

**SIXTH MEETING OF
THE UNITED NATIONS INTER-AGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

SUMMARY REPORT

*OHCHR, Geneva
20 February 2009*

The sixth meeting of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System (UNIACC) was organized on 20 February 2009 at OHCHR Headquarters in Geneva. It gathered representatives from six UN system entities and affiliated organizations (ILO, UNESCO, OHCHR, UNRWA, UNHCR and UNFPA). The meeting also benefited from the participation of the representative of the Council of Europe as an observer.

The aims of the meeting were to (a) examine how to further promote human rights education in schools for the last year of the first phase of the World Programme; (b) discuss possible contribution to the Durban Review Conference; (c) discuss the development of the tool for UN Country Teams (UNCTs); (d) further examine how to track progress on the national implementation of the Plan of Action; (e) explore how to initiate the evaluation of the first phase of the World Programme.

The Committee suggested to further advocate the implementation of the Plan of Action for the last year by identifying international conferences/events during which the Plan of Action could be promoted. Celebrations such as the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 10th anniversary of the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour were cited among the entry points/avenues which could be used by the Committee to raise the issue of human rights education in schools.

Representatives of OHCHR informed of the forthcoming Durban Review Conference which will take place in Geneva from 20-24 April 2009 and which aims at evaluating progress towards the goals set by the World Conference against Racism held in 2001. During the Conference, exhibitions and side-events will be organized to discuss themes related to the issue of racial discrimination. The Committee agreed to organize a panel featuring good practices on human rights education in schools as a means of combating racial discrimination.

In order to further develop the tool for UNCTs (which aims at enhancing UNCTs' capacities to support the national integration of human rights education into the primary and secondary school systems), the Committee discussed how it can provide constructive input into the tool. In particular, it agreed to establish contacts with in-country focal points working on HRE in schools to introduce them to the project and invite them to submit their good practices in the context of the tool, i.e. on interagency cooperation or other UN support to national implementation of human rights

education in schools. The Committee also agreed to explore whether the UNCT tool could be endorsed as a joint publication by UNIACC's Committee Members. The Committee finally recommended developing in the future: a) a summarized version of the tool under the form of a leaflet for the use of Coordinating Staff; and b) a follow-up and dissemination strategy of the tool to ensure its application.

The Committee continued its discussion on the existing UN monitoring mechanisms which it could build upon to track progress on the national implementation of the Plan of Action. The Committee was informed that the reporting exercise of 'UNESCO's 1974 Recommendation'¹ was launched in November 2008, with a questionnaire to Member States containing clear indications on the submission of information on the integration of HRE in schools. This process emerged as one of the key mechanisms for tracking progress on the implementation of the Plan of Action.

As the first phase of the World Programme is in its last year, the Committee discussed the preparation of the final evaluation report of the implementation of the Plan of Action. The final evaluation report should be submitted to the General Assembly, based on the national evaluation reports provided by Member States to the Committee. To support Member States' efforts in the preparation of these national evaluation reports, the Committee decided to elaborate a questionnaire which will be sent to all Member States by October 2009.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Committee Members agreed that next meeting agenda would be mainly devoted to: a) the evaluation of the first phase of the World Programme, with the discussion and approval of the draft questionnaire to be sent to Member States; b) a presentation of OHCHR self-assessment tool for Governments; and c) the development of the UNCT tool.

Committee Members agreed to hold the seventh meeting on 15 May 2009.

¹ UNESCO's 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms