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

World Programme for Human Rights Education

Report of the High Commissioner*

* Late submission.

1. On 14 July 2005, in its resolution 59/113 B, the General Assembly adopted the plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. The first phase of the World Programme focused on the infusion of human rights education into the primary and secondary school systems. Drawing from the principles and frameworks set by international human rights instruments, the plan of action highlights that human rights education in the school system involves not only the integration of human rights in all educational processes and tools (curricula, textbooks, materials, methods and training) but also the practice of human rights in the education system. The main responsibility for implementing the plan rests with the ministry of education or equivalent institution in each country, which should assign or strengthen a department or unit responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of a related national strategy, in close cooperation with all relevant actors. Member States are also encouraged to identify and support a resource centre for collecting and disseminating related initiatives and information, such as good practices, educational materials and events. On 28 September 2007, in its resolution 6/24, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the first phase of the World Programme for two more years, until December 2009.
2. The previous report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the World Programme and related activities undertaken by her Office (A/HRC/4/85) was dated 30 January 2007. The present report, submitted in accordance with Council resolution 6/24, provides additional information on activities held from January 2007 to June 2008.
3. During the period under consideration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) focused on promoting and assisting the national implementation of the plan of action, as well as on coordinating related international efforts.
4. OHCHR has devoted a section of its website to the World Programme and regularly replies to related queries. To facilitate information-sharing, OHCHR is making available information on national initiatives undertaken in connection with the plan of action through the World Programme web page www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/national-initiatives.htm, which also contains the text of national human rights education plans as well as excerpts on human rights education from overall human rights plans and information on national focal points for the World Programme.
5. OHCHR has supported the collection and documentation of good practices on human rights education in the school system at the regional level. Together with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Council of Europe, OHCHR is developing a compendium of good practices from Central Asia, Europe and North America, which will be launched on 10 December 2008, as a contribution to the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As part of this initiative, a regional meeting on the World Programme was organized in Strasbourg (France) on 5 and 6 November 2007, gathering more than 100 participants from ministries of education, teacher training institutions, non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and other relevant actors from the region. OHCHR is also sponsoring the collection of good practices in Asia, both locally (Tamil Nadu/India) and subregionally (South-East Asia).

6. OHCHR has continued to liaise with a wide range of actors, including Governments, civil society actors, United Nations entities and other intergovernmental organizations, through the provision of advice and information, participation in related events, distribution of OHCHR publications and expression of support through messages from the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner.

7. OHCHR has also continued to ensure the secretariat of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System, in accordance with the World Programme plan of action. The Committee is composed of 12 United Nations entities (the International Labour Organization, OHCHR, the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Group, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Public Information, the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the World Bank) and aims to facilitate coordinated United Nations support for the national integration of human rights education in primary and secondary school systems.¹

8. During the period under consideration, the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System met four times: on 20 and 21 February 2007, in Geneva; on 1 June 2007, in Geneva; on 17 and 18 January 2008, in Paris; and on 13 June 2008, in Geneva. It undertook various initiatives to raise awareness on the plan of action and to promote inter-agency cooperation at the national level.

9. In December 2007, the High Commissioner addressed correspondence to all ministers of education on behalf of the Coordinating Committee, encouraging national implementation of the plan of action and requesting further information on national progress. As at 30 June 2008, OHCHR had received responses from 36 countries (see annex). Letters were also addressed to United Nations Resident Coordinators to solicit the support of United Nations country teams for the national implementation of the plan of action.

10. The Coordinating Committee organized events during the fourth and sixth sessions of the Council (on 21 and 22 March 2007, and 24 and 25 September 2007), to disseminate information about the plan of action and to share examples of related initiatives undertaken by national authorities with the support of the United Nations. On the occasion of the World Day against Child Labour on 12 June 2008, the Coordinating Committee released a joint statement encouraging Member States "to ensure education, and in particular human rights education, as a concrete response to child labour".

¹ More information is available at the address www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/UN-inter-agency.htm.

11. OHCHR has continued to contribute to the implementation of the World Programme and its plan of action by conducting the following activities:²

(a) Facilitating information-sharing and networking among all actors through the ongoing development of the OHCHR Database on Human Rights Education and Training, which provides information on relevant institutions, programmes and materials (accessible at <http://hre.ohchr.org/hret>), and of the Resource Collection on Human Rights Education and Training, a specialized section of the OHCHR library that includes a variety of human rights education and training materials. OHCHR continues to respond on a daily basis to related queries from governmental and non-governmental actors, including by providing human rights education and training reference services and advice. OHCHR has also supported international and regional human rights education activities organized by other actors through grants, publications, participation of specialized staff and other initiatives, as appropriate;

(b) Supporting national capacities for human rights education and training through projects undertaken within the framework of the OHCHR programme of technical cooperation in the field of human rights.³ OHCHR has continued to devote enhanced efforts to strengthening national capacities for human rights training of military, police and other staff deployed to peacekeeping operations;

(c) Supporting grass-roots human rights education initiatives through the Assisting Communities Together Project, a joint initiative of OHCHR and UNDP. The project provides small grants to national and local non-governmental organizations for community-based human rights education and training projects. In the fifth phase (2005-2008), which focused on supporting activities within the school system, OHCHR supported 155 projects in 44 countries.⁴ In May 2008, UNDP and OHCHR launched the sixth phase (2008-2009) of the Project, in which the participation of 33 countries is envisaged. To create synergy with the first phase of the World Programme, the sixth phase of the Project will focus on supporting projects contributing to the

² More information on all these activities is available on the address www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/index.htm.

³ More information on this programme is available on the address www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/Pages/TechnicalCooperationIndex.aspx.

⁴ In Africa (Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda); in the Arab region (Iraq, Palestinian Authority); in the Asia-Pacific group (Afghanistan, Cook Islands, Indonesia, Mongolia, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu); in Europe and Central Asia (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine); and in Latin America and the Caribbean (Belize, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uruguay).

integration of human rights education in primary and secondary school systems and to the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;⁵

(d) Developing and disseminating a selected number of human rights training and education materials. In particular, OHCHR is developing methodological tools to support the integration of human rights education in the school system, including a self-assessment tool for Governments and a kit to assist evaluation of the impact of human rights education activities;⁶

(e) Globally disseminating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. OHCHR continues to maintain and develop a web page on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (available at the address www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/udhr.htm). The web page comprises many resources on the Universal Declaration, including translations into more than 330 national and local languages. OHCHR also maintains a Universal Declaration of Human Rights collection, which includes more than 300 printed and multimedia materials, as well as a broad array of commemorative items, a selection of which is permanently displayed on the ground floor of OHCHR headquarters in Geneva.

⁵ The Assisting Communities Together Project is available at the address www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/act.htm.

⁶ More information on OHCHR publications, including relevant electronic versions, is available at the address www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/Publications.aspx.

Annex

**LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO THE LETTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS
INTER-AGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM
(as at 30 June 2008)**

Algeria
Angola
Armenia
Australia
Belarus
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria
Burundi
Cameroon
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Ecuador
Estonia
France
Iceland
Japan
Latvia
Lesotho
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Mexico
Moldova
Mozambique
Netherlands
Poland
Saudi Arabia
Serbia
Singapore
Slovakia
Slovenia
Sweden
Syrian Arab Republic
Turkey
Uzbekistan
