversary. The aim of the campaign is to make human rights and, in particular, the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration accessible to the general public in an interactive and participatory manner. The website is sponsored by France, Italy and Switzerland; other European countries are expected to join this initiative soon.

84. UNIS Vienna participated in a human rights symposium co-organized by the United Nations Association of Austria and the Centre for Legal Studies, which was held at the Austrian Parliament. The symposium attracted around 200 participants, including Members of Parliament, members of the diplomatic corps, and NGO/CSO representatives. The event launched the year-long celebrations to mark UDHR 60 in 2008, as well as the fifteenth anniversary of the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna in 1993. UNIS Vienna also issued a press release and created a “human rights corner” on its website which features information, relevant links and materials.

85. A wide-range of activities were carried out by UNICs: UNIC Prague co-hosted a workshop on human rights in the twenty-first century in cooperation with the Czech Helsinki Committee. UNIC Bucharest, in partnership with *Cotidianul* daily newspaper, launched a cartoon exhibition on human rights, with works produced by Devis Grebu, an illustrator for leading international newspapers. UNIC Moscow hosted a briefing by the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry’s Human Rights Department dedicated to the recently adopted “Framework for cooperation between OHCHR and the Russian Federation for 2007 and beyond”. In Argentina, a day of workshops on human rights education was organized by UNIC Buenos Aires, with resources and ideas for the 2008 academic year offered to educators.

### **3. Publications**

86. Articles on human rights have been written or adapted for UNRIC’s monthly magazine and also placed on its 13-language website for Western Europe, which also contains a variety of human rights-related information materials. UNRIC produced and updated backgrounders on topics including genocide and the Human Rights Council.

87. A range of information products, such as regular newsletters, TV and radio productions, press kit materials and websites, often produced by UNICs in local languages, also serve as vehicles for raising awareness of human rights issues within their regions. Specific examples from the range of materials produced during this reporting period include: production of a resource CD on the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade (UNIC Port of Spain), adapting information materials of the press kit prepared by Headquarters

on the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Indigenous Issues into Portuguese and providing information materials in Portuguese and English at a seminar on the rights of children (UNIC Rio De Janeiro), and sponsoring a manual of human rights and international humanitarian law for field soldiers (UNIC Asunción).

#### **4. Public and educational outreach**

88. On 29 January, to mark the second observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, UNIS Geneva, in cooperation with the Office of the Director-General and the Permanent Mission of Israel, organized a ceremony attended by more than 700 participants in the Assembly Hall at the Palais des Nations

89. During the reporting period, the Press and External Relations Section of UNIS Geneva organized 45 information programmes for visiting university students and other civil society organizations. The Visitors' Service also organizes information programmes on targeted themes - including human rights - for groups that request them, generally for secondary school students.

90. The 45th Graduate Study Programme was held at the Palais des Nations in July 2007 on the theme, "The United Nations: united for peace, development and human rights". The programme was attended by 68 postgraduate students from around the world who produced a report at the end of the programme.

91. UNIS Geneva helped to promote and facilitate a number of human rights projects in cooperation with civil society partners. A major project involved the organization of the "Cartooning for peace" exhibition, which took place at the Palais des Nations in March and April and was created in collaboration with cartoonist Jean Plantu of *Le Monde*. In April, a UNIS Geneva television feature on the exhibition was shown at the "Cartooning for peace" exhibition in Paris.

92. UNIS Vienna also enhanced its cooperation with civil society and is increasing its outreach to target audiences. The UNIS Director participated in the first meeting of the Vienna NGO Committee on Human Rights, and a lecture on human rights was held in December 2007.

93. UNIS Vienna supported the efforts of two former United Nations staff members to set up a German-language version of the CyberSchoolBus. The pilot project has human rights as its theme. UNIS Vienna established a link to the main English and German websites of CyberSchoolBus at UNIS's other language websites (Hungarian, Slovak, Slovenian) and draws attention to the German-language CyberSchoolBus during lectures to students.

94. UNRIC was also involved in the award of a Human Rights Prize for schools in Caen, France, and held a lecture in Spain on the Human Rights Council. At a debate organized by Human Rights Watch in Brussels, UNRIC provided a panellist to discuss the question "What is a Special Rapporteur?" and organized a briefing on human rights for the Togolese community. The Human Rights Council was also the main topic of an address by UNRIC to German civil servants in Berlin and at a lecture to German armed forces personnel in Bonn.

95. Along with other UNICs, UNRIC supported a two-month car trip through the Mediterranean region, during which the participants promoted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and human rights locally. UNRIC also co-organized a writing competition for Greek schoolchildren and conducted a radio interview on the event.
96. The informal group “Friends of Human Rights in Europe”, initiated by UNRIC and comprising representatives from the European Commission and the European Parliament as well as major NGOs, met on a regular basis.
97. Other examples of special initiatives relating to human rights in which UNICs were involved include exhibitions on human rights and film screenings. In January, UNIC Warsaw, in cooperation with Warner Bros. Poland and the World Food Programme (WFP), organized a special presentation of the film *Blood Diamond*. The premiere of the same film was also promoted by UNIC Panama City. UNIC Brazzaville screened the United Nations film titled *Indigenous Peoples and the UN* at a regional forum for indigenous people. On the occasion of the International Day of the World’s Indigenous People in August, UNIC Manila organized a book launch as well as a two-day forum. UNIC Nairobi organized a commemoration of the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda with representatives of the diplomatic community and religious leaders, while UNIC Dakar mounted a photo exhibit on the genocide over a two-week period. UNIC Tokyo co-organized the exhibit entitled “The face of human rights” at the UN Gallery in April.
98. UNIC representatives regularly gave briefings to visitors and participated as speakers in panel discussions, workshops and conferences. During the reporting period, some examples of human rights-related briefings or presentations include: a keynote address on “Bringing the world together” at the University of Canberra to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNIC Canberra); a public lecture at the University of Dar es Salaam, entitled “The 1994 Rwanda genocide: What lessons for humanity?”, to mark the International Day of Reflection of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda (UNIC Dar es Salaam); lectures on human rights at local schools (UNIC Accra, UNIC Lome and UNIC Panama City); university lectures (UNIC Tehran and UNIC Bucharest); an open-door session for a representative group of university students on the “United Nations and the core universal human rights treaties” (UNIC Moscow); a lecture on the “United Nations and human rights” and the delivery of a speech at a seminar on human rights in Argentina (UNIC Buenos Aires); a seminar on issues related to human rights of the elderly (UNIC New Delhi); conferences on “The impact of the transatlantic slave trade on Africa” and on the Human Rights Council (UNIC Ouagadougou); a briefing programme on the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for indigenous women (UNIS Bangkok).

## 5. Special information activities

99. In observance of World Press Freedom Day on 3 May, the statements by the Secretary-General and by the Director-General of UNESCO were highlighted in Geneva and the Director of UNIS Geneva participated in a debate in Brussels organized by the Subcommittee on Human Rights at the European Parliament.
100. UNIS Geneva contributed to the organization of a closing event of the Geneva International Film Festival on Human Rights on 17 March, at which cartoonists from different

parts of the world - the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, the Russian Federation, Algeria, Israel, France and Switzerland - explained to a large audience the role of political press drawings and the importance of freedom of expression.

101. UNIS Vienna organized a ceremony on the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust that was attended by over 300 persons and widely covered by media. The Secretary-General's message was translated into Czech, Polish and Romanian. The exhibition "No child's play" produced by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, was inaugurated during the ceremony. A version in German was especially produced for the UNIS Vienna event, and will be on display in Vienna in 2009.

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