



CONCEPT NOTE

Expert workshop The right of peoples to peace Geneva – Switzerland, December 2009

Introduction

1. On 12 June 2009, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution A/HRC/11/4¹ entitled “Promotion of the rights of peoples to peace”. Paragraph 12 of the Resolution requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to convene, before February 2010, and taking into account previous practices, a workshop on the right of peoples to peace, with the participation of experts from all regions of the world, in order to: (a) Further clarify the content and scope of this right; (b) Propose measures that raise awareness of the importance of realizing this right; (c) Suggest concrete actions to mobilize States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the promotion of the right of peoples to peace. Paragraph 13 of the Resolution requests the High Commissioner to report on the outcome of the workshop to the Council at its fourteenth session.

Background

2. During its 39th session, the General Assembly considered the item entitled “Right of peoples to peace”. In resolution 39/11 of 12 November 1984,² the General Assembly considered that a proclamation of the right of peoples to peace would contribute to the efforts aimed at the strengthening of international peace and security. It further adopted the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, which proclaimed “*that the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace*”. It also declared “*that the preservation of the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each State*”.

¹ The resolution was adopted by a recorded vote of 32 to 13, with 1 abstention.

² The resolution was adopted by a recorded vote of 92 to 0, with 34 abstentions.

3. In resolutions A/RES/57/216³ of 27 February 2003, A/RES/60/163⁴ of 2 March 2006, and A/RES/63/189⁵ of 18 March 2009, the General Assembly solemnly declared “that the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace and that the preservation and promotion of peace constitutes a fundamental obligation of each State”. Furthermore, the General Assembly, in resolution A/RES/60/163 stressed “that peace is a vital requirement for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all”.
4. The Commission on Human Rights, for its part, reaffirmed in resolutions 2001/69⁶ and 2002/71⁷ “*the solemn proclamation that the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace.*” Furthermore, the Commission declared “*that the preservation of the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each State.*”
5. Furthermore, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights adopted resolutions 1996/16 of 29 August 1996 and 1997/36 of 28 August 1997 of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, entitled “International peace and security as an essential condition for the enjoyment of human rights, above all the right to life”.
6. The Human Rights Council, in resolutions 8/9⁸ of 12 June 2008 and 11/4 of 12 June 2009 affirmed that “*human rights include social, economic and cultural rights and the right to peace, a healthy environment and development*”. It further reaffirmed “*that the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace*” and that “*the preservation of the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of all States*” and “*stresses the importance of peace for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all*”.

The Expert Workshop

7. Pursuant to the Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/11/4, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) intends to organize a two-day expert

³ Adopted by a recorded vote of 116 votes to 53, with 14 abstentions.

⁴ Adopted by a recorded vote of 116 votes to 53, with 8 abstentions.

⁵ Adopted by a recorded vote of 124 votes to 55, with 7 abstentions.

⁶ Adopted by a roll-call vote of 29 votes to 16, with 7 abstentions.

⁷ Adopted by a recorded vote of 33 votes to 15, with 5 abstentions.

workshop on the right of peoples to peace. The workshop will take place in Geneva on 15-16 December 2009.

8. OHCHR, using existing resources, will invite relevant experts from all regions of the world to share their views and experiences on the subject-matter of the workshop. It will be open to States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
9. The expert workshop will include an opening session and substantive sessions as required. The substantive sessions will be structured around three thematic issues, namely:
 - (a) Content and scope of the right of peoples to peace, taking into account the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights, and the Human Rights Council concerning the right of peoples to peace;
 - (b) Awareness-raising, namely identifying measures to raise public awareness at the national and international level of the importance of realizing this right;
 - (c) Promotion, in particular identifying concrete actions to mobilize States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the promotion of the right of peoples to peace.

Outcome

10. As requested by the Human Rights Council, the High Commissioner for Human Rights will submit a report on the outcome of the consultation, in the form of a summary of discussions, to the Council at its 14th session.

⁸ The resolution was adopted by a recorded vote of 32 to 13, with 2 abstentions.