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Human Rights Council

Twenty-first 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*

21/6.

Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling its resolutions 11/8 of 17 June 2009, 15/17 of 30 September 2010 and 18/2 of 28 September 2011 on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its review conferences, including the outcome document of the 15-year review of the Programme of Action contained in Commission on Population and Development resolution 2009/1 of 3 April 2009, Commission on the Status of Women resolutions 54/5 of 12 March 2010 and 56/3 of 9 March 2012, the targets and commitments regarding the reduction of maternal mortality and universal access to reproductive health, including those contained in the 2000 Millennium Declaration, the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, and Commission on Population and Development resolution 2012/1 of 27 April 2012,

Taking note of the various processes within the United Nations system to review the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, to review the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and to prepare for a post-2015 development framework,

Welcomes the organization by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in cooperation with other relevant entities of the United Nations system, of an expert workshop and a public consultation in April 2012, with the participation of Governments, regional organizations, relevant United Nations bodies and civil society organizations, and the preparation of concise technical guidance on the application of a

* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its twenty-first session (A/HRC/21/2), chap. I.

human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce preventable maternal mortality and morbidity,¹

Convinced that increased political will and commitment, cooperation and technical assistance at all levels are urgently required to reduce the unacceptably high global rate of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity, and that the integration of a human rights-based approach can contribute positively to the common goal of reducing this rate,

1. *Requests* all States to renew their political commitment to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity at the local, national, regional and international levels, and to redouble their efforts to ensure the full and effective implementation of their human rights obligations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its review processes, including the commitments relating to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goals on improving maternal health and promoting gender equality and empowering women, including through the allocation of necessary domestic resources to health systems and the provision of the necessary information and health services addressing the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls;

2. *Requests* States and other relevant actors to give renewed emphasis to maternal mortality and morbidity initiatives in their development partnerships and cooperation arrangements, including by honouring existing commitments and considering new ones, and the exchange of effective practices and technical assistance to strengthen national capacities, and to integrate a human rights-based perspective into such initiatives, addressing the impact that discrimination against women has on maternal mortality and morbidity;

3. *Encourages* 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 maternal mortality and morbidity, such as poverty, malnutrition, harmful practices, lack of accessible and appropriate health-care services, information and education, and gender inequality, and to pay particular attention to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls;

4. *Welcomes* the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce preventable maternal mortality and morbidity, and calls upon all relevant actors, including Governments, regional organizations, relevant United Nations agencies, national human rights institutions, and civil society organizations to disseminate the technical guidance and apply it, as appropriate, when designing, implementing and reviewing policies and evaluating programmes to reduce preventable maternal mortality and morbidity;

5. *Calls upon* all relevant United Nations agencies to provide technical cooperation and assistance to States, as requested, to support the implementation of the technical guidance;

6. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to bring the technical guidance to the attention of the Secretary-General and all United Nations entities with mandates relevant to maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, and to continue dialogue on the issue of preventable maternal mortality and

¹ A/HRC/21/22 and Corr. 1 and 2.

morbidity with all relevant actors in order to accelerate the realization of the rights of women and girls and the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 5 by 2015;

7. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare, from within existing resources, in consultation with States, United Nations agencies, in particular the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and all other relevant stakeholders a report on how the technical guidance has been applied by States and other relevant actors, to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-seventh session;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the technical guidance to the General Assembly as a contribution to the review of the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, including at its special event in 2013 to follow up on efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and its special session on the theme "The ICPD beyond 2014";

9. *Decides* to continue to consider the issue under the same agenda item.

*36th meeting
27 September 2012*

[Adopted without a vote.]
