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Human Rights Council
Sixty-first session
23 February–31 March 2026
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Resolution adopted by Human Rights Council on 27 March 2026

61/7. Sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Covenants on Human Rights

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes, principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations,

Mindful that the International Covenants on Human Rights constitute the first all-embracing and legally binding international treaties in the field of human rights and, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, form the core of the International Bill of Human Rights,

Recalling that 2026 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the General Assembly in its resolution 2200 (XXI) on 16 December 1966, and acknowledging the fundamental importance and special status of these basic human rights instruments of the United Nations,

Recalling also that 2026 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Human Rights Council, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/251 on 15 March 2006,

Considering that the anniversary of the adoption of the International Covenants on Human Rights provides an opportunity for the United Nations and its Member States to intensify their efforts to promote awareness and strengthened observance of the rights set out in the Covenants and other international instruments in the field of human rights,

Reaffirming the importance of the observance and effective implementation of the universally recognized standards in the field of human rights as contained in the Covenants, and taking note of the relevant contributions made by the Human Rights Council in this regard,

Recalling that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis, and that while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their

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political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Reaffirming that the promotion and protection of one category of rights should never exempt or excuse States from the promotion and protection of the other rights, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and with international law,

1. *Reaffirms* the importance of the International Covenants on Human Rights as major components of international efforts to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Calls upon* all States that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

3. *Encourages* States parties to consider limiting the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocols thereto, to formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible and to review regularly such reservations with a view to withdrawing them so as to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the relevant treaty;

4. *Calls for* the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, where applicable, the Optional Protocols thereto;

5. *Invites* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to make provisions for events and arrangements aimed at the celebration of the anniversary of the International Covenants on Human Rights and to circulate the relevant information among States and other stakeholders;

6. *Also invites* States, as well as relevant United Nations organs and agencies, in cooperation with the High Commissioner, to celebrate the anniversary of the International Covenants on Human Rights by intensifying their own contributions to United Nations system-wide efforts to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, welcomes in this regard the various commemorative initiatives, and calls upon them to take part meaningfully in those processes, where appropriate;

7. *Decides* to convene at its sixty-third session a high-level panel discussion accessible for persons with disabilities on the topic “The sixtieth anniversary of the International Covenants on Human Rights: universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights”, in order to give the sixtieth anniversary of the International Covenants on Human Rights attention commensurate with its historical significance;

8. *Recommends* that the General Assembly mark the sixtieth anniversary of the International Covenants on Human Rights during its eighty-first session.

51st meeting
27 March 2026

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 26 to 0, with 21 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Angola, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, China, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Mauritius, Mexico, Pakistan, Qatar, South Africa, Thailand, Viet Nam

Abstaining:

Albania, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Chile, Cyprus, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Marshall Islands, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland]