

27th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council – Item 5 - General Debate



Joint Oral Statement

Co-signed by: **Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23), Company of the Daughters of Charity of Vincent de Paul, International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), International Peace Bureau, International Society for Human Rights, International Institute of Mary Our Help of the Salesians of Don Bosco (IIMA), International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education, Development (VIDES) and Pax Romana (International Movement of Catholic Students and International Catholic Movement of Intellectuals and Cultural Affairs).**

“The Declaration of the Right to Peace”

APG23 and the co-signing NGOs take note of the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Right to Peace.

We commend the efforts of the Chair to build consensus among Member States and to root the new draft text on the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and the International Bill of Human Rights. We also welcome the reference to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, to the friendly relations among nations and the principles of human dignity and of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. On the other hands, we would like the new draft text of the declaration to be stronger and more meaningful.

Peace is a fundamental human right. All individuals and peoples have the right to live and develop in a social and international order in which all rights and fundamental freedoms universally recognised can be fully realised.

A draft declaration on the right to peace should build a new milestone in the existing International Legal framework to protect all the Rights inherent in all human beings, particularly the right to life and to live in Peace of all persons. It should be a complementary source to add values and bridge differences existing in the two bodies of law—international human rights law and international humanitarian law— as they are complementary and mutually reinforcing. It should reaffirm the interconnection and mutual reinforcement of the three pillars of the United Nations Charter.

The title and operational part of the new draft text should refer clearly to the Human Right to Peace or, at a very minimum, for the sake of consensus, to the “inherent right to life in peace” as per the 1978 declaration. Moreover, the declaration should affirm that States have the duty to refrain from propaganda for war (ICCPR art. 20), to commit in a joint and coordinated manner towards further disarmament, to respect fully the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion from which conscientious objection derives, to adopt dialogue, negotiation and other non-violent means to prevent and solve conflicts and to develop education programmes on human rights, peace education and nonviolent methods to solve conflicts.

The co-signing NGOs appeal to all Member States to renew the mandate of the Working Group on Right to Peace for making this declaration not just a step but also a quantum leap forward.

Thank You!

