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人权理事会

第二十三届会议

议程项目 3

增进和保护所有人权——公民权利、政治权利、  
经济、社会和文化权利，包括发展权

2013 年 6 月 4 日新加坡共和国常驻联合国日内瓦办事处和日内瓦其他  
国际组织代表团致联合国人权事务高级专员的普通照会

新加坡共和国常驻联合国日内瓦办事处和日内瓦其他国际组织代表团向联合国人权理事会秘书处致意，谨提及下列发言，发言是在 2013 年 6 月 4 日对项目 2 和 3 进行一般性辩论时就联合国人权事务高级专员关于良心拒服兵役的四年期分析报告(A/HRC/23/22)作出的。

常驻代表团谨请将发言\* 作为理事会第二十三届会议议程项目 3 下的文件分发。

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\* 附件不译，原文照发。

## Annex

*[English only]*

### **General debate on items 2 and 3 following the presentation of thematic reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Secretary-General at the twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council, on 4 June 2013**

#### **Quadrennial Analytical report of the OHCHR on Conscientious objection to military service (A/HRC/23/22)**

Mr President

My statement refers to the quadrennial analytical report of the OHCHR on conscientious objection to military service (A/HRC/23/22) which was prepared in pursuant to resolution A/HRC/20/2.

As stated in our statement at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council, Singapore does not recognise the universal applicability of the right to conscientious objection to military service. The premise of the resolution 20/2, and by extension the OHCHR report 23/22, goes beyond what is prescribed in international law and applicable human rights instruments. Conscientious objection to military service has been referred to in the resolution and report as a legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as laid down in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). However, what they failed to highlight is the important fact that Article 29 of the UDHR and Article 18 of the ICCPR recognise that the exercise of the rights and freedom of an individual is subject to the necessity of ensuring public order and the general welfare of the society.

National defence is a fundamental sovereign right under international law. Where individual beliefs or actions run counter to such a right, the right of a State to preserve and maintain national security must prevail.

Whereas some States may choose to establish a standing army, for a small country like Singapore, compulsory military service is the only way to build up a credible national defence force. This system is only viable under the principle of universality where every male Singapore Citizen and Permanent Resident, regardless of race or religion, is required by law to fulfil compulsory military service to defend our country. Under such a system, allowing any individual or group, for whatever reason including on the basis of conscientious objection, to be excused from military service will fundamentally undermine the concept of collective responsibility for national defence, compromise national values and violate the principle of equal application of the law.

Thank you, Mr President.

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