



# General Assembly

Distr.: Limited  
28 October 2013

Original: English

---

## Sixty-eighth session

### Third Committee

Agenda item 69 (b)

**Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms**

**Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Jordan, Maldives, Montenegro, Netherlands, Panama, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine: draft resolution**

### **The human right to water and sanitation**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [64/292](#) of 28 July 2010, in which it recognized the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights, and reaffirming the previous resolutions of the Human Rights Council regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, inter alia, Council resolution [24/18](#) of 27 September 2013,

*Recalling also* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

*Reaffirming* its commitments to human rights, as expressed in its resolution [55/2](#) of 8 September 2000, entitled “United Nations Millennium Declaration”, and its follow-up resolutions [60/1](#) of 16 September 2005, entitled “2005 World Summit Outcome”, and [65/1](#) of 22 September 2010, entitled “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”,

*Reaffirming also* its resolutions [58/217](#) of 23 December 2003, by which it proclaimed the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, and [65/154](#) of 20 December 2010, by which it proclaimed 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation,



*Recalling* the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of June 1992 and its resolution [66/288](#) of 27 July 2012, entitled “The future we want”, and emphasizing the critical importance of water and sanitation within the three dimensions of sustainable development,

*Welcoming* the holding of the General Assembly plenary meeting of 27 July 2011 entitled “The human right to water and sanitation”,

*Welcoming also* the proclamation of 19 November as World Toilet Day, in the context of and pursuant to General Assembly resolution [67/291](#) of 24 July 2013, entitled “Sanitation for All”,

*Recalling* general comment No. 15 (2002) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, on the right to water (articles 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and the statement on the right to sanitation of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 19 November 2010, as well as the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation,

*Deeply concerned* that approximately 768 million people still lack access to improved drinking water sources and that more than 2.5 billion do not have access to improved sanitation facilities, including more than 1.04 billion people who still practice open defecation, as defined by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund in their 2013 update on the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, and that these figures do not fully capture the dimensions of water safety, the affordability of services and the safe management of excreta and wastewater, as well as equality, non-discrimination and differences between urban and rural areas, and therefore underestimate the numbers of those without access to safe drinking water and sanitation,

*Deeply concerned also* that, despite the fact that the target of the Millennium Development Goals to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to improved water sources was formally met five years before its deadline of 2015, the target on sanitation is one of the most off-track on the Millennium Development Goals agenda, that communities continue to be exposed to harmful substances owing to inexistent or inadequate sanitation facilities and that the achieved level of drinking water and sanitation coverage might not be sustainable owing to the serious deficiencies in water management and wastewater treatment, which have a negative impact on water provision and likely also on future access to drinking water,

*Deeply concerned further* that women and girls often face particular barriers in accessing water and sanitation, and that they shoulder the main burden of collecting household water in many parts of the world, restricting their time for other activities,

*Deeply alarmed* that, every year, almost 700,000 children under 5 years of age die, and millions of school days are lost, as a result of water- and sanitation-related diseases, and that girls in large parts of the world do not go to school for lack of separate toilets for girls,

*Acknowledging* the importance of equal access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as an integral component of the realization of all human rights,

*Reaffirming* the responsibility of States to ensure the promotion and protection of all human rights, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and must be treated globally, in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

*Reaffirming also* that States have the primary responsibility to ensure the full realization of all human rights and must take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of their available resources, to achieve progressively the full realization of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation by all appropriate means, including in particular the adoption of legislative measures in the implementation of their human rights obligations,

1. *Stresses* the important role of the international cooperation and technical assistance provided by States, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and international and development partners, as well as by donor agencies, in particular in the timely achievement of the relevant Millennium Development Goals, and urges development partners to adopt a human rights-based approach when designing and implementing development programmes in support of national initiatives and plans of action related to the right to safe drinking water and sanitation;

2. *Recalls* that the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation entitles everyone, without discrimination, to have access to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use and to have physical and affordable access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure and acceptable, and that provides privacy and ensures dignity;

3. *Reaffirms* the recognition of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights;

4. *Also reaffirms* that the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation is derived from the right to an adequate standard of living and is inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as well as to the right to life and human dignity;

5. *Recognizes* the need to take into account the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation while shaping the post-2015 development agenda, in particular while defining concrete goals, targets and indicators, taking into account the human rights-based approach;

6. *Welcomes* the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation by the Human Rights Council;

7. *Also welcomes* the work of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and takes note with appreciation in particular of her related reports<sup>1</sup> and her contributions to shaping the post-2015 development agenda and to progressively eliminating inequalities in the access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

8. *Takes note* of the recommendation in the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, commissioned by the

<sup>1</sup> A/67/270 and A/68/264.

Secretary-General, in which the Panel lists water and sanitation among the indicative goals in the post-2015 development agenda, and also takes note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015”,<sup>2</sup> in which the Secretary-General recognizes the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation as one of the foundations for a decent life;

9. *Calls upon* States and, as applicable, regional and international organizations:

(a) To ensure the progressive realization of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(b) To continuously monitor and regularly analyse the status of the realization of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation on the basis of the criteria set out above;

(c) To address, in an appropriate manner, the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and the principles of equality and non-discrimination in the post-2015 development agenda;

(d) To take into due account the role of proper management of water resources, increasing water quality, significantly improved wastewater treatment and water efficiency, and the essential role that ecosystems play, in maintaining water quantity and quality for sustainable development and the realization of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(e) To ensure the progressive realization of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation for all, while eliminating inequalities in access by persons belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups, including those based on rural-urban disparities, tenure status, residence in a slum, poverty and income levels, ethnicity, nationality and social origin, gender, age and disability, or on any other grounds;

(f) To ensure the adequate participation of concerned communities, including through an open and inclusive dialogue, regarding adequate solutions to ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(g) To provide for effective accountability mechanisms for all water and sanitation service providers in order to ensure that they respect human rights and do not cause human rights violations or abuses.

---

<sup>2</sup> A/68/202.