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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
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Agenda item 5

HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS

**Australia*, Austria*, Belarus*, Belgium*, Bolivia, Cuba, Czech Republic*, Denmark*,
Finland*, France, Germany, Greece*, Hungary*, Ireland*, Italy, Liechtenstein*,
Maldives*, Poland*, Portugal*, Romania, San Marino*, Slovakia*, Slovenia, Spain*,
Sweden*, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and
Uruguay: draft resolution**

6/... Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

The Human Rights Council,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude and that slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms;

Recognising the various international instruments, including the 1926 Slavery Convention, the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery and the 1930 ILO Convention on Forced or Compulsory Labour, which prohibit all forms of slavery and call on Governments to eradicate such practices;

* Non members of the Human Rights Council.

Recalling that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action strongly condemned the fact that slavery and slavery-like practices still exist today in parts of the world and urged states to take immediate measures as a matter of priority to end such practices, which constitute flagrant violations of human rights;

Acknowledging that contemporary forms of slavery is a global issue which affects all continents and most countries of the world;

Deeply concerned that the minimum estimate of the number of people in slavery is over 12 million and that the problem appears to be increasing;

Recognising that broad international cooperation among states as well as between states and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations is essential for effectively countering contemporary forms of slavery;

Taking note with great appreciation of the work, reports and recommendations of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery since its establishment in 1975;

Considering the proposals to replace the UN Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery with a Special Rapporteur as a mechanism for better addressing the issue of contemporary forms of slavery within the UN system which were made in May 1998 in a review of the implementation of the conventions on slavery for the 24th session of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.2/1999/CRP.1); in the UN Office of the

High Commissioner for Human Rights' report *Abolishing Slavery and its Contemporary Forms*, 2002 (HR/PUB/02/4); and in the recommendations of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery itself at the 31st Session in 2006;

Recalling Human Rights Council decision 5/1 and its annex which stated that the Council would decide at its sixth session on the most appropriate mechanisms to continue the work of the Working Groups on Indigenous Populations, Contemporary Forms of Slavery, Minorities and the Social Forum, as well as Human Rights Council decision 5/2;

Bearing in mind that 2007 marks the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade;

Convinced that the mandates of existing Special Rapporteurs do not adequately cover all slavery practices, and that the issue of contemporary forms of slavery needs to be given greater prominence and priority within the UN system if these practices are to be eradicated once and for all;

1. Decides to appoint, for a three-year period, a Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, including its causes and its consequences, to replace the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery;

2. Decides that the Special Rapporteur shall examine and report on all contemporary forms of slavery and slavery-like practices, but in particular those defined in the 1926 Slavery Convention, and the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, as well as all other issues covered by the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. In the discharge of his/her mandate, the Special Rapporteur will:

(a) Promote the effective application of relevant international norms and standards on slavery;

(b) Request, receive and exchange information on contemporary forms of slavery from Governments, treaty bodies, special procedures, specialised agencies, intergovernmental organisations, and non-governmental organisations and other relevant sources, including on slavery practices and, as appropriate, and in line with the current practice, respond effectively to reliable information on possible human rights violations with a view to protecting the human rights of victims of slavery and preventing violations;

(c) Recommend actions and measures applicable at the national, regional and international levels to prevent and eliminate slavery practices wherever they occur, including remedies which address the causes and consequences of contemporary forms of slavery, such as poverty, discrimination and conflict as well as the existence of demand factors;

(d) focus principally on aspects of contemporary forms of slavery which are not covered by existing mandates of the Human Rights Council;

3. Requests the Special Rapporteur, in carrying out his/her mandate, to

(a) give careful consideration to specific issues within the scope of the mandate and to include examples of effective practices as well as relevant recommendations;

(b) take account of the gender and age dimensions of contemporary forms of slavery;

(c) focus principally on aspects of contemporary forms of slavery which are not covered by existing mandates of the Human Rights Council;

4. Calls upon all Governments to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of the tasks and duties mandated, to supply all necessary information requested by him/her and to give serious consideration to responding favorably to the Special Rapporteur's requests to visit their countries, so as to enable him/her to fulfil his/her mandate effectively.

5. Encourages the United Nations, including its specialised agencies, regional intergovernmental organisations, Governments, independent experts, interested institutions, and

non-governmental organisations to co-operate to the fullest extent possible with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of his/her mandate;

6. Requests the Special Rapporteur to co-operate fully and effectively with other existing human rights mechanisms and Treaty Bodies, including, but not limited to, the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in persons, especially in women and children, the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related intolerance, the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its causes and consequences and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict, as well as the Board of Trustees for the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, taking full account of their contribution while avoiding duplication of their work;

7. Requests the Special Rapporteur to submit annual reports on the activities of the mandate to the Human Rights Council together with recommendations on measures that should be taken to combat and eradicate contemporary forms of slavery and protect the human rights of victims of such practices;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to give the Special Rapporteur all necessary human and financial assistance for the effective fulfilment of his/her mandate.
