

**NOW IS THE TIME TO ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS**

# Adopt the New Human Rights Council

March 9, 2006

We believe that the draft resolution to establish a Human Rights Council presented by the President of the General Assembly is a sound basis to strengthen the UN's human rights machinery. World leaders pledged to do this when they met at the September 2005 World Summit. We call on all states to join the consensus that has emerged in countries from all regions of the world and to adopt the draft resolution.

**The proposed Human Rights Council will be better equipped than the existing Commission on Human Rights to address urgent, serious and long-running human rights situations wherever they occur.** It will hold more frequent meetings throughout the year instead of only one. More competitive election procedures will encourage a membership that is more dedicated to the protection of human rights. Instead of slates being adopted by acclamation, members must be elected individually and a higher threshold of votes applies - at least 96 individual votes out of 191 members. A country's human rights record will be taken into account by those voting and those committing gross violations of human rights can be suspended from the body. All members must fully cooperate with the Council and they will undergo a review of their human rights record through a new universal review system that will apply to all countries.

**This is an historic opportunity to create a better human rights protection system within the United Nations.**

- We call on all members of the United Nations to ensure that the draft resolution is adopted by consensus in the General Assembly.
- No country should call for a vote or propose amendments. To do so will seriously jeopardize this sound and carefully balanced agreement that we have before us.

It is now time to move forward together to ensure that the new Human Rights Council is implemented in the spirit of reform — that governments which are seriously committed to human rights should be elected to this body to make it strong and effective.

ActionAid International  
African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies  
Amnesty International  
Association for the Protection of the Victim (APAV)  
ARC International  
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)  
Association for the Cooperation between Peoples (ACEP)  
Association for Cooperation and Development (SUL)  
Casa Alianza Honduras  
Center "Demos" (Moscow, Russia)  
Center For Democracy (Morocco)  
Center for Development of International Law  
Center for Women's Global Leadership  
Childline South Africa  
Citizens for Global Solutions  
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation  
Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka  
Comissão Teotônio Vilela  
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative  
Conectas Direitos Humanos (Brazil)  
Conference of NGOs (CONGO)  
Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace  
Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos- Peru  
Democracy Coalition Project, Ted Piccone  
Dominicans for Justice and Peace Geneva  
Earthjustice  
Latin American Federation of Associations of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees (FEDEFAM)  
Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH)  
Fédération Internationale de l'Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture  
Franciscans International  
Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)  
German United Nations Association  
Global Justice (Justicia Global)  
Human rights center, (Kyrgyzstan)  
Human Rights Council of Australia  
Human Rights Education and Information Centre  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Institute of South Africa  
Human Rights Watch  
Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos (IDDDH)  
International Center for Law in Development  
International Commission of Jurists  
International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF)  
Intercooperation and Development (INDE)  
International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism  
International Service for Human Rights  
Legal Aid Society of Uzbekistan  
NGO Coalition on Child Rights (Egypt)  
One World Trust  
Open Society Institute and Soros Foundation Network  
Organisation Mondiale Contre la Torture  
Pax Romana  
Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN)  
Rights Australia  
Rights & Democracy (Montreal)  
Somali Youth for Peace and Democracy (SYPD)  
Temple of Understanding  
The Carter Centre  
Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office  
United Nations Association of the United States of America  
United Nations Foundation  
World Federalist Movement Movement, Canada  
Youth Resource Center on Human Rights (CODAP- Geneva)