

ZÜRICH DECLARATION

International Experts gathered at the Seminar «From Minority Protection towards Managing Diversity», hosted by the Foundation Convivenza, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Institute of International Studies and the Europa Institut at the University of Zurich on 29 - 30 April 2010 in Zürich

Having discussed the impact of variously motivated migrations, enhanced by the processes of globalization, on the phenomenon of the so called new minorities present in many countries of the world and affecting millions of people, underscore that the respect for human dignity and international standards of human rights as proclaimed in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be the yardstick for addressing related problems,

Emphasize, recognizing the particular vulnerability of new minorities, the need for special measures of protection by Governments to ensure the enjoyment of human rights by the affected persons, as well as for the acceptance of newcomers as full-fledged members of the community by the civil society,

Also emphasize the responsibility of the persons belonging to new minorities to fulfill their duties vis-à-vis the host state and society, as well as to contribute to the well-being of the society as a whole,

Believe that such a double-track approach will benefit not only new minorities but also the rest of societies,

Stress the fundamental importance of international and regional standards of the protection of national minorities and of the rights of persons belonging to minorities as laid down, in particular, in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, the relevant provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as in the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;

Call on relevant stakeholders to accept and benefit from the concept developed by the Advisory Committee under the European Framework Convention on National Minorities according to which a measure by measure approach, applied with the emergence of new minorities, may help to ensure optimal protection commensurate with the evolving situation of a specific new minority; this approach leaves room for the necessary flexibility without questioning the essential principle of minority protection,

Also call for the development of coherent, based on international human rights standards, specific guidelines concerning the protection of the so called new minorities at the international, regional and national levels.

Request the organizers to approach the Swiss authorities and other stakeholders with a view to promoting the elaboration of the guidelines and presenting them to the international community.