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Amnesty International

ARTICLE 19

Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

Asian Legal Resources Centre

Association for Progressive Communications (APC)

CIVICUS

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

Human Rights in China

Human Rights Watch

Impact Iran

International Disability Alliance (IDA)

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights

OutRight Action International

Southern Africa Human Rights Defenders Network (SAHRDN)

FIRST JOINT STATEMENT ON REPRISALS

LED BY THE UK

WELCOME 😊

Calling on all States and the UN to prevent, respond to, and ensure accountability for cases of intimidation and reprisals against those who engage or seek to engage with the UN.

COMMENTS

- In line with the call made at the Human Rights Council (resolution 42/28) in Sep 2019.
- An important first step towards enhanced dialogue on reprisals at the General Assembly.

HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

LED BY NORWAY

WELCOME 😊

The consensus outcome and record number of co-sponsors across regions that offers an opportunity and basis for an ongoing, energetic and focused conversation in the future.

DISAPPOINTED 😞

Weakening of language exhorting States to immediate action despite the grave situation faced by many defenders across the world demanding an urgent response.

RESOLUTION ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND THE ISSUE OF IMPUNITY

LED BY ARGENTINA, AUSTRIA, COSTA RICA, FRANCE, GREECE AND TUNISIA

WELCOME 😊

Reaffirming measures States must take on prevention, protection and remedy for attacks.

DISAPPOINTED 😞

- Lack of implementation of previous versions of the resolution.
- Lacking progressive language adopted by consensus at the Human Rights Council.
- Not reflecting recommendations from the UN probe into the murder of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

COMMENTS

The creation of a UN Standing Investigative Mechanism could be a significant contribution to reduce attacks against journalists.

RESOLUTION ON NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NHRIS)

LED BY GERMANY

WELCOME 😊

Establishing and strengthening national human rights institutions.

DISAPPOINTED 😞

The commitment to formalising the relationship between the Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions and the UN was not supported.

COMMENTS

This formal relationship could further enable the UN to benefit from the work of NHRIs.

RESOLUTION ON TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

LED BY DENMARK

WELCOME 😊

- Consensus backing of new language on the elaboration of a set of universal standards for non-coercive interviewing methods and procedural safeguards.
- The need for States to adopt a gender-responsive approach in the fight against torture.
- The recognition that the prevalence of corruption can have a negative impact on the fight against torture.

RESOLUTION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

LED BY GERMANY AND SPAIN

WELCOME 😊

- Adoption by consensus.
- New emphasis on addressing menstrual hygiene management needs, including the widespread silence and stigma surrounding menstruation.
- Greater attention to the growing threat of the climate crisis to the realisation of water and sanitation services for all.

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

LED BY FINLAND (ON BEHALF OF THE EU)

WELCOME 😊

Adoption once again.

COMMENTS

The resolution encourages the Security Council to engage more actively on the human rights situation in the DPRK and, given the gravity of the violations, we hope the Council will convene a meeting on this subject in 2020.

RESOLUTION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

LED BY CANADA (CO-SPONSORED BY AUSTRALIA)

WELCOME 😊

- Overwhelming support.
- Recognising the ongoing systemic and systematic rights violations in the country.

CONCERNED 😟

Serious human rights violations were committed despite the scrutiny of the Third Committee and the resolution's attempts to encourage progress.

JOINT STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES IN XINJIANG

LED BY UK

WELCOME 😊

A powerful joint statement on the human rights abuses in Xinjiang delivered by the UK on behalf of 23 countries.

COMMENTS

The joint statement highlighted the growing concern about the detention of over a million Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang and the need for China to grant full and unfettered access to the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

ANNUAL RESOLUTIONS ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF AND ON COMBATING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

LED BY EU AND OIC

WELCOME 😊

- Adoption by consensus.
- Ongoing efforts by States to encourage the practical implementation of both resolutions.
- Reinvigoration of the Istanbul Process, with the seventh meeting taking place in the Netherlands shortly after the adoption of these resolutions.

COMMENTS

The worldwide rise of reports of violent acts and threats against persons on the basis of their religion or belief is alarming.

RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND TERRORISM

LED BY EGYPT AND MEXICO

DISAPPOINTED 😞

States continue to support the Egypt's leadership of this resolution despite Egypt's attempts to undermine the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

CONCERNED 😟

A crucial opportunity for States to restore the approach and strong human rights commitments from prior Mexican-led resolutions on this issue.

RESOLUTION ON COUNTERING THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES FOR CRIMINAL PURPOSES

LED BY RUSSIA

DISAPPOINTED 😞

- Adoption despite significant opposition (nearly 50 organizations and individuals from civil society expressed concern).
- The potential to undermine the use of the internet to exercise human rights and facilitate social and economic development.

CONCERNED 😟

References to balancing the interests of law enforcement and respect for fundamental human rights are absent, as are references to the principle of proportionality and to due process rights.

COMMENTS

Cybercrime legislation is being misused in many parts of the world to target defenders, hinder their work, and endanger their safety in a manner, contrary to international law. Building on and improving existing instruments is more desirable and practical than diverting scarce resources into a new international framework likely to be lengthy instead of resulting in consensus.

RESOLUTION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

LED BY MEXICO AND NEW ZEALAND

WELCOME 😊

- Mentions of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Accessibility Steering Committee, and relevant International Days.
- Mentions of humanitarian situations.

DISAPPOINTED 😞

Losing of references to the highly relevant Security Council Resolution 2475.

COMMENTS

Focused on Accessibility.

Finally, it is a source of ongoing frustration that civil society are not consistently welcomed to attend informals as observers. Our direct experience of the human rights violations and abuses the Third Committee seeks to address, and our expertise on the substance and history of UN resolutions, should mean civil society are treated as valuable partners. States should invite civil society to actively participate in informals as a matter of course, and speak up if their presence is challenged.