The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office in Geneva and has the honour to transmit the letter and questionnaire attached on norms and standards for quality of education, elaborated by the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Kishore Singh, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 10/23.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights would be grateful if this letter could be transmitted at your earliest convenience to the relevant department or agency, and if the submissions could be sent electronically to sreducation@ohchr.org no later than 10 January 2012. Kindly limit your responses to 2,500 words and attach annexes where necessary. Please also indicate if you have any objections with regard to your reply being posted on the OHCHR website.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office in Geneva the assurance of its highest consideration.

10 November 2011
QUESTIONNAIRE ON NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR QUALITY OF EDUCATION BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

I. Objectives and scope of this questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information from Governments for the preparation of a report by the Special Rapporteur on the right to education Mr. Kishore Singh. The report is due for submission to the UN Human Rights Council at its 19th session pursuant to resolutions 8/4 and 17/3.

In his first report (A/17/29) to the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur included among his initial priorities to study efforts to establish quality norms and standards for education. While many countries have succeeded in expanding enrollment rates at both primary and secondary levels of education, questions are raised about the quality of the education offered in rapidly expanded school systems. Deployment of qualified teachers is a major challenge. Establishing norms and standards for the quality of education and monitoring their enforcement are important steps to ensure that both public and private schools uniformly fulfill their role in the promotion of the right to education.

The current questionnaire is designed to collect information on national norms and standards for quality education. These might include laws, regulations and policies establishing minimal requirements with regard to issues such as school infrastructure, teacher-student ratios, training for teachers, teacher’s working conditions and the assessment of learning outcomes.

The questionnaire also aims to collect information on institutional mechanisms responsible for evaluating the quality of education. These might include inspectorates and oversight bodies, external evaluations as well as regular data collection process.

II. How to answer the questionnaire

If the information requested in the questionnaire has been provided by the Government in another context (e.g. in a report to one of the UN human rights treaty bodies) reference to the specific report or document should be provided. There is no need to repeat the information provided elsewhere.

Governments may wish to identify a focal point responsible for coordinating the response to the questionnaire, and make this focal point known to the office of the Special Rapporteur for further follow up.
III. Submission of responses

Due to the limited capacity for translation, we kindly request that you submit your answers, if possible, in a UN working language. Responses should be sent in hard copy or electronic format no later than 10 January 2011 to:

UN Special Rapporteur on right to education
UNOG – OHCHR
CH – 1211 Geneva 10
Telefax: 41 22 917 90 06
E-mail: sreduction@ohchr.org

IV. Questionnaire

1. Please list existing national laws, regulations and policies establishing norms and standards for quality of education in your country. Please also include any guidelines on the quality of education.

2. Please describe briefly applicable norms and standards and minimal requirements, especially with regard to the following:

   (Please specify if there are different norms for different types of education institutions including: (i) primary schools, (ii) secondary schools)

   a. School infra-structure
   b. Class size and pupil-teacher ratio
   c. Teacher qualification
   d. Working conditions for teachers and their professional development
   e. School curricula content and pedagogical materials
   f. Teaching-learning processes
   g. School management, including student and parents participation
   h. Methods to evaluate student performance and assess learning outcomes

3. Please identify the institutional mechanisms in your country used to collect and process information and to assess adherence to norms and standards established to ensure quality of education.

   (Please specify if there are different mechanisms monitoring public or private institutions)

4. Please provide information on other relevant initiatives and developments aiming to promote quality in education.