



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifteenth 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\*

**15/17**

### **Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights: follow-up to Council resolution 11/8**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Reaffirming* its resolution 11/8 of 17 June 2007 on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights,

*Reaffirming also* the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its review conferences, including the outcome document of the 15-year review of the Programme of Action contained in Commission on Population and Development resolution 2009/1 of 3 April 2009, Commission on the Status of Women resolution 54/5 of 12 March 2010, 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 of 8 September 2000) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005),

*Welcoming* the recent initiatives relevant to preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, including the Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, the Group of Eight Muskoka initiative on maternal, newborn and under-five child health, as well as the convening of the fifteenth ordinary session of the summit of the African Union in Kampala, from 19 to 27 July 2010, with the theme "Maternal, infant and child health and development in Africa", the launch of the African Union campaign in accelerated reduction of maternal mortality in Africa and the "Africa cares: no woman should die while giving life" campaign,

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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 fifteenth session (A/HRC/15/60), chap. I.

*Welcoming also* the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, held in New York from 20 to 22 September 2010, entitled “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”, and reaffirming in particular the deep concern expressed therein by the Assembly at the alarming global levels of maternal and child mortality and its grave concern at the slow progress being made on reducing maternal mortality and improving maternal and reproductive health, as well as the commitments to accelerate progress in order to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 on improving maternal health, and Millennium Development Goal 8 on a global partnership for development,

*Welcoming further* the information contained in the recent report entitled “Trends in maternal mortality”, released jointly by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Bank, showing a decrease in the number of women and girls dying annually owing to complications during pregnancy and childbirth, but expressing continued grave concern at the still unacceptably high global rate of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity,

*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,

*Welcoming* the holding of the interactive panel debate on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, on 14 June 2010 at its fourteenth session,

*Recognizing* that gender equality, the empowerment of women, women’s full enjoyment of all human rights and the eradication of poverty are essential to economic and social development, and that achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women is both a key development goal and an important means for achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals,

1. *Welcomes* the thematic study on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,<sup>1</sup> and calls upon all stakeholders to consider the findings and recommendations contained therein;

2. *Reaffirms* its commitment to strengthen national statistical systems, including for effectively monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, and reiterates the need to increase efforts in support of statistical capacity-building in developing countries;

3. *Calls upon* States to collect disaggregated data, including data disaggregated by age, rural/urban location, disability and other relevant criteria, in relation to maternal mortality and morbidity to ensure effective targeting of policies and programmes to address discrimination and the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized women and adolescent girls, and to permit effective monitoring of policies and programmes, including through the adoption of national-level targets and indicators reflecting the main underlying causes of maternal mortality and morbidity, and through the development of appropriate health programmes;

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/14/39.

4. *Encourages* States and other relevant stakeholders, including national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations, to give greater 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 the special procedures;

5. *Requests* all States to renew their political commitment to eliminate 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 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its review conferences, the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goals on improving maternal health and promoting gender equality and empowering women, including through the allocation of necessary domestic resources to health systems;

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

7. *Encourages* States and other relevant stakeholders, including national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations, to take action at all levels to address the interlinked root causes of maternal mortality and morbidity, such as poverty, malnutrition, harmful practices, lack of accessible and appropriate health-care services, information and education and gender inequality, and to pay particular attention to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls;

8. *Invites* the Office of the High Commissioner to engage in or, as appropriate, continue dialogue on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights with regional organizations, relevant United Nations agencies and organizations, including the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and other relevant special procedures, and the World Bank;

9. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to invite States and all other relevant stakeholders, including regional organizations, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, relevant special procedures, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Bank, civil society and national human rights institutions, to submit information to the Office of the High Commissioner on initiatives that exemplify good or effective practices in adopting a human rights-based approach to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity;

10. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare, on the basis of the above-mentioned submissions, an analytical compilation that includes an identification of how such initiatives embody a human rights-based approach, the elements of these initiatives that succeed in achieving reductions in maternal mortality and morbidity through a human rights-based approach, and ways in which similar initiatives could give effect more fully to a human rights-based approach;

11. *Decides* to address the analytical compilation requested in paragraph 10 above within its programme of work at its eighteenth session, and to consider taking further action on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights.

*31st meeting*  
*30 September 2010*  
[Adopted without a vote.]

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