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ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of human rights

Report of the High Commissioner

Introduction

1. In its resolution 2002/28, the Commission requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights “to integrate the theme of globalization and its impact on the enjoyment of human rights in the programmes of her Office concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights, and in this context, to convene intersessional workshops during the year to gather relevant data and opinions with a view to evaluating the varied impact of globalization on the enjoyment of human rights in various regions and parts of the world and to report to the Commission at its next session (para. 10)”.

2. The theme of globalization has been treated in two regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights over 2002 - in the Latin American and Caribbean region and the Asian-Pacific region. From 3 to 5 July 2002 in Lima, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights convened a subregional seminar for the Andean Community of Nations - Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela - on “Development, Human Rights and the Andean Community of Nations”. The seminar considered four themes: rights-based approaches to development, development, poverty reduction and non-discrimination, development and the rule of law and human rights and trade. OHCHR provided background papers on each of the themes. The material of particular reference to the theme of globalization concerned the section on “human rights and trade” which considered the subthemes of “the liberalization of agricultural trade and the right to food”, “the liberalization of trade in services and the right to health” and, finally, “issues arising in the negotiation of multilateral and regional trade agreements”. The seminar agreed on conclusions and recommendations, including a recommendation to the Andean Community of Nations to undertake an impact study of the effects of trade agreements on the right to food. The conclusions of the seminar are available on the OHCHR web site.

3. The theme of globalization has also been included in the Asia Pacific regional arrangement for the promotion and protection of human rights. The 2002-2004 Plan of Action for the Regional Technical Cooperation Programme in the Asian-Pacific Region, under the subtheme “Realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights”, includes a request to OHCHR to “organize a workshop involving national planning authorities, relevant ministries, national institutions and representatives of civil society at which information on national experiences can be exchanged with a view to compiling a reference of good practices of responses to globalization”. The workshop will be held during the second year of the Plan of Action.
