PART I

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION
GROUP ACCOMMODATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION: MULTICULTURAL OR INTERCULTURAL – OR A COMBINATION OF THE TWO?

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1. Introduction

Göran Melander has been at the forefront of the promotion of human rights education, with a world-wide impact through the creation and subsequently his role in the development of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute. There is hardly any international human rights centre with a more global educational role, which has been achieved not only through the Master and other RWI courses in Lund but even more through the human rights training carried out in all corners of the world. It is a particular pleasure, therefore, to devote these pages as recognition of the momentous achievements of the Raoul Wallenberg institute initiated by Göran Melander.

I have chosen as a topic an issue with which I have been faced for a long time, but for which there are no simple answers. The choice of best policies regarding group accommodation in a functioning civil society has been a concern since the time I was preparing the study on ‘Possible ways and means of facilitating the peaceful and constructive solution to problems involving minorities’ for the United Nations.1 It has since surfaced on several occasions: While I was Chairman of the UN Working Group on Minorities (1995–2004) and again now when I am the President of the Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention on National Minorities (from 2004).

The Sub-Commission, whose full name then was ‘the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities’, decided in 1989 to engage in an examination of national experience regarding peaceful and constructive solutions of problems involving minorities, and appointed me to prepare a study on that matter.

I have elsewhere discussed the long and often futile efforts of the Sub-Commission to deal in a meaningful way with the minority issues2 but the developments around 1988–1989 made it essential to come to grips with the problems. In the enabling resolution, the Sub-Commission noted that that many of the situations brought to its attention involved questions of human rights problems related to assimilation, integration or autonomy of minorities. The Sub-Commission reaffirmed, in accordance with the Charter, the basic importance of sovereign

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1 UN Doc. (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/4) and additions 1-4.