

URGENT ACTION ALERT

ACT NOW TO OPPOSE RUSSIAN RESOLUTION ON TRADITIONAL VALUES: UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT STAKE!

(Please feel free to forward this Action Alert to others)

What's up?

- At the current session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, **Russia** has tabled a resolution seeking to **promote "traditional values"** as a basis for human rights. Numerous UN experts have emphasised that **traditional values are frequently invoked by States to justify human rights violations**, such as **family violence, marital rape, forced marriage and female genital mutilation**.
- Last year, the Human Rights Council tasked its Advisory Committee to prepare a report on traditional values. Now Russia wants to proceed with a new resolution before the Advisory Committee has even finished its report. Russia's resolution is therefore **premature** and **procedurally flawed**.
- A preliminary report of the Advisory Committee is **highly critical** of a traditional values approach to human rights, calling traditional values **"vague, subjective and unclear"** and noting that **"those most marginalized and disenfranchised have the most to lose** from a traditional values approach to human rights".
- There is absolutely **no recognition** in Russia's draft resolution that many practices inconsistent with human rights derive from traditional values. If this resolution is passed, there is no doubt that Governments in future will use "traditional values" to restrict human rights.
- We feel that this resolution should be **strongly opposed** and **we need your help today to urge your government to vote against the resolution**.

See the [attached backgrounder](#) for more details. Additional information can also be found at:

- <http://arc-international.net/global-advocacy/human-rights-council/hrc-advisory-committee>
- <http://arc-international.net/global-advocacy/human-rights-council/hrc21/tv-concerns>

What can I do?

- **Contact your country's Foreign Ministry** today! Send your Foreign Ministry a copy of the attached backgrounder expressing concerns and write a short cover note calling on your government to **oppose the resolution**.
- Forward this action alert to other supportive NGOs.

Is my government a member of the Human Rights Council?

It is particularly important that voting members of the Human Rights Council oppose the resolution. A list of Council Members can be found [here](#). However, all States, whether or not they are Council Members, can participate in negotiations and oppose the text.

How do I contact my government?

- The most important contact is your government's **Foreign Ministry**. Contact details for the Foreign Ministry of each country can be found at: http://www.ediplomat.com/dc/foreign_ministries.htm
- It is also helpful to send a copy of any correspondence to your country's **Ambassador or mission in Geneva**. A list of Geneva missions is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/t2cwt>

The resolution will be negotiated over the next two to three weeks and the vote is scheduled to take place between September 26 and 28. **Please act today!** Thanks for your help to protect and defend basic human rights by opposing this resolution!