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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
Seventh special session  
22 May 2008

**REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ON ITS  
SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION**

**Vice-President and Rapporteur: Mr. Alejandro Artucio (Uruguay)**

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## **I. Resolution adopted by the Council at its seventh special session**

### **S-7/1. The negative impact of the worsening of the world food crisis on the realization of the right to food for all**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Recalling* all previous resolutions and decisions on the issue of the right to food adopted in the framework of the United Nations, in particular by the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/164 of 18 December 2007, and the Human Rights Council, in its resolution 7/14 of 27 March 2008,

*Recalling also* paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 60/251, in which the Assembly stipulates, inter alia, that the Human Rights Council shall be able to hold special sessions, when needed, at a request of a member of the Council with the support of one third of the membership of the Council,

*Recalling further* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including its provision that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself or herself and that of his or her family, including food, the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition and the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular the first Millennium Development Goal of eradicating hunger and extreme poverty by 2015,

*Recalling* the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, especially its article 11 (2), which recognize the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger, and the duty of States to take, individually and through international cooperation, the measures needed to implement this right by improving the methods of production, conservation and distribution of food,

*Bearing in mind* the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action of November 1996, and the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, adopted in Rome on 13 June 2002,

*Bearing in mind also* the New York Declaration on Action against Hunger and Poverty, and recommending the continuation of efforts aimed at identifying additional sources of financing for the fight against hunger and poverty,

*Reaffirming* the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, adopted by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in November 2004,

*Reaffirming also* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and that they must be treated globally, in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

*Reaffirming further* that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment, at both the national and international levels, is the essential foundation that will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

*Recognizing* the complex character of the worsening of the current global food crisis, in which the right to adequate food is threatened to be violated on a massive scale, as a combination of several major factors, including macroeconomic factors, also impacted negatively by environmental degradation, desertification and global climate change, natural disasters and the lack of the necessary technology to confront its impact, particularly in developing countries and least developed countries,

*Bearing in mind* the situation of one sixth of the world population, mainly in developing and least developed countries, suffering from hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity, and alarmed at the particular effects of the current global food crisis on many net food importing countries, and especially on least developed countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean,

*Stressing* that the international community should provide its assistance to populations in need in an effective and coordinated manner, with the consent and in principle on the basis of the appeal by the affected country, in order to ensure that such humanitarian assistance, including the supply of food, reaches affected populations,

*Acknowledging* the United Nations Task Force established by the Secretary-General, and supporting the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard,

1. *Expresses* grave concern at the worsening of the world food crisis, which seriously undermines the realization of the right to food for all;
2. *Also expresses* grave concern that this crisis threatens to further undermine the achievement of Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 1 aiming at halving by 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger;
3. *Calls upon* States, individually and through international cooperation and assistance, relevant multilateral institutions and other relevant stakeholders, to take all necessary measures to ensure the realization of the right to food as an essential human rights objective, and to consider reviewing any policy or measure which could have a negative impact on the realization of the right to food, particularly the right of everyone to be free from hunger, before instituting such a policy or measure;
4. *Stresses* that States have a primary obligation to make their best efforts to meet the vital food needs of their own populations, especially of the vulnerable groups and households, such as through enhancing programmes to combat mother-child malnutrition, and to increase local production for this purpose, while the international community should provide, through a coordinated response and upon request, support to national and regional efforts by providing the necessary assistance for increasing food production, particularly through transfer of technology, as well as food crop rehabilitation assistance and food aid;

5. *Calls upon* States Members of the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders to participate actively in the High-level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy, to be held from 3 to 5 June 2008, in Rome, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, while taking note of the results of the special meeting of the Economic and Social Council on this issue, held on 20 May 2008;
6. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to extend an invitation to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and to the Special Rapporteur on the right to food to attend and actively participate in the aforementioned High-level Conference, so as to help to mainstream a human rights perspective in the analysis of the world food crisis, with a focus on the realization of the right to food;
7. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to make a presentation to the Council at its eighth session on his participation in the meeting mentioned in paragraph 5 above, and on his initial recommendations regarding actions required, at all levels, to promote, respect and protect the right to food and freedom from hunger in the midst of the current food crisis, when actions are called for to promote mid- and long-term food security;
8. *Also requests* the Special Rapporteur to present a report to the Council at its ninth session, inviting comments from States and other relevant actors, on the impact of the global food crisis on the protection of the right to food and the required remedies from a human rights perspective;
9. *Requests* the High Commissioner for Human Rights to bring the present resolution to the attention of all relevant international organizations and agencies;
10. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur on the right to food to continue reporting on further developments on this issue to the Council and the General Assembly;
11. *Decides* to remain seized of the implementation of the present resolution.

*2nd meeting  
22 May 2008*

Resolution adopted, as orally revised, without a vote; see chapter II.

## **II. Organization of work of the seventh special session**

1. Pursuant to paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, and in accordance with rule 6 of the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Council as contained in Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, the Council shall hold special sessions, when needed, at the request of a member of the Council with the support of one third of the membership of the Council.
2. In a letter dated 8 May 2008, addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/S-7/1), the Permanent Representative of Cuba requested the convening of a special session of the Council on 23 May 2008 to consider and take action on the negative impact on the realization of the right to food of the worsening of the world food crisis, caused inter alia by soaring food prices.
3. The letter, received by the President on the same day, was accompanied by signatures in support of the above-mentioned request from the following 41 States members of the Council: Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Djibouti, Egypt (on behalf of the Group of African States), France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay and Zambia. Subsequently, Madagascar signed the request.
4. In addition to the above-mentioned States members of the Council, the request was also supported by the following observer States of the Council: Algeria, Armenia, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, Gambia, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Morocco, Mozambique, Norway, Palestine (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Panama, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, the Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe. Subsequently Argentina, New Zealand and Thailand signed the request.
5. As more than one third of the membership of the Council supported the above-mentioned request, the special session of the Council was convened on 22 May 2008, following further consultations on the date proposed in the request.

### **A. Opening and duration of the session**

6. The Council held its seventh special session at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 22 May 2008. It held two meetings during the session.
7. The seventh special session was opened by the President of the Council.

## **B. Attendance**

8. The special session was attended by representatives of States members of the Council, observers for non-member States of the Council, observers for non-member States of the United Nations and other observers, as well as observers for United Nations entities, specialized agencies and related organizations, intergovernmental organizations and other entities, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations.

## **C. Officers**

9. At its first organizational meeting of the second cycle, on 19 June 2007 (A/HRC/OM/1/1), the Council elected the following officers, who also served as officers for the seventh special session:

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Doru Romulus Costea (Romania)
<i>Vice-Presidents:</i>	Mr. Mohamed-Siad Doualeh (Djibouti) Mr. Boudewijn van Eenennaam (Netherlands) Mr. Dayan Jayatilleka (Sri Lanka)
<i>Vice-President and Rapporteur:</i>	Mr. Alejandro Artucio (Uruguay)

## **D. Organization of work**

10. Pursuant to paragraph 124 of the annex to Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, an open-ended informative consultation was held on 19 May 2008 in preparation for the seventh special session.

11. At its 1st meeting, on 22 May 2008, the Council considered the organization of its work, including speaking time limits, which would be five minutes for statements by States members of the Council, and three minutes for statements by observers for non-member States of the Council and other observers, including United Nations entities, specialized agencies and related organizations, intergovernmental organizations and other entities, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations. The list of speakers would be drawn up in chronological order of registration.

12. The special session was conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions contained in Council resolution 5/1.

## **E. Resolution and documentation**

13. The resolution adopted by the Council at its seventh special session is reproduced in chapter I of the present report.

14. The list of documents issued for the seventh special session is contained in the annex to the present report.

## F. Statements

15. At the 1st meeting, on 22 May 2008, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made a statement.
16. At the same meeting, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter, made a statement.
17. Also at the same meeting, a member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Eibe Riedel, made a statement.
18. At the same meeting, and at the 2nd meeting, on the same day, statements were made by the following:

(a) Representatives of States members of the Council: Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Cuba, Djibouti, Egypt (also on behalf of the Group of African States), France, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Palestine<sup>1</sup> (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine), South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)<sup>2</sup> (also on behalf of Bolivia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua), Zambia;

(b) Observers for non-member States: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Haiti, Iceland, Ireland, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Maldives, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam;

(c) Observer for the Holy See;

(d) Observers for intergovernmental organizations: African Union, International Organization of la Francophonie, Organization of the Islamic Conference;

(e) Observers for United Nations entities, specialized agencies and related organizations: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Development Programme, World Bank, World Food Programme;

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<sup>1</sup> Observer of the Council speaking on behalf of States members and observer States.

<sup>2</sup> Observer State of the Council speaking on behalf of States members and observer States.

(f) Observers for non-governmental organizations: Amnesty International, Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities) (also on behalf of the International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development-VIDES, Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers), the International Catholic Migration Commission, the Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund, the International Catholic Child Bureau, Franciscans International and The Center For Migration Studies Of New York, Inc.), Centre Europe-Tiers Monde (also on behalf of Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and France Libertés: Fondation Danielle Mitterand), Foodfirst Information and Action Network, Indian Movement Tupaj Amaru (also on behalf of the World Peace Council), International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Rights and Democracy), International Commission of Jurists, International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH), Mouvement contre le racisme et l'amitié entre les peuples (also on behalf of Centre Europe-Tiers Monde, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and France Libertés: Fondation Danielle Mitterand), Nord-Sud XXI, Union of Arab Jurists, World Federation of Trade Unions, World Vision International.

19. At the 2nd meeting, on 22 May 2008, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food made his concluding remarks.

#### **G. Action on draft resolution A/HRC/S-7/L.1/Rev.1**

20. At the 2nd meeting, on 22 May, the representative of Cuba introduced draft resolution A/HRC/S-7/L.1/Rev.1, sponsored by Bahrain, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, the Philippines, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tunisia, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Subsequently, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt (on behalf of the Group of African States), El Salvador, Finland, France, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan (also on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Palestine (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Peru, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, the Sudan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe joined the sponsors.

21. At the same meeting, the representative of Cuba orally revised the draft resolution by modifying preambular paragraph 12 and operative paragraph 3.

22. A statement in explanation of vote before the vote on the draft resolution was made by the representative of Canada.

23. The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted without a vote.

24. For the text of the resolution as adopted, see chapter I, resolution S-7/1.

### **III. Report to the General Assembly on the seventh special session of the Human Rights Council**

25. At the 2nd meeting, on 22 May 2008, the draft report was adopted ad referendum and the Rapporteur was entrusted with its finalization.

## ANNEX

### List of documents issued for the seventh special session of the Council

#### *Documents issued in the general series*

A/HRC/S-7/1 Letter dated 8 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Geneva, addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

#### *Documents issued in the limited series*

A/HRC/S-7/L.1/Rev.1 Draft resolution: the negative impact of the worsening of the world food crisis on the realization of the right to food for all

A/HRC/S-7/L.2 Draft report of the Human Rights Council on its seventh special session

#### *Documents issued in the non-governmental organizations series*

A/HRC/S-7/NGO/1 Written statement submitted by the International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements, a non-governmental organization on the roster

A/HRC/S-7/NGO/2 Written statement submitted by the Association of World Citizens, a non-governmental organization on the roster

A/HRC/S-7/NGO/3 Joint written statement submitted by the Europe-Third World Centre, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status, Action Aid International, the Habitat International Coalition, the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, and the Foodfirst Information and Action Network, a non-governmental organization on the roster

A/HRC/S-7/NGO/4 Exposé écrit conjoint présenté par le Centre Europe-Tiers Monde, organisation non gouvernementale dotée du statut consultatif général, la Ligue internationale des femmes pour la paix et la liberté, Nord-Sud XXI, France Libertés : Fondation Danielle Mitterrand, organisations non gouvernementales dotées du statut consultatif

spécial, et le Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples, organisation non gouvernementale inscrite sur la liste

A/HRC/S-7/NGO/5

Joint written statement submitted by the Europe-Third World Centre, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, France Libertés : Fondation Danielle Mitterrand, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, and Movement contre le racism et pour l'amitié entre les peuples, a non-governmental organization on the roster

A/HRC/S-7/NGO/6

Written statement submitted by International Educational Development (IED), Inc., a non-governmental organization on the roster

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