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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
Eleventh session  
Agenda item 3

**PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL,  
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS,  
INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT**

**Australia\*, Austria\*, Belgium\*, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil,  
Canada, Chile, Colombia\*, Congo\*, Croatia\*, Cyprus\*, Czech Republic\*,  
Dominican Republic\*, Ecuador\*, Estonia\*, Finland\*, France, Germany,  
Greece\*, Guatemala\*, Honduras\*, Ireland\*, Israel\*, Italy, Liechtenstein\*,  
Lithuania\*, Luxembourg\*, Maldives\*, Mali\*, Malta\*, Mexico, Monaco\*,  
Netherlands, New Zealand\*, Nicaragua, Norway\*, Panama\*, Peru\*,  
Poland\*, Portugal\*, Romania\*, Rwanda\*, Slovenia, Spain\*, Sri Lanka\*,  
Sweden\*, Switzerland, Thailand\*, Turkey\*, Ukraine, United Kingdom  
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America\*,  
Uruguay: draft resolution**

**11/... Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights**

*Reaffirming* the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and their Review Conferences and the targets and commitments regarding the reduction of maternal mortality and universal access to reproductive health, including those contained in the 2000 Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (**General** Assembly resolution 60/1),

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\* Non-member State of the Human Rights Council.

*Reaffirming also* the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the Goals ~~5, 3, 4 and 8~~ on improving maternal health, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child and infant mortality and the development of a global partnership,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling* the obligations of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families,

*Convinced* that increased political will and commitment, cooperation and technical assistance at the international and national levels are urgently required to reduce the unacceptably high global rate of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity,

*Recognizing* the leading role of the World Health Organization on maternal health and the work under the annual World Health Assembly agenda item on the monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals,

*Recognizing also* that the unacceptably high global rate of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity is a health, development and human rights challenge, and that a human rights analysis of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and the integration of a human rights perspective in international and national responses to maternal mortality and morbidity could contribute positively to the common goal of reducing this rate, with a view to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity,

*Welcoming* the ongoing efforts of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies to highlight **the human rights aspects of** preventable maternal mortality and morbidity ~~as a human rights issue~~, including those of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and of the special procedures, in particular

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<sup>1</sup> Millennium Development Goals 5, 3, 4 and 8 respectively.

in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (A/61/338),

*Recognizing* that the Council has a constructive role to play in raising awareness of the human rights aspects of the unacceptably high global rate of maternal mortality and morbidity and in supporting, promoting and enhancing existing national and international efforts to reduce this rate,

*Welcoming* its initiative to hold an interactive dialogue at its eighth regular session on maternal mortality and the human rights of women, on 5 June 2008,

*Recognizing* that preventable maternal mortality and morbidity affects women and their families in all regions and cultures, and that it is exacerbated by factors such as poverty, gender inequality, age and multiple forms of discrimination, as well as factors such as lack of access to adequate health facilities and technology, and lack of infrastructure,

1. *Expresses grave concern* at the unacceptably high global rate of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity, noting in this regard that the World Health Organization has assessed that over 1,500 women and girls die every day as a result of preventable complications occurring before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth, and that, globally, maternal mortality is the leading cause of death among women and of girls of reproductive age;

2. *Recognizes* that most instances of maternal mortality and morbidity are preventable, ~~inter alia, through family planning, skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care,~~ and that preventable maternal mortality and morbidity is a ~~multidimensional issue that also reflects a failure to promote and protect effectively~~ **the health, development and human rights challenge, which also requires the effective promotion and protection of the** human rights of women and girls, ~~including~~ **in particular** their rights to life, to be equal in dignity, to education, to be free to seek, receive and impart information, to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress, to freedom from discrimination, and to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health;

3. *Requests* all States to renew their political commitment to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity at the local, national, regional and international levels, and to

redouble their efforts to ensure the full and effective implementation of their human rights obligations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the International Conference for Population Development Programme of Action and their review conferences, and the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular ~~the~~ **the** Goals 5 and 3 on improving maternal health and promoting gender equality and empowering women<sup>2</sup>, including through the allocation of necessary domestic resources to health systems;

4. ~~Strongly encourages~~ **Requests** States to give renewed emphasis to maternal mortality and morbidity initiatives in their development partnerships and cooperation arrangements, including through honouring existing commitments and ~~pronouncing~~ **considering** new commitments, and the exchange of effective practices and technical assistance **to strengthen national capacities**, as well as to integrate a human rights perspective into such initiatives, addressing the impact that discrimination against women has on maternal mortality and morbidity;

5. *Encourages* States and other relevant stakeholders, including national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations, to give increased attention and resources to preventable maternal mortality and morbidity in their engagement with the United Nations human rights system, including with the human rights treaty bodies, the universal periodic review and special procedures;

6. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a thematic study on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, in **consultation with States**, ~~collaboration with~~ the World Health Organization, ~~and~~ the United Nations Population Fund, as well as ~~all relevant stakeholders, including~~ the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Bank, and **all other relevant stakeholders, and** requests that the thematic study include identification of the human rights dimensions of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity **in the existing international legal framework**; an overview of initiatives and activities within the United Nations system to address all causes of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity; identification of how the Council can add value to existing

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<sup>2</sup> Millennium Development Goals 5 and 3.

initiatives through a human rights analysis, **including efforts to** ~~identification of options for the Human Rights Council to support and increase existing efforts in the United Nations system and to~~ achieve the Millennium Development Goal on improving maternal health, and **recommended options** ~~and recommendations~~ for better addressing the human rights dimension of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity throughout the United Nations system;

7. *Decides* to ~~consider~~ **address** the thematic study requested in paragraph 6 above **within the programme of work** of its fourteenth session, **and to consider** ~~with a view to~~ taking further **possible** action on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights at that session, and invites the Office of the High Commissioner, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund and the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health to participate in an interactive dialogue on the study in the Council.

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