

independence of judges, lawyers and court officers; invited the High Commissioner for Human Rights to collaborate with the SR on the elaboration of a manual on the training of judges and lawyers in the field of human rights; encouraged governments to invite the SR to conduct in-country visits; and, extended the mandate of the SR for a further three years.

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INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Issues of concern to indigenous peoples were addressed by both the Commission on Human Rights and the SubCommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Commission on Human Rights

The 1997 session of the Commission considered three reports relevant to indigenous peoples: (1) a report of the Secretary-General on the question of a permanent UN forum for indigenous peoples (E/CN.4/1997/100); (2) a report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Coordinator for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (E/CN.4/1997/101); and, (3) a report by the Working Group on indigenous issues, related to a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples (E/CN.4/1997/102). The Commission, by consensus, then adopted three resolutions and two draft decisions related to indigenous issues.

Resolution on the Working Group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples

In the first resolution, on the Working Group (WG) of the Commission to elaborate a draft declaration (1997/31), the Commission, *inter alia*: recalled the 1994 General Assembly decision to consider a draft declaration with the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples; welcomed the progress made in the elaboration of a text; emphasized the important and special nature of the draft declaration as an instrument specifically for promoting the rights of indigenous peoples; welcomed the continuation and positive nature of the deliberations of the WG elaborating the text; welcomed ECOSOC's decision to approve the participation of organizations of indigenous peoples in the process; urged ECOSOC to approve all pending applications for participation from such groups as soon as possible; recommended that the WG meet for 10 working days prior to the 1998 session of Commission; encouraged indigenous organizations not already involved in the process but wishing to be so to apply for authorization; and, requested the WG to report to the 1998 session.

Resolution on the question of a permanent UN forum for indigenous peoples

The second resolution, on the question of a permanent forum (1997/30), *inter alia*: recalled the recommendation in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that a permanent forum for indigenous peoples be considered; recalled General Assembly resolution 50/157 recognizing that consideration of establishing a permanent forum is one of the important objectives of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People; noted the recommendation of the General Assembly that a second workshop on the possible establishment of a forum be considered; requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to convene a second

workshop prior to the 1997 session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations; requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to transmit the report of the workshop to the Working Group and invite the Group to express its views; requested the High Commissioner to submit the report, with comments arising from discussions of the Working Group, to the 1998 CHR session as well as to governments, relevant UN bodies and indigenous organizations for comment and to submit these comments to the 1998 session.

Resolution on the Working Group on indigenous populations and the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

The third resolution (1997/32) *inter alia*: noted that international standards must be developed on the basis of the diverse situations and aspirations of the world's indigenous peoples; affirmed recognition of the value and diversity of the cultures and forms of social organization of indigenous peoples; affirmed that development of indigenous peoples within their countries will contribute to socio-economic, cultural and environmental advancement of all countries of the world; recalled the goal of the International Decade to strengthen international cooperation for a solution to problems faced by indigenous peoples in areas such as human rights, environment, development, education and health.

I. Report of Working Group (WG): urged the WG to continue the comprehensive review of developments and the diverse situations and aspirations of the world's indigenous peoples; invited the WG to take into account the work of thematic rapporteurs, representatives, experts and working groups, and expert seminars as it pertains to the situation of indigenous peoples; invited the WG to continue consideration as to whether there are ways in which the contribution of expertise from indigenous peoples to the work of the Group might be enhanced; encouraged all initiatives by governments, indigenous organizations and NGOs to ensure full participation of indigenous peoples in activities related to the tasks of the WG; appealed to governments, organizations and individuals to consider contributing to the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.

II. International Decade: welcomed the affirmation by General Assembly that a major objective of the Decade is the adoption of a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and another important objective is consideration of the establishment of a permanent forum; recommended that the High Commissioner for Human Rights assume responsibility for coordination of the Decade; requested the High Commissioner to consider organizing a workshop for research and higher education institutions focussing on indigenous issues in education, with the aim of improving the exchange of information between such institutions and encouraging further cooperation in future; requested the High Commissioner to submit to the 1998 CHR session an updated report on activities related to the Decade; encouraged governments to support the Decade by establishing national committees or other mechanisms involving indigenous peoples to ensure that the objectives and activities of the Decade are well planned and implemented on the basis of full partnership with indigenous peoples; encouraged governments to seek the means to give indigenous peoples greater responsibility for their own affairs and effective voice on matters which affect