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INPUT TO THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REGARDING THE THIRD PHASE OF THE UN WORLD PROGRAMME FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

1 BACKGROUND

The UN World Programme for Human Rights Education (hereinafter WPHRE) was approved by the UN General Assembly December 10th, 2004 and has included two phases. In Phase one (2005-2009) the main focus was on developing and strengthening human rights education in primary and secondary schools at a national level in member states. In phase two (2010-2014) the main focus has been human rights education for teachers, civil servants, law enforcement officials and the military. As the second phase is coming to its termination in less than two years, the national human rights institutions (hereinafter NHRIs) working with Human Rights Education (hereinafter HRE) were requested to provide the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (hereinafter OHCHR) with inputs regarding the next phase of the programme. This paper presents recommendations prepared by the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

2 DANISH INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, DENMARK'S NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTION

The Danish Institute for Human Rights, Denmark's National Human Rights Institution (hereinafter the Institute) is a national human rights institution accredited as status A by the ICC, and has been operating since 1987. Human Rights Education has always been included in the Institute's portfolio both nationally and internationally. For the past 25 years, the Institute has conducted a great number of HRE activities in Denmark, working primarily with school teachers and students as well as the Danish Police Academy, and internationally through facilitating learning processes for civil society, law enforcement, justice sector, universities, political and diplomatic environments.

In 2009, new Education Department was re-established at the Institute gathering all in-house expertise in the field of HRE. The Education Department is working on methodology and concept development within Human Rights Education, as well as monitoring and implementing national and international HRE activities.

In 2012, the Education Department published the "Human Rights Education Toolbox - a practitioner's guide to planning and managing

human rights education". The publication collects the Institute's experiences and in-depth knowledge of HRE and is designed to provide guidance and inspiration to those implementing HRE.

3 DANISH EXPERIENCE

In Denmark, the WPHRE seems to have had a minor impact on the educational system throughout the reporting period. National stakeholders primarily relate HRE efforts to the international aid programs supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and often do not consider HRE relevant for the national educational system. This is despite several concerns in this regard expressed by the international bodies (see for instance CRC/C/DNK/CO/3 23 November 2005; CRC/C/DNK/CO/4, 24 January 2011).

Based on meetings between the Institute and NGOs working with HRE and Citizenship Education as well as with the Ministry of Education, our midterm conclusion is that WPHRE has only led to minor discussions on HRE in the formal educational sector in Denmark. A few newspaper articles on the subject have been initiated by those NGOs who have made an effort to strengthen HRE in the formal education sector through training of and materials development for the teachers. This conclusion is substantiated by data collection for a HRE-mapping, which the institute initiated in 2012. The HRE-mapping is conducted in primary and lower-secondary education as well as in teacher training in Denmark and is expected to be finalized by May 2013. The aim of the mapping is to inform the government, local school politicians and the relevant civil society actors about the current needs as well as provide the Institute's recommendations to ensure human right education in the school system in the future.

4 SUGGESTIONS FOR THIRD PHASE OF THE UN WPHRE

Our point of departure for the following suggestions is that the first two phases of the WPHRE have not had the impact, we had hoped. HRE has neither been prioritised by the government nor other official stakeholders in Denmark including schools of education, (and seemingly this is the case also in a number of other countries) and the focus on and interest in the WPHRE has been rather weak. Our suggestions are consequently aimed at securing the value and quality of the previous phases and mapping lessons learned.

1. Interlink between formal, informal and non-formal HRE:

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, Article 3, p.2 states:

“Human rights education and training concerns all parts of society, at all levels (...) and all forms of education, training and learning, whether in a public or private, formal, informal or non-formal setting.”

It is our experience that although the past two phases of the WPHRE were dedicated to specific target groups within the formal education setting, it is still in- and non-formal education stakeholders who are implementing the main part of HRE activities. It seems therefore essential to explore interlinks between the formal, informal and non-formal education sectors, and analyse how they can complement and support each other. Such coherence and experience sharing may contribute to promoting and strengthening HRE.

In practice, we suggest to dedicate the next phase of the UN WPHRE to building bridges, exploring coherence and exchanging lessons learned between the formal education stakeholders and the in- and non-formal education stakeholders in the field of HRE. Such exchange can feed into an overview over HRE efforts in member states through mapping best practices and gaps. Moreover, the overview can lead to a more clear division of roles and responsibilities between formal, informal and non-formal education stakeholders, to stronger collaboration between partners and to a more holistic and coherent approach to HRE in each member state.

In compliance with Article 9 of the UN Declaration on HRE and Training, the dialogue can be facilitated by NHRIs in the countries where such institutions exist.

“States can promote the establishment, development and strengthening of effective and independent national human rights institutions (...) recognizing that national human rights institutions can play an important role, including, where necessary, a coordinating role, in promoting human rights education...”

Other actors can also be considered for the coordinating roles, including NGOs with relevant capacities and portfolio or academia representative. It is recommended to continue to enforce Article 9, and

promote establishment of NHRIs in the countries, where such institutions do not exist.

2. Enforcing the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

We also recommend considering promotion and further implementation of the UN Declaration on HRE and Training in the member states as a focus for the new phase of the UN WPHRE.

It is our experience that there is little knowledge of the Declaration among stakeholders, especially at the national governmental level. It is therefore important to focus on its content and implications for States.

Focusing on the UN Declaration on HRE and Training will allow for key stakeholders to continue their important HRE work initiated during the first two phases.

It is recommended that the OHCHR considers pushing for transforming the Declaration on HRE and Training into a legally binding covenant during the third phase of the WPHRE.