

## **Statement on the draft declaration on Human Rights Education and Training**

**Human Rights Council 13<sup>th</sup> session, 16 March 2010**

Mr President,

The International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) welcomes the draft declaration on human rights education and training. We commend the role played by the Advisory Committee in ensuring that a wide range of NGOs and civil society actors were consulted in drafting this new instrument. We recognise that the declaration does not establish a new right but reaffirms the right to human rights education as a component of the right to education. We support the intent of the declaration in delivering a clear message to the international community about the importance of human rights education and training as we believe that it is vital for preventing human rights violations and for ensuring the full realisation of human rights.

We welcome that the declaration recognises that human rights education is based on the principle of equality and contributes to the principle of non-discrimination. However, we note that the prohibited grounds for discrimination are not listed. We therefore encourage that the scope of this provision be broadened to clearly reflect the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

Noting that civil society actors and NGOs are not only recipients but also providers of human rights education, we encourage the inclusion of a specific focus on the right to provide human rights education and training. We welcome the inclusion of the role of human rights educators as human rights defenders. Whilst we welcome the inclusion of the responsibility of States to pay particular attention to protect the human rights of those responsible for human rights education and training, in their role as human rights defenders, we urge that the declaration uphold the higher level of protection for human rights defenders provided by the UN *Declaration on human rights defenders* and ask States to create an enabling environment for those involved in human rights education and training. We would also encourage the inclusion of a recognition of the specific rights underpinning the work of human rights defenders such as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and access to information when providing human rights education.

While we welcome the proposed creation of an open-ended working group to continue the drafting process, we would encourage a speedy completion of the drafting process. At the same time, it is important that the inclusive and transparent approach used by the Advisory Committee is continued.