



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Sixteenth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## **Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council\***

**16/3**

### **Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms through a better understanding of traditional values of humankind**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Guided by the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations,*

*Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,*

*Guided by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which reaffirms, inter alia, the solemn commitment of all States to fulfil their obligations to promote universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in accordance with the Charter, other instruments relating to human rights, and international law, and that the universal nature of these rights and freedoms is beyond question,*

*Reiterating that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis and that, while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, have the duty to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,*

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\* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its sixteenth session (A/HRC/16/2), chap. I.

*Reaffirming* that all cultures and civilizations in their traditions, customs, religions and beliefs share a common set of values that belong to humankind in its entirety, and that those values have made an important contribution to the development of human rights norms and standards,

*Stressing* that traditions shall not be invoked to justify harmful practices violating universal human rights norms and standards,

*Recalling* Human Rights Council resolution 12/21 of 2 October 2009,

1. *Welcomes* the holding on 4 October 2010 of a workshop for an exchange of views on how a better understanding of traditional values of humankind underpinning international human rights norms and standards can contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Also welcomes* the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights containing the summary of the discussions held at the said workshop;<sup>1</sup>

3. *Affirms* that dignity, freedom and responsibility are traditional values, shared by all humanity and embodied in universal rights instruments;

4. *Recognizes* that the better understanding and appreciation of these values contribute to promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms;

5. *Notes* the important role of family, community, society and educational institutions in upholding and transmitting these values, which contributes to promoting respect for human rights and increasing their acceptance at the grass roots, and calls upon all States to strengthen this role through appropriate positive measures;

6. *Requests* the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to prepare a study on how a better understanding and appreciation of traditional values of dignity, freedom and responsibility can contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, and to present that study to the Council before its twenty-first session;

7. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*45th meeting  
24 March 2011*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 24 to 14, with 7 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

*In favour:*

Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Djibouti, Ecuador, Ghana, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Thailand, Uganda, Zambia

*Against:*

Belgium, France, Hungary, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Uruguay]

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/16/37.