



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Twenty-seventh session

Agenda item 3

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

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

27/14

**Preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age as
a human rights concern**

The Human Rights Council,

Emphasizing that the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, and bearing in mind the importance of the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other human rights instruments,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolution 24/11 of 26 September 2013 on preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age as a human rights concern, as well as all other relevant resolutions on the rights of the child of the Commission on Human Rights, the Council and the General Assembly,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and recognizing the need to ensure the full and effective enjoyment by all of their human rights, including the right to development,

Reaffirming also the right of everyone to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, which is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as enshrined in the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as well as in the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Deeply concerned that more than 6,300,000 children under 5 years of age die each year,¹ mostly from preventable and treatable causes, owing to inadequate or lack of access to integrated and quality maternal, newborn and child health care and services, early childbearing, as well as to health determinants, such as safe drinking water and sanitation,

¹ See “Levels and Trends in Child Mortality”, available from www.unicef.org/media/files/Levels_and_Trends_in_Child_Mortality_2014.pdf.

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safe and adequate food and nutrition, and that mortality remains highest among children belonging to the poorest and most marginalized communities,

Recognizing that a human rights-based approach to reduce and eliminate preventable child mortality and morbidity is an approach underpinned by the principles of, inter alia, equality and non-discrimination, participation, sustainability, transparency, the best interests of the child, international cooperation and accountability,

Reaffirming that States should take all appropriate measures to ensure the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health without discrimination of any kind and, in doing so, be guided by the best interests of the child, ensuring the meaningful participation of children, consistent with their evolving capacities, in all matters and decisions affecting their lives, bearing in mind the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents or caregivers in relation to preventing mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, and take steps to ensure the allocation of available resources to the maximum extent possible to achieve the full realization of the right of the child to the highest attainable standard of health, including by strengthening international cooperation in this field,

Reaffirming also the commitments made by States to make every effort to accelerate the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including Millennium Development Goal 4, to reduce by two thirds the under-5 mortality rate by 2015, Goal 5, to improve maternal health, and Goal 6, to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, and the need to take into account preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age in the post-2015 development agenda,

Acknowledging the work done by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, programmes and funds in relation to the reduction and elimination of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, and in that regard welcoming the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health launched by the Secretary-General, and the related establishment of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health and the Independent Expert Review Group on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, the action plan "Every Newborn: an action plan to end preventable deaths" endorsed by the World Health Assembly, and the analytical study by the World Health Organization entitled "Women's and Children's Health: Evidence of Impact of Human Rights",

1. *Welcomes* the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age;²

2. *Urges* States to disseminate the technical guidance and to apply it, as appropriate, in the design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of laws, policies, programmes, budgets and mechanisms for remedy and redress, aimed at eliminating preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age;

3. *Calls upon* States to adopt a human rights-based approach to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, including in scaling up efforts to achieve the integrated management of quality maternal, newborn and child health care and services, particularly at the community and family levels, and to take action to address the main causes of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age;

² A/HRC/27/31.

4. *Calls upon* States and other relevant stakeholders, including national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations, to take action at all levels to address the interlinked root causes of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, such as poverty, malnutrition, harmful practices, violence, stigma and discrimination, unsafe households and environments, lack of safe drinking water and sanitation, lack of accessible, affordable, quality and appropriate health care, services, medicines and vaccinations, late detection of childhood illnesses and low levels and quality of education;

5. *Calls upon* States to strengthen their international commitment, cooperation and mutual assistance with the objective of reducing and eliminating preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, including through the sharing of good practices, research, policies, monitoring and capacity-building;

6. *Calls upon* all relevant United Nations agencies to provide technical cooperation and assistance to States, as requested, to support the application of the technical guidance, including through the development and dissemination of tools for its operationalization at all relevant stages of national planning and action cycles for child health and survival;

7. *Reaffirms* that the Human Rights Council should promote the effective coordination and mainstreaming of human rights within the United Nations system;

8. *Encourages* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in close collaboration with the World Health Organization, to bring the technical guidance to the attention of the Secretary-General and all United Nations entities with mandates relevant to preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, and to continue dialogue on the issue of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age with all relevant actors and in that regard;

9. *Encourages* further consideration of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age in the post-2015 development agenda;

10. *Requests* the High Commissioner, in close collaboration with the World Health Organization and in consultation with States, relevant United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, as well as the special procedures mandate holders, human rights mechanisms, regional organizations and civil society, to prepare a report on the practical application of the technical guidance and its impact on the development and implementation of policies and programmes in States to reduce preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age, and to present it to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-third session;

11. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*39th meeting
25 September 2014*

[Adopted without a vote.]