



ACTIVITY REPORT 2008

(For submission to the CONGO Board Meeting in December 2008)

NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education & Learning

Of the Special Committee of NGOs on Human Rights of CONGO

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Central Facilitating Organisations:

- Soka Gakkai International (SGI)
- Pax Romana
- Organisation internationale pour le droit à l'éducation et la liberté d'enseignement (OIDEI)

OBJECTIVE

The basic objective of the NGO WG on HREL is to ensure the participation of NGOs in the processes of global policy-making on human rights education and learning in relation to the UN institutions, principally the Human Rights Council (HRC) and its subsidiary bodies.

Activities include: NGO networking, information sharing, and coordination; Advocacy; Transmission of information, proposals and experiences of NGOs to the UN bodies; Consultation with HRC member state(s) on relevant resolution(s); NGO joint statement(s); and, Working on the right to education in connection with human rights education and learning. Other issues on human rights, including women, children, indigenous peoples, minorities, etc are all within the cross-sectoral range of work in the main context of the work on HREL.

STRUCTURE

The NGO WG on HREL is linked with the Special Committee of NGOs on Human Rights in Geneva.

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NGO NETWORKING

Currently, some 40 NGOs (53 representatives) are on the mailing list of the NGO WG members. NGOs outside Geneva have also been on the information-sharing mailing list, including regional and international networks on human rights education.

CONSULTATION WITH OHCHR & GOVERNMENT

Regular participants for consultation include representatives from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Methodology, Education and Training Unit. Consultation with governments' delegates particularly of the Informal Platform for Human Rights Education and Training in the UN HRC, Costa Rica, Italy, Switzerland and Morocco, is part of the activity. The NGO WG is also in cooperative relationship with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education for mutual support and consultation.

ACTIVITY IN 2008

Regular meetings: 6 regular meetings (14th-19th) were held for strategy-building, networking, action plans, reporting and information sharing.

(1) UN Human Rights Council

Joint NGO oral statements: Through the network of the NGO WG, three joint NGO oral statements were produced and presented at the plenary sessions of the UN HRC - at the 8th session in June, on the NGO support to extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, co-signed by 12 organisations; and at the 9th session in September, on the World Programme for Human Rights Education, co-signed by 15 organisations and on the draft UN declaration on human rights education and training, co-signed by 13 organisations.

Side-Event: At the 7th session in March, the NGO WG was invited by the four governments of the Informal Platform for Human Rights Education and Training for NGOs involvement in discussion at their side event that was aimed to keep up human rights education and training on the international agenda. The speakers included the Chair of the NGO WG to make an NGO presentation on the role of NGOs in the global policy-making process for human rights education and the overview of the progress made over the last few years.

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(2) Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council (CAC)

Consultation with NGOs: At its first session in August, the CAC set in motion for the task of preparation of a draft UN declaration on human rights education and training. A drafting group within the CAC was set up. Several member organisations of the NGO WG made an oral intervention. The NGO WG Chair communicated with the CAC drafting group on the work of the NGO WG and requested them to hold consultation with NGOs for exchange of information and views. Accordingly, the CAC drafting group held consultation with NGOs twice during its 1st session. The NGO WG continues its efforts to take part in the ongoing process at the UN regarding the draft UN declaration on human rights education and training.

MID-TERM PLAN OF ACTION

Regarding the 10th session of the HRC in March 2009, the NGO WG is planning to organise a series of side events on human rights education and learning.

Currently, a possibility of organising by the end of 2010 an international conference on human rights education and learning is under consideration. The matter has been consulted to several NGO networks on human rights education, and the consultation is ongoing.
