

## **UN Family Rights Caucus Declaration to the Human Rights Council**

Whereas the United Nations has recognized that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, entitled to protection by society and State; (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16(3))

Whereas the family unit plays an essential role in eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (United Nations 2014 CsocD Family Resolution)

Whereas “The stability and cohesiveness of communities and societies largely rest on the strength of the family”; (Secretary General's Family Report 2011 (A/66/62–E/2011/4))

Whereas UN policies and programs too often target individuals rather than families, despite evidence that a family-centered approach yields better results; (See The Family Impact Rationale: An Evidence Base for the Family Impact Lens)

Whereas the family was left out of the Millennium Development Goals and merits priority attention in the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 UN agenda.

Therefore, we, as concerned government, religious, and civil society leaders along with concerned individuals representing diverse cultures and countries in every region of the world, hereby call upon the Human Rights Council, the United Nations and all Member States to prioritize the protection of the family unit.

Specifically, we call upon the Human Rights Council to resist pressures to focus solely on individual rights to the detriment of the family unit, and to recognize the unique role the family unit as a whole plays in protecting human rights and preparing the next generation to be positive contributors to society.

We call upon the Human Rights Council to recognize that while family violence occurs and should be addressed and prevented, this is the exception rather than the rule, and that to insist wherever positive references to the family are made that references to family violence must also be made, is to establish a standard that is not applied to any other issue and undermines the family.

We call upon the Human Rights Council to allow nations to address the family according to their own national legislation and cultures and to aggressively resist attempts to force various forms of the family that are not recognized by many UN Member States.

We commend the Human Rights Council for proposing the “Protection of the Family” resolution focusing on protecting the positive role of the family in society and call upon all UN Member States to support this resolution as the world celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the International year of the Family.