**Human Rights Council**

**High level Panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming**

*Friday 1 March 2013, 15:00-18:00, room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland*

**Concept note (27.02.2013)**

As part of its mandate established by General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Human Rights Council should play an important role in promoting the effective coordination and the mainstreaming of human rights within the UN system. In this context, the Council decided in the review outcome of its work and functioning (Council resolution 16/21) to “*hold a half-day panel discussion once a year to interact with heads of governing bodies and secretariats of United Nations agencies and funds within their respective mandates on specific human rights themes with the objective of promoting the mainstreaming of human rights throughout the United Nations system*”.

Accordingly, a high level panel discussion will be held on 1st March 2013, from 15:00 to 18:00. Following the 2012 high-level panel on mainstreaming of human rights which focused on development and cooperation at the national level, it is suggested that in 2013, the panel focuses on human rights and the post 2015 development agenda, with a particular focus on areas related to the right to education.

**Background**

Promoting the respect for all human rights is a fundamental purpose of the UN Charter. All UN agencies, organizations, funds and programmes have been contributing directly and indirectly towards the realization of human rights within the framework of their specific mandates. Indeed, as stated by UN Secretary General (SG) Ban Ki Moon, there is virtually no aspect of the UN work which does not have a human rights dimension.

Member States have strongly supported UN’s efforts of human rights mainstreaming at the 2005 World Summit and resolved to integrate the promotion and protection of human rights into national policies. At the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Summit, UN member States agreed that human rights are indispensable to achieving the MDGs and reiterated their commitment made in the 2000 Millennium Declaration to protect and promote human rights, gender equality, the rule of law and democracy, as interlinked, mutually reinforcing, universal and indivisible core values and principles of the UN. Furthermore at the 2012 Rio+20 Conference, Member States reaffirmed the importance of respect for all human rights.

As the 2015 MDGs deadline gets closer, the international community has mobilized in order to prepare the post-2015 development agenda and address the remaining challenges. Several initiatives have been taken to prepare the ground for that purpose. The SG has set up a UN Task Team (UNTT) – of which OHCHR is an active member, which identified human rights as one of three fundamental principles for the post-2015 agenda, in its June 2012 report. The SG has also appointed a High level Panel of Eminent Persons (HLP) on the post-2015 development agenda, who will submit a report in May 2013. An Open Ended Working Group (OWG)on sustainable development goals (SDGs) stemming from the Rio+20 summit was also established to deliver proposals on SDGs before September 2013. Both the HLP and the OWG will provide inputs to the General Assembly’s Special Event to be held at its 68th session in order to follow up on efforts made towards achieving the MDGs, and to discuss the post-2015 development agenda. The GA is expected to pass its first resolution on the development framework that should follow the MDGs.

In this context, the Human Rights Council should play a central role in promoting a human rights based approach to development. Indeed, human rights are a central feature of the framework for developing the post-2015 development agenda; while they can contribute to the realisation of post-2015 goals, the post-2015 agenda can help achieve the realisation of human rights.

The 2013 Council’s high level panel on human rights mainstreaming will therefore constitute a timely opportunity to provide substantive inputs to the work of the SG High-level Panel of Eminent Persons, reaffirming the importance of integrating human rights in the post-2015 development agenda, and in particular the right to education.

Indeed, the central role of the right to education - an overarching right, essential for the enjoyment of all other human rights- in accelerating progress toward MDGs is now increasingly acknowledged. The Ministerial declaration resulting from the High Level segment of the ECOSOC in July 2011 stresses “the need to promote the right to education and the achievement of the MDGs, in particular the education-related goals and the Education for All goals”. The Declaration also recognizes “the interlinkages between education and the advancement of all the other MDGs”. Resolution 20/12 adopted by the HRC in June 2012 also recognized “the role that the full realisation of the right to education plays in helping to achieve the MDGs”.

**Objectives of the panel**

* Provide substantive inputs to the work of the SG High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons and in particular reaffirm the importance of integrating human rights in the post-2015 development agenda, with a particular emphasis on the right to education.
* Contribute to the promotion of the mainstreaming of human rights in all development efforts undertaken in order to ensure that development is participatory, equitable, sustainable and accountable.
* Draw lessons from the human rights work undertaken to achieve the realization of the MDGs and discuss remaining challenges in this regard.
* Discuss how the integration of a human rights’ perspective can contribute to the realization of post 2015 goals and vice-versa.

**Modalities of the panel**

The high level panel will be held on 1st March 2013, from 15:00-18:00.

It will be chaired by the President of the Council and opened by the UN Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Panellists from various UN institutions will be invited to make short presentations.

Opening statements

* **Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,** UN Secretary-General
* **Mr. Luís Brites Pereira ,** Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal
* **Ms. Navanathem Pillay,** UNHigh Commissioner for Human Rights

Keynote speakers

* **H.H. Sheika Moza bint Nasser**, Consort of His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development and UNESCO’s Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education
* **Ms. Amina J. Mohammed**, Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning

Panellists:

* **Ms. Irina Bokova,** Director-General, UNESCO
* **Mr. Guy Ryder,** Director-General, ILO
* **Dr. Margaret Chan,** Director-General, WHO
* **Ms. Rebeca Grynspan,** Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator, UNDP
* **Ms. Yoka Brandt,** Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF