



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Twenty-sixth session

Agenda items 2 and 3

Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Note verbale dated 25 June 2014 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland addressed to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council, and has the honour to refer to the attached joint statement, which was delivered on 18 June 2014 during the general debate on agenda items 2 and 3 at the twenty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council (see annex).

The Mission has the further honour to request on behalf of the Permanent Missions of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Barbados, Brunei Darussalam, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, India, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, the State of Kuwait, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Sultanate of Oman, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Singapore, the Republic of the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, the Republic of Uganda, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Republic of Yemen and the Republic of Zimbabwe that the joint statement* be circulated as a document of the twenty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council under agenda items 2 and 3.

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.

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Annex

[English only]

Joint statement delivered at the General Debate on promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Draft resolution on the question of death penalty

Mr President

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of a group of countries (as indicated at the end of this statement) to express our concern on the proposed draft resolution on the question of the death penalty.

The draft resolution is severely unbalanced and overly simplistic. It portrays the death penalty as a violation of the rights of the convicted prisoners, and ignores the rights of the victims and the right of the community to live in peace and security. Every country has the sovereign right to decide its own criminal justice system. Whether to maintain or abolish the death penalty is a question that should be determined by each country based on its national circumstances and its legal system.

The draft resolution's proposal that the Human Rights Council establish a biennial high level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty, disregards last year's vote on HRC Decision 22/117 entitled "High-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty" which clearly reflected the disagreement on whether a high-level panel discussion on this topic should be held. The insistence to advance this controversial proposal is a violation of the agreed principles, including universality, constructive international dialogue and cooperation that should guide the work of the Council. Given the annual presentation of the Secretary General's report on the question of the death penalty to the Council which is followed by a General Debate, the biennial high-level panel discussion is also an unnecessary duplication of the existing channel to provide views on the issue and will exacerbate the Council's already overstretched resources.

Mr President

In the clear absence of international agreement on the question of the death penalty, including its prohibition, States on one side of the argument have no right to impose their beliefs on others, as if those beliefs were universal. We thus call for States to refrain from polarising the Human Rights Council further with this issue as it will undermine the Council's credibility and impede its ability to promote genuine and constructive dialogue on human rights.

List of co-sponsors

1. Kingdom of Bahrain
2. Barbados
3. Brunei Darussalam
4. People's Republic of China
5. Democratic People's Republic of Korea

6. Arab Republic of Egypt
 7. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
 8. India
 9. Republic of Indonesia
 10. Islamic Republic of Iran
 11. Jamaica
 12. State of Kuwait
 13. Lao People's Democratic Republic
 14. Malaysia
 15. Republic of the Union of Myanmar
 16. Sultanate of Oman
 17. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
 18. State of Qatar
 19. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
 20. Republic of Singapore
 21. Republic of Sudan
 22. Syrian Arab Republic
 23. United Arab Emirates
 24. Republic of Uganda
 25. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
 26. Republic of Yemen
 27. Republic of Zimbabwe
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