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2007 Minority Fellowship Programme

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has an annual fellowship programme for minority representatives as part of the office's capacity building initiatives. Through this programme, OHCHR aims to give persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities - particularly young minority women and men - an opportunity to gain knowledge on the UN system and mechanisms dealing with international human

rights in general and minority rights in particular. 21 minority representatives participated in the 2005 and 2006 fellowship programmes. Five persons were chosen for the 2007 fellowship programme from 19 March to 18 June 2007, and four have been able to continue with the programme. Their names are Favour Irabor from Nigeria, Phounsy Pasaveng from Sekong Province, Lao PDR, Asya Umarova from the Chechen Republic, the Russian Federation and Fakhteh Zamani from Canada concerned about the situation of Azerbaijani Iranians.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/minorities/fellowprog.htm>

Human face to human rights' work of Minority Fellows

In cooperation with a former fellow, Angel Getsov who acted as a resource person, and a local NGO "Roma Together", a community led training was organized in Polski Trambesh, Bulgaria, with funding from OHCHR. The outcome of this training was concrete. It led to the establishment of an advisory council on minorities issues to the local authority.

For more information see the human interest story at OHCHR's web page

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/hfhr/bulgaria.htm>

Independent Expert on Minority Issues

The Independent Expert on Minority Issues, Ms Gay McDougall, will present four reports

to the Human Rights Council on 20 March 2007. Ms McDougall's Annual Report has a particular focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), poverty and minorities. The Thematic report is a review of the MDG country reports and on the poverty reduction strategies. The other two reports will summarize the findings of her two country missions conducted in 2006 in Hungary (26 June-3 July) and in Ethiopia (28 November-12 December).

Two reports are already available at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/4session/documentation.htm>

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Working Group on Minorities

Please note that updated information regarding the Working Group on Minorities will be posted on the website as soon as possible.

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Informal Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UNDP consultation on parliamentarians and minorities issues

A consultation was held in Geneva on 19 and 20 March at the headquarters of the IPU. It was jointly organized by IPU and UNDP and brought together representatives of Parliaments, international organizations, NGOs and Academia. The recommendations from the meeting are meant to assist IPU and UNDP in planning data collection and advocacy work on minority representation, including a campaign using the 60th anniversary of the UDHR on 10 December 2008.

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UN Tools, including Commentary, Minority Profile and Matrix, Pamphlets on

We would like to draw your attention to the tool called Minority Profile and Matrix which has been prepared by the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit. This aims to review the

promotion and practical realization of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and to broaden understanding of minority rights and minority issues (see document attached to this letter). It can be used for trainings and so far it has been completed by former OHCHR minority fellows during their fellowship in Geneva and has been distributed in draft form to OHCHR country officers, thematic and treaty body mandates. It was produced as a document of the Working Group at its 12th session. The Minority Profile and Matrix may be found at the following web site page as UN Document, E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/2006/3.

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/minorities/group/main.htm>

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Informal Inter-agency meeting on minority

An informal inter-agency meeting took place in February 2007 and another will take place in June during a lunchtime meeting during the time of the Annual session of the Special Procedures mandate holders.

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To be held - First OHCHR training for staff in Asia on minority and indigenous issues and rights held in Nepal and first consultation with NHRC Nepal on minority issues.

More information will be provided on these training programmes in the next update.

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OHCHR Handbook for NGOs

OHCHR has developed a Handbook for NGOs which aims to provide the non-governmental organizations with a comprehensive and user-friendly guide to the work of OHCHR, including key information on human rights mechanisms, entry points for NGOs and

contact details with a view to assisting NGOs in identifying areas of possible cooperation and partnership with OHCHR; it also anticipates the changes of the current United Nations reform process. The Handbook is up to date as of June 2006, and is currently available electronically only, in English and Arabic. Efforts are underway to secure its translation in other UN languages in the next few months.

If you wish to download the Handbook, please visit:
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/about/ngohandbook.htm>

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Treaty Bodies and country reviews:

The Committee Against Torture will hold its 38th Session during 30 April - 18 May 2007 in Geneva. It is scheduled to review 7 States parties reports: *Italy, Ukraine, Denmark, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Poland and Japan*. More information at
http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cat/cat_s38.htm

The **Committee on Migrant Workers** will meet for its 6th Session during 23 to 27 April 2007 in Geneva and is scheduled to review *Egypt's* Initial Report and prepare a list of issues on the State party report on *Ecuador*. More information at
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cmw/cmws06.htm>

The **Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** will hold its 38th session at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 14 May to 1 June 2007. It is scheduled to review *Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arab Republic and Vanuatu*.

More information at
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/38sess.htm>

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child** will hold its next session from 21 May to 8 June 2007. The Committee will consider the following reports:

CRC: *Kazakhstan; Maldives; Slovakia; Uruguay*

CRC OPSC: *Bangladesh; Guatemala; Sudan; Ukraine*

CRC OPAC: *Guatemala; Monaco; Norway; Sweden*

All the reports are available on the Committee's webpage at:
http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/crc_s45.htm

The **Human Rights Committee** will hold its 90th Session from 9 to 27 July 2007 in Geneva. It is scheduled to consider the following reports of States parties to ICCPR: *Zambia, Sudan, Czech Republic and Grenada*. More information at
http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/hrc_s90.htm

The **Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination** will hold its 71st session from 30 July to 17 August in Geneva. It is scheduled to review the reports of the following States parties to ICERD: *Republic of Moldova, Republic of Indonesia, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Kyrgyzstan, Costa Rica, Mozambique and Democratic Republic of Congo*. More information at
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/cerds71.htm>

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