HUMAN RIGHTS DAY PROGRAMME
10 DECEMBER 2010

10:00am – 12:30pm
ROOM XX, THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS ROOM
PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

Welcome from the Mayor of the City of Geneva, Ms. Sandrine Salerno

Keynote speech by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay

Musical performance by Mr. Nelson Ebo

Panel discussion moderated by Mr. Ahmad Fawzi

First responders

Questions-réponses avec le public

Musical performance by Mr. Nelson Ebo
Adala Abu Middain (Gaza) is the Chairperson of the Right to Live Society, an NGO she founded in 1992 to improve the lives of people with Down’s Syndrome and children with autism living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. For years, she has worked to raise awareness of the need for special attention to people with disabilities. The Right to Live Society cares for some 850 children.

Beatrice Achaleke (Austria) was the first black woman to stand for parliament in Austria in 2008. She is the President of the Black European Women’s Council, which aims to develop and strengthen strategic alliances to influence the European Union’s political agenda on issues affecting black European women, to empower them and increase their visibility in public life.

Dora Alonzo (Guatemala), at 18, is a member of the Parliament for Children and Adolescents, a Guatemalan national organization for Mayan, Xinca, Garifuna and Ladino children and youngsters. The Parliament focuses its work on the promotion of health, education, gender equality, respect for identity, and the prevention of sexual exploitation and child abuse. Alonzo is a member of the Mayan indigenous community which together with the Xinca and Garifuna make up more than 40 per cent of the country’s population.

Nurbek Toktakunov (Kyrgyzstan) is a lawyer. He is the head of the Precedent Partnership Group, an organization that focuses on civic education, access to information and budgetary transparency. Toktakunov assists non government organizations working to protect human rights. He works with prominent NGOs in Kyrgyzstan including Mental Health and Society, the Youth Human Rights Group, and the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society.

Otgonbaatar Tsedendemberel (Mongolia) is a lawyer and is the Advocacy Programme Manager of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Centre. He studied civil law at the University of Tokyo and says the experience of studying abroad and further travel afterwards widened his horizons and enabled him to become an internationally-minded person. When he returned to Ulaanbaatar, Tsedendemberel helped found the LGBT Centre. It is the first-ever human rights organization in Mongolia dedicated to promoting and protecting the human rights of the LGBT community.

Chaloka Beyani (Zambia) is the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons. He is a senior lecturer in International Law at the London School of Economics. Beyani has extensive experience in human rights, international criminal law, international humanitarian law, humanitarian assistance, migration, refugees and displaced persons. He was involved in drafting and negotiating the regional mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, as well as the African Union Convention on Internally Displaced Persons.

Roberto Garretón (Chile) is a member of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. He was a lawyer and human rights defender during the Pinochet regime. After the dictatorship’s collapse, he became Chile’s first ambassador to the UN from 1990-1994. Garretón subsequently held a mandate as UN Special Rapporteur on the Democratic Republic of Congo and in 2001, OHCHR Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean. Since 2006 he has been a member of the UN Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention.

Ana Peláez Narváez (Spain) is a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Peláez is the Director for International Relations of the Spanish National Organization of the Blind. She also represents the Spanish Committee of Representatives of People with Disabilities in the Council of the Royal Board on Disability chaired by Queen Sofía of Spain.

Nelson Ebo is an opera singer born in Angola during the civil war. He discovered opera at 13, listening to CDs at his parish in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Luanda. While still a teenager, he started to sing opera in local restaurants in order to supplement the family income. Following his participation in the human rights song contest organized by OHCHR and the Ministry of Justice, Ebo was awarded a scholarship to study music in Spain in 2001. He is currently enrolled at the Hartt School in Hartford, Connecticut, USA.

Ahmad Fawzi (Egypt) was Director of the UN News and Media Division based at UN Headquarters in New York. Over the past 15 years, his assignments as a UN spokesman have brought him face to face with the turbulence of political transitions in Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor and other global hotspots. He was head of the UN Information Centre in London for six years. Fawzi joined the UN after a career in broadcast journalism; working for Reuters Television, he covered the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and was based in London, Cairo, Prague and New York. He spent ten years as Press Secretary and Chef de Cabinet for Egypt’s former First Lady Jehan Sadat.