

ments and others to the following issues, with the context of implementation of the VDPA, *inter alia*:

- ♦ strengthening the implementation of human rights at the national level, including through the development of an international climate conducive to the promotion and protection of human rights and by addressing matters of concern for different countries and regions in a balanced and cooperative way;
- ♦ making the system of international human rights instruments more effective: ratification of treaties, withdrawal of reservations, development of indicators and benchmarks for marking progress in the realization of rights and increasing the impact of treaty-based bodies;
- ♦ giving effect to the principle that human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent, based on an understanding that human rights must be understood, promoted and implemented by the international community also from the perspectives of development, peace and security;
- ♦ creating a favourable environment for human rights and human development by the eradication of, *inter alia*, extreme poverty, famine and illiteracy;
- ♦ preventing human rights violations by adoption of a comprehensive approach, including both addressing the economic, social, ethnic and other root causes of conflict from a human rights perspective, maintenance of the rule of law and strengthening of democratic institutions, and making the eradication of racism and mass and gross human rights violations the ultimate end of efforts at international and national levels to ensure respect for human dignity;
- ♦ enhancing national capacities, including national human rights institutions, to effectively promote and protect human rights by establishing and/or strengthening national human rights structures and institutions, as well as utilizing existing programmes of technical assistance to support this process, noting the need for the international community to provide appropriate resources and ensure their optimal use at the national, regional and international levels;
- ♦ taking effective action to address the phenomena that render large groups of people vulnerable;
- ♦ ensuring the equal status and the implementation of human rights of women by, for example, mainstreaming human rights for women into all relevant policies and activities of governments;
- ♦ developing a culture of human rights through human rights education by making human rights education the core of educational systems in all countries worldwide; and

- ♦ strengthening the role of non-governmental organizations and civil society at large by, *inter alia*, ensuring greater participation of civil society in decision-making.

Resolution of the General Assembly

At its 1998 session the General Assembly considered the question of comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (A/53/625/Add.4). The GA adopted by consensus a resolution (A/C.3/53/L.65) in which it, *inter alia*: recalled resolution 48/121 of 20 December 1993, in which the GA endorsed the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights (1993); recalled paragraph 100 of part II of the VDPA concerning the five-year review of progress made in the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, including the need to pay special attention to assessing the progress towards the goal of universal ratification of international human rights treaties and protocols adopted within the framework of the United Nations; reaffirmed that human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings, that their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of governments, and that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated; stated that the VDPA has to be translated into effective action by states, and by the competent UN organs and organizations and other organizations concerned, including non-governmental organizations; welcomed the significant steps taken over the past five years at both national and international levels to implement the recommendations made by the World Conference on Human Rights; expressed deep concern about the wide gap that continues to exist between the promise of human rights and their promotion and protection worldwide, as well as denials and violations of human rights, including the right to development; reaffirmed the important role of non-governmental organizations in the promotion of all human rights and in humanitarian activities at the national, regional and international levels; noted the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of the VDPA; solemnly declared its commitment to the fulfilment of the VDPA; welcomed the agreed conclusions 1998/2 of the Economic and Social Council on the coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the VDPA and called for their full implementation; reaffirmed that the VDPA continues to constitute a solid foundation for further action and initiatives by states, the UN and other relevant intergovernmental bodies and organizations, as well as concerned national institutions and non-governmental organizations; called upon all states to take further action with a view to the full realization of all human rights for all in the light of the recommendations of the World Conference; and decided to continue consideration of this question at its 1999 session.