



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Nineteenth 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\***

**19/32**

**Human rights and unilateral coercive measures**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Recalling* the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Recalling also* all previous resolutions on human rights and unilateral coercive measures adopted by the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly,

*Reaffirming* Human Rights Council resolution 15/24 of 1 October 2010 and General Assembly resolution 66/156 of 19 December 2011,

*Stressing* that unilateral coercive measures and legislation are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States,

*Recognizing* the universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated character of all human rights and, in this regard, reaffirming the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of all human rights,

*Expressing its concern* at the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights, development, international relations, trade, investment and cooperation,

*Recognizing* that unilateral coercive measures in the form of economic sanctions can have far-reaching implications for the human rights of the general population of targeted States, disproportionately affecting the poor and the most vulnerable classes,

*Recognizing also* that long-term unilateral coercive measures may result in social problems and raise humanitarian concerns in the States targeted,

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\* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its nineteenth session (A/HRC/19/2), chap. I.

*Recalling* the final document of the fifteenth summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in July 2009, in which the States members of the Movement decided to oppose unilateralism and unilaterally-imposed measures by certain States, which can lead to the erosion and violation of the Charter and international law, the use and threat of use of force and pressure and coercive measures as a means to achieving their national policy objectives, and to support, in accordance with international law, the claim of affected States, including targeted States, to compensation for damage incurred as a consequence of the implementation of extraterritorial or unilateral coercive measures or laws,

*Recalling also* that the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, called upon States to refrain from any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter and that created obstacles to trade relations among States and impeded the full realization of all human rights, and that also severely threatened the freedom of trade,

*Deeply concerned* that, despite the resolutions adopted on this issue by the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Commission on Human Rights and at United Nations conferences held in the 1990s and at their five-year reviews, and contrary to norms of international law and the Charter, unilateral coercive measures continue to be promulgated, implemented and enforced by, inter alia, resorting to war and militarism, with all their negative implications for the social-humanitarian activities and economic and social development of developing countries, including their extraterritorial effects, thereby creating additional obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights by peoples and individuals under the jurisdiction of other States,

*Reaffirming* that unilateral coercive measures are a major obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development,

*Recalling* article 1, paragraph 2, common to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which provides that, inter alia, in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

1. *Calls upon* all States to stop adopting or implementing unilateral coercive measures not in accordance with international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, in particular those of a coercive nature with extraterritorial effects, which create obstacles to trade relations among States, thus impeding the full realization of the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the right of individuals and peoples to development;

2. *Strongly objects* to the extraterritorial nature of those measures which, in addition, threaten the sovereignty of States and, in this context, calls upon all Member States neither to recognize these measures nor to apply them, and to take effective administrative or legislative measures, as appropriate, to counteract the extraterritorial application or effects of unilateral coercive measures;

3. *Condemns* the continued unilateral application and enforcement by certain powers of such measures as tools of political or economic pressure against any country, particularly against developing countries, with a view to preventing these countries from exercising their right to decide, of their own free will, their own political, economic and social systems;

4. *Reiterates* its call upon Member States that have initiated such measures to abide by the principles of international law, the Charter, the declarations of the United Nations and world conferences and relevant resolutions, and to commit themselves to their

obligations and responsibilities arising from the international human rights instruments to which they are parties by putting an immediate end to such measures;

5. *Reaffirms*, in this context, the right of all peoples to self-determination, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their own economic, social and cultural development;

6. *Also reaffirms* its opposition to any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a State, which is incompatible with the Charter;

7. *Recalls* that, according to the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and to the relevant principles and provisions contained in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, in particular article 32 thereof, no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measure to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind;

8. *Reaffirms* that essential goods, such as food and medicines, should not be used as tools for political coercion and that under no circumstances should people be deprived of their own means of subsistence and development;

9. *Underlines* the fact that unilateral coercive measures are one of the main obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development and, in this regard, calls upon all States to avoid the unilateral imposition of economic coercive measures and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws that run counter to the principles of free trade and hamper the development of developing countries;

10. *Rejects* all attempts to introduce unilateral coercive measures, as well as the increasing trend in this direction, including through the enactment of laws with extraterritorial application, which are not in conformity with international law;

11. *Recognizes* that the Declaration of Principles, adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva in December 2003, strongly urges States to avoid and refrain from any unilateral measure in building the information society;

12. *Invites* all special rapporteurs and existing thematic mechanisms of the Human Rights Council in the field of economic, social and cultural rights to pay due attention, within the scope of their respective mandates, to the negative impact and consequences of unilateral coercive measures;

13. *Decides* to give due consideration to the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures in its task concerning the implementation of the right to development;

14. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in discharging her functions in relation to the promotion and protection of human rights, to pay due attention and give urgent consideration to the present resolution;

15. *Takes note* of the thematic study prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner on the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights\* including recommendations on actions aimed at ending such measures;

16. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner:

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\* A/HRC/19/33.

(a) To organize, prior to the twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council, a workshop on the various aspects relating to the impact of the application of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights by the affected populations in the States targeted, with the participation of States, academic experts and civil society representatives;

(b) To prepare a report on the proceedings of the workshop and to submit it to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-third session;

17. *Decides* to examine this question in accordance with its annual programme of work under the same agenda item.

*55th meeting  
23 March 2012*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 35 to 12, with no abstentions. The voting was as follows:

*In favour:*

Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Thailand, Uganda, Uruguay

*Against:*

Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, United States of America]

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