

9th session of IGWG

First draft of conclusions and recommendations as of 26 October 2011

Item 6: Thematic discussion on the role of education in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

1. The Working Group emphasizes the importance of the DDPA as a valuable source for education and encourages Member States and other relevant stakeholders to include information about DDPA in educational materials and to disseminate them widely.
2. The Working Group calls on States to ensure equality and non-discrimination with regard to access to education and career development in the educational sector.
3. The Working Group encourages national, regional and local authorities to develop programmes for the promotion of tolerance and respect for diversity, with special emphasis on children.
4. The Working Group welcomes the positive contribution made by the new information and communications technologies, including the Internet, in combating racism through rapid and wide-reaching communication and encourages all stakeholders, including Governments and OHCHR to use these technologies to combat manifestations of racism and xenophobia in cyber space.
5. The Working Group invites stakeholders, in particular Governments, to ensure cross-cultural interactions and genuine dialogue within educational initiatives. The Working Group encourages Governments to develop creative educational tools, including through the usage of Internet, to promote appreciation of diversity among youth.
6. The Working Group emphasizes the important role of formal and non-formal education for deconstruction of prejudices, positive change of negative perceptions, enhanced understanding and social cohesion. To this end, the Working Group encourages States to implement educational activities at various levels and sectors to prevent and combat effectively racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
7. The Working Group notes the complex linkages between education, identity-building and outburst of conflicts. In this regard, the Working Group encourages Governments to ensure that textbooks and other educational materials reflect accurately historical facts, in particular with regard to trans-Atlantic slave trade, Holocaust and genocide, and do not incite to hatred.
8. The Working Group invites the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to assist stakeholders to provide human rights education or training with a strong anti-discrimination component for students in schools and universities, but also for journalists, judges, lawyers, police, border control, humanitarian workers, staff involved in peacekeeping and peace-building operations. The Working Group notes the importance of focusing on effective prevention of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance during such trainings, in accordance with the provisions of ICERD and DDPA.

Proposals received from the Russian Federation:

1. The Working Group recognizes the important role of education in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular in promoting the principles of tolerance and respect to ethnic, religious and cultural diversity and preventing the proliferation of extremist racist and xenophobic movements and propaganda, especially among the youth (Russian Federation).

2. The Working Group underlines that misusing the education in politicized purposes, in particular, through unilateral revision, manipulation, falsification or concealment of historical facts, teaching stereotypes, contribute to the increase of racism and xenophobia (Russian Federation).