

GA73 | Third Committee adopts its first resolution on peaceful assembly and freedom of association

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For the first time, a resolution on peaceful assembly and freedom of association was negotiated at the UN General Assembly's human rights committee, in a text presented by the United States.



ISHR welcomes efforts at the UN's Third Committee to pay greater attention to the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association. The [recently adopted resolution](#) builds upon the significant normative progress and reaffirmed a number of essential elements achieved in several Human Rights Council[1]and Third Committee[2]resolutions.

'The resolution is a useful contribution to efforts to articulate and ensure the respect of the rights of human rights defenders, at the Third Committee,' said ISHR's Legal Counsel Tess McEvoy.

'The resolution explicitly lists human rights defenders - including more vulnerable groups of human rights defenders, such as women human rights defenders and those working for the rights of indigenous peoples - and acknowledges the growing threats, risks and dangers they face when exercising these rights,' added McEvoy.

The resolution condemns the use of harassment, intimidation, or extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and killings by State and non-State actors to violently suppress and silence individuals for participating in peaceful protests. Furthermore, it calls on States to ensure the protection of journalists and media workers covering demonstrations and protests both online and offline.

ISHR regrets that seven States - China, Russia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Iran, Belarus, Nicaragua and Syria - called for a vote on the resolution, criticising the text for being unbalanced as it failed to include proposals made, including proposals to limit the exercise of these fundamental rights.

Notwithstanding this, the resolution passed with 140 in favour, 0 votes against and 38 abstentions, with substantial cross regional support.

'We urge all States to implement this resolution at the national level. As it stresses, it is the prime responsibility of States to ensure these fundamental rights are fully protected and accountability for human rights violations is secured', added McEvoy.

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[1]HRC Res 39/11 on "equal participation in public and political affairs", consensus, 28 September 2018; HRC Resolution 38/11 on "the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of peaceful protests", consensus, 5 July 2018; HRC Resolution 38/12 on "Civil society space: engagement with international and regional organizations", vote (35 to 0, 11 abstentions), 6 July 2018; HRC Res 31/32 on Protecting human rights defenders, whether individuals, groups or organs of society, addressing economic, social and cultural rights; HRC Res 34/5 Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

[2]GA Resolutions on human rights defenders: 68/181(consensus), 72/24 (consensus); UN GA resolution 72/175 "on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity" (consensus).

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