



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

**Open-ended Working Group on the draft United Nations  
declaration on human rights education and training**

**First session**

Geneva, 10–14 January 2011

Agenda item 5

**Adoption of the report**

## **Report of the Open-ended Working Group on the draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training (Geneva, 10-14 January 2011)**

*Chairperson-Rapporteur: Jürg Lauber (Switzerland)*

### *Summary*

In its resolution 13/15, the Human Rights Council decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group with the mandate of negotiating, finalizing and submitting to the Council a draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training on the basis of the draft submitted by the Advisory Committee. During its meeting in Geneva from 10 to 14 January 2011, the Working Group finalized, adopted and submitted to the Council a draft declaration (A/HRC/WG.9/1/2).

## Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction.....	1–4	3
II. Organization of the session .....	5–14	3
III. Adoption of the draft declaration .....	15–21	4
IV. Adoption of the report.....	22–23	5
Annex		
Agenda .....		6

## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 13/15 entitled “United Nations declaration on human rights education and training”, the Human Rights Council established an open-ended intergovernmental working group with the mandate of negotiating, finalizing and submitting to the Council a draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training on the basis of the draft submitted by the Advisory Committee in January 2010 (recommendation 4/2, annex). It decided that the working group would meet for a maximum of five working days before the Council’s sixteenth session.
2. In 2010, the cross-regional intergovernmental Platform for Human Rights Education and Training, composed of Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland, and which is sponsoring the declaration initiative before the Human Rights Council, held open-ended informal consultations on 24 June, 3 September and 14 December 2010 on the text submitted by the Advisory Committee and subsequently revised by the Platform.
3. The Working Group accordingly convened in Geneva from 10 to 14 January 2011.
4. The Working Group had before it the proposed draft declaration on human rights education and training as prepared by the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training (A/HRC/WG.9/1/CRP.1).

## II. Organization of the session

5. The session of the Working Group was opened on 10 January 2011 by the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.
6. Subsequently, the Working Group elected Jürg Lauber (Switzerland) as its Chairperson-Rapporteur, upon nomination by the delegation of Morocco on behalf of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training. After his election, the Chairperson made an opening statement and then gave the floor to the Rapporteur of the drafting group of the Advisory Committee, Professor Emmanuel Decaux, for general remarks. The Working Group then adopted its agenda (A/HRC/WG.9/1/1, see annex).
7. The floor was thereafter open for general statements. Morocco, on behalf of the Platform, noted that the revised text contained in A/HRC/WG.9/1/CRP.1 reflected most of the comments made by delegations during the three informal consultations convened by the Platform. It also noted that, on the basis of the draft declaration developed by the Advisory Committee, the current draft had been shortened and streamlined. Morocco emphasized the need to strive for consensus and called for engagement by all with a view to achieving a text with clear added value.
8. Norway expressed its appreciation for the efforts made to shorten and streamline the draft text. It also expressed its support for the adoption of a draft declaration, which would give more visibility to the issue.
9. The Chairperson then closed the opening plenary session. From 10 to 14 January, the Working Group continued in an informal consultation setting.
10. On 10 January, the Working Group proceeded with a first paragraph-by-paragraph reading of the whole proposed draft declaration contained in document A/HRC/WG.9/1/CRP.1, with a view to facilitate discussions on the draft text in a more conducive format.

11. On 11 January, upon reconvening the Working Group, the Chairperson assigned facilitators, members of the Platform, to deal with different parts of the document as follows: the Philippines (preambular part), Switzerland (arts. 2-6), Italy and Slovenia (arts. 1, 7 and 8) and Morocco (arts. 9-15). For the rest of the day, the delegates of the above-mentioned Platform members held subsequent consultation meetings on the parts of the text assigned to them, following the sequence in the text, while the others were in private meetings discussing and entering some of the comments to their respective parts, which they presented subsequently in an informal plenary session. In this way, the text was reviewed once again in its entirety. On the basis of comments received from delegations, the Platform prepared a revised draft declaration text, which the Secretariat circulated to all Permanent Missions as document A/HRC/WG.9/1/CRP.1/Rev.1.

12. On 12 January, the Working Group reconvened in an informal plenary session, reading the revised version of the draft text. During the day, certain articles were subject of separate informal consultations among interested Governments and other smaller group discussions, assigned again to facilitators. Most of the draft text was agreed, with small amendments to the text circulated in the morning.

13. On 13 January, informal consultations among interested Governments on articles 1 and 7 continued in the morning. Subsequently, in a resumed informal plenary session, Marianne Haugaard of the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) presented information to delegations, upon their request, on existing voluntary funds managed by OHCHR, with a view to assist the Working Group in finalizing a provision concerning funding for human rights education and training initiatives. In the meantime, the text provisionally agreed upon was made available to delegations. The facilitators appointed by the Chairperson the previous day to seek consensus on particular wording reported back to the plenary on the results of their consultations, and brief discussions ensued. In the afternoon, on the basis of discussions in the Working Group, a consolidated draft text was prepared, which the Secretariat circulated to all Permanent Missions as document A/HRC/WG.9/1/CRP.1/Rev.2.

14. On 14 January, informal consultations continued in the morning among interested Governments on articles 1 and 7 with a view to find compromise wording. The informal plenary session resumed in the afternoon, when the Chairperson presented a revised version of article 1. He also highlighted minor changes to articles 5, 7 and 10, and opened the floor for discussion, during which the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Algeria, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Switzerland and Norway took the floor.

### **III. Adoption of the draft declaration**

15. The Working Group reconvened in a formal plenary session in the afternoon of 14 January 2011. The Chairperson thanked the Platform for its efforts to accommodate concerns of delegations, and emphasized his appreciation for the excellent spirit, cordiality and patience displayed by all during the week. He expressed his understanding that the latest version of the draft, with amendments read out earlier, was acceptable.

16. At the same meeting, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 13/15, the Working Group adopted and submitted to the Council the draft declaration (A/HRC/WG.9/1/2).

17. Prior to the adoption of the draft declaration, the delegations of the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, Algeria and Norway made statements.

18. The United Kingdom reserved its position on the new article 1.1 and also on article 7.1.

19. The Russian Federation stated that it could not join with the approval of articles 1.1 and 1.2 in the present form. It expressed its hope that, before the draft declaration was submitted to the Human Rights Council for its consideration, additional consultations would be held on the above-mentioned paragraphs of article 1. It also requested that its statement be recorded in the report of the meeting.

20. The delegation of Algeria stated that it would like to have a chance to confirm its position with national authorities in the capital concerning article 1.1.

21. The delegation of Norway requested that it be reflected in the report of the meeting that Norway did not consider it necessary to include the word “universal” before “human rights” in article 4 (a) and that, in its view, this did not change or alter the meaning of the paragraph.

#### **IV. Adoption of the report**

22. The Working Group adopted its report ad referendum on 14 January 2011.

23. At the close of the meeting, the Chairperson and a representative of OHCHR made their concluding remarks, expressing satisfaction at the work accomplished towards a new international instrument which would constitute an important reference for the international community in the area of human rights education and training. The United States of America expressed its thanks to the Platform members and other delegations, and particularly to the Chairperson for his leadership.

## **Annex**

### **Agenda**

1. Opening of the session.
  2. Election of the Chairperson-Rapporteur.
  3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
  4. Discussion on the draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training.
  5. Adoption of the report.
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