



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Twenty-first 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*

21/3.

**Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms through a better
understanding of traditional values of humankind: best practices**

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,*

*Reiterating the call of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to promote
respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms by teaching and education, and to
secure their universal and effective recognition and observance by progressive measures,
national and international,*

*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,*

* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its twenty-first session (A/HRC/21/2), chap. I.

economic and cultural systems, have the duty to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

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 practices contrary to human dignity and violating international human rights law,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the issue, in particular resolutions 12/21 of 2 October 2009 and 16/3 of 24 March 2011,

Noting the ongoing work of the Advisory Committee, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 16/3, on the preparation of 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,

1. *Reaffirms* that a better understanding and appreciation of traditional values shared by all humanity and embodied in universal human rights instruments contribute to promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms worldwide;

2. *Recalls* 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;

3. *Stresses* that human rights derive from the dignity and worth inherent in the human person;

4. *Notes* that traditional values, especially those shared by all humanity, can be practically applied in the promotion and protection of human rights and upholding human dignity, in particular in the process of human rights education;

5. *Takes note* of recommendation 9/4 of the Advisory Committee¹ on the progress of work on 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 decides to accord it additional time to finalize the study;

6. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to collect information from States Members of the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders on best practices in the application of traditional values while promoting and protecting human rights and upholding human dignity, and to submit a summary thereon to the Human Rights Council before its twenty-fourth session;

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

*36th meeting
27 September 2012*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 25 to 15, with 7 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Congo, Cuba,
Djibouti, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libya,

¹ See A/HRC/AC/9/6.

Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation,
Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Thailand, Uganda

Against:

Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy,
Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland,
United States of America

Abstaining:

Benin, Chile, Guatemala, Nigeria, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Uruguay]
