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Code: Draft Resolution 1/1

Committee: Human Rights Council

Topic: Equitable Access to Safe Drinking Water as a Human Right

1 *The Human Rights Council,*
2
3 *Guided by* the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), as a fundamental milestone for the
4 international community in addressing the significance of human rights,
5
6 *Reaffirming* that the right to water is an extension of the right to life guaranteed by Art. 3 of the UDHR,
7
8 *Affirming* General Assembly resolution 60/251 (2006) establishing the Human Rights Council to strengthen the
9 promotion and protection of human rights globally,
10
11 *Fully believing* in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), which in addition with the General
12 Assembly resolution 48/141 (1994) established the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for
13 Human Rights (OHCHR), which acts as a coordinating body for the human rights agenda,
14
15 *Endorsing* the General Assembly resolution 64/292 (2010), acknowledging the human right to water and sanitation
16 outlining the connection between access to safe drinking water and the fulfilment of other human rights,
17
18 *Acknowledging* General Comment No. 15: The Right to Water, adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and
19 Cultural Rights, which draws the attention of the international community to the fundamental human right to safe
20 drinking water for personal and domestic uses,
21
22 *Deeply concerned* about 2.2 billion people around the world who still cannot enjoy the human right to access safe
23 drinking water,
24
25 *Notes with deep concern* the increasing inequality in access to safe drinking water and sanitation as stated in the UN-
26 Water Report (2015) on "Eliminating Discrimination and Inequalities in access to water and sanitation",
27
28 *Approving* General Assembly resolutions 34/180 (1979) "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
29 Discrimination Against Women", 44/25 (1989) "Convention on the Rights of the Child", 61/106 (2007) "Convention
30 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", 61/295 (2007) "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous
31 Peoples",
32
33 *Considering the importance* of Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 (2011) in the light of General Assembly
34 resolution 70/1 (2015) "The 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development", particularly Sustainable Development Goal
35 6, stressing the significant role the fundamental human right to safe drinking water and sanitation plays,
36
37 *Emphasizing* that the exploration of new methods to clean water and sanitation is vital to achieve SDG 6 "Clean
38 Water and Sanitation",
39
40 *Applauding* the valuable work of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS),
41
42 *Acknowledging* the work done by the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and
43 Sanitation, UN-Water and the World Health Organization (WHO),
44
45 *Recognizing* the potential of Reverse Osmosis Desalination (ROD) using biological membranes as filtering systems
46 instead of evaporation to deliver high quality drinking water creating jobs and economic opportunities in the long
47 term while realizing the human right to access safe drinking water,

48
49 *Welcoming* the potential of portable ROD processors for immediate relief for regions suffering acute water
50 crises,
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52 *Reaffirming* General Assembly resolution 46/182 (1991) paving the grounds for General Assembly resolution
53 60/124 (2005), which establishes the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) providing stand-by funding to
54 combat human right violations during emergencies,
55
56 *Drawing attention to* General Assembly resolution 71/127 (2016) as a response to the Secretary-General's concerns
57 to raise the budget of the CERF,
58
59 *Welcoming* the efforts done by Member States in collaborating with the CERF in order to increase the resilience to
60 new potential crises regarding human rights,
61
62 *Further recalling* General Assembly resolution 63/229 (2009) "Role of microcredit and microfinance in the
63 eradication of poverty" as it acknowledges poverty and overcoming the vulnerability of people in crises through
64 microfinancing and microcredits,
65
66 *Deeply Convinced* by the indispensable steps towards guaranteeing the fundamental human right to drinking water
67 made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Water.org, WaterCredit, Microloan Foundation and many
68 more,
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70 1. *Recommends* further research and development of technology of Reverse Osmosis Desalination (ROD) by
71 Member States as a more economically effective, environmentally friendly and energy efficient way to
72 desalinate and clean sea water;
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74 2. *Asks* UN-Water to task the UN-Water Expert Group on Water Scarcity with the topic of ROD and to cooperate
75 with experts on ROD technology from relevant countries that will form a Reverse Osmosis Desalination Expert
76 Group (RODE-Group) to share existing knowledge and encourage further improvements focusing also on
77 research projects to make desalination more environmentally friendly e.g. using solar panels to power
78 desalination so that the Right to Water will be implemented in a sustainable way:
79
80 a. Ensuring equitable distribution so that all Member States and every human benefit from the
81 technological advances regarding ROD which can also be used to purify groundwater, thus enabling
82 people in landlocked countries and rural areas to use it for irrigation, sanitation and as safe drinking
83 water;
84
85 b. Focusing also on providing quick relief to Member States affected by acute water crises with portable
86 versions of ROD;
87
88 3. *Further asks* UN-Water Expert Group on Water Scarcity to annually monitor the RODE-Group and report
89 about their progress in improving desalination technologies;
90
91 4. *Encourages* the UN-Water Expert Group on Water Scarcity to map out a plan how the UNOPS Inter Agency
92 Trust Fund can be expanded by integrating a Marine Desalination Financial Facility (MAD) to finance research
93 and development, infrastructure and implementation of marine desalination projects to realize the Right to Safe
94 Drinking Water for all people by:
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96 a. Including the private sector to leverage public money investments regarding sustainable desalination,
97 co-financing private projects if they adhere to strict criteria safeguarding human rights and equitable
98 distribution of water;
99
100 b. Adequately including developing and emerging countries in the desalination projects aimed at realizing
101 equitable access to safe drinking water without overburdening them with financial obligations;
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- 103 5. *Charges* the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation - within the limits
104 of his mandate - to use the resources of his office to engage in an exchange with different UN bodies like UN-
105 Water or the WHO to assess the opportunities created by desalination with regards to equitable access so safe
106 drinking water but also to conduct research with regards to how governments, governmental aid organization,
107 NGOs and the private sector could contribute further to mechanisms such as the MAD Fund;
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- 109 6. *Urges* all Member States to provide equitable access to safe drinking water as a human right to all people of
110 society, especially addressing children and other marginalized groups;
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- 112 7. *Encourages* all Member States to guarantee human rights, in particular the human right to safe drinking water,
113 sanitation and hygiene during situations where human rights are most at risk, especially during situations of
114 emergencies such as natural disasters, war and conflict;
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- 116 8. *Recommends* Member States to:
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- 118 a. Deepen cooperation with NGOs to exchange knowledge and to benefit from the recommendations
119 made from NGOs based on their efforts made in ensuring the human right to access to safe drinking
120 water during all kind of emergencies especially considering the most vulnerable groups of society;
121
- 122 b. Review national emergency-response systems and identify aspects that need to be improved in order to
123 ensure that the emergency does not threaten existing drinking water infrastructures to continuously
124 guarantee everybody's fundamental human right to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene;
125
- 126 c. Support life-saving humanitarian activities in the different stages of humanitarian emergencies related
127 to war and conflict, especially ensuring the Human Right to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH),
128 by:
- 129
- 130 i. Providing hydraulic and electrical equipment to ensure the efficiency and reliability for the
131 regional drinking water supply;
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- 133 ii. Supporting reconstruction measures of municipal drinking water supply systems as well as
134 sanitary facilities in regions with a high risk of disruption of WASH;
135
- 136 9. *Urges* Member States to consider increasing contributions to CERF, in order to:
- 137
- 138 a. Stabilize the flow of financial resources of the CERF as an existing emergency-response system in
139 order to strengthen the resilience of the CERF when catastrophes such as natural disasters, war and
140 conflict threaten the human rights, particularly the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation;
141
- 142 b. Maintain the CERF Loan Element as a fundamental mechanism providing loans to the UN, specialized
143 agencies, the International Organization for Migration and the Office for the Coordination for
144 Humanitarian Affairs during the first glimpse of emergencies;
145
- 146 10. *Strongly recommends* the OHCHR to establish a working group composed of ten independent experts
147 representing different geographical areas, to improve current microfinancing structures, which provide access to
148 WASH, by:
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- 150 a. Drawing expertise from the Microcredit Summit Campaign conducted between 1997 and 2005 and
151 making use of their experiences in bringing together various actors such as NGOs, microfinance
152 institutions and educational institutions, in order to particularly address vulnerable and excluded
153 groups of society;
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- 155 b. Reassessing the degree to which the existing microfinancing projects providing access to water are
156 able to target marginalized and excluded groups of society and address their need;
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- 158 c. Reviewing the implementation process of such existing projects as well as the outcomes;

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- d. Investigating whether and how microfinancing structures for equitable water access differ within regions and draw conclusions from it.