

EU priorities for the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council

European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on EU priorities for the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council (2014/2612(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the UN human rights conventions and optional protocols thereto,
- having regard to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/251 establishing the Human Rights Council (UNHRC),
- having regard to the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000 and to the UN General Assembly resolutions thereon,
- having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Social Charter and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights,
- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy and the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, as adopted at the 3179th Foreign Affairs Council meeting of 25 June 2012,
- having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 13 June 2012 on the EU Special Representative for Human Rights¹,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), including Parliament's priorities in this context, and in particular that of 7 February 2013²,
- having regard to its urgent resolutions on human rights issues,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 December 2013 on the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2012 and the European Union's policy on the matter³,
- having regard to the EU Foreign Affairs Council's conclusions on the EU's priorities in the UN human rights fora, adopted on 10 February 2014,
- having regard to Articles 2, 3(5), 18, 21, 27 and 47 of the Treaty on European Union,
- having regard to the forthcoming sessions of the UNHRC in 2014, in particular the 25th regular session, to be held from 3 to 28 March 2014,
- having regard to Rule 110(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,

¹ OJ C 332 E, 15.11.2013, p. 114.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0055.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0575.

- A. whereas respect for, and the promotion and safeguarding of, the universality of human rights is part of the European Union's ethical and legal *acquis* and one of the cornerstones of European unity and integrity;
- B. whereas the EU's credibility in the UNHRC will be bolstered by increasing consistency between its internal and external policies relating to human rights;
- C. whereas the EU and its Member States should strive to speak out with one voice against human rights violations in order to achieve the best possible results, and should in this context continue to strengthen cooperation and enhance organisational arrangements and coordination among the Member States and among the EU institutions;
- D. whereas the EU Foreign Affairs Council of 10 February 2014 set out its priorities ahead of the 25th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council and the forthcoming UN General Assembly Third Committee, which included the situation in Syria, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, Sri Lanka, Myanmar/Burma, Belarus, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Mali and Sudan; whereas the thematic priorities outlined by the Foreign Affairs Council included the death penalty, freedom of religion or belief, the rights of the child, women's rights, the post-2015 global agenda, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of association and assembly, NGO cooperation with UN human rights bodies, torture, LGBTI issues, racism, indigenous peoples, economic, social and cultural rights, business and human rights, and support for UN human rights bodies and mechanisms;
- E. whereas an EU Special Representative for Human Rights (EUSR) was appointed on 25 July 2012, whose role it is to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of EU human rights policy and to contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy;
- F. whereas 14 new members were elected to the UNHRC in October 2013 and took up their membership on 1 January 2014, namely Algeria, China, Cuba, France, the Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Vietnam, Russia and the United Kingdom; whereas nine EU Member States are now UNHRC members;
- G. whereas the priority theme of the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls;
- H. whereas corruption in the public and private sectors perpetrates and aggravates inequalities and discrimination when it comes to equal enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and whereas it is proven that acts of corruption and human rights violations involve the misuse of power, lack of accountability and various forms of discrimination;
- I. whereas the ratification of both of the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) by states and the activation of the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression will further contribute to ending impunity for perpetrators of this crime;

1. Welcomes the priorities set out by the Council with a view to the 25th regular session of the UNHRC; urges the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Member States to take into account its recommendations when promoting the EU's priorities in the UNHRC;

The work of the UN Human Rights Council

2. Reiterates its belief that elections to the UNHRC need to be competitive, and expresses its opposition to the arranging of uncontested elections by regional groups; reiterates the importance of standards for UNHRC membership as regards commitment and performance in the human rights field, and urges the Member States to insist on such standards when defining the candidates they will vote for; emphasises that UNHRC members are required to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights; reiterates the importance of strong and transparent criteria for reinstating suspended members;
3. Expresses its concern about human rights abuses in a number of newly elected members of the UNHRC, including Algeria, China, Cuba, Morocco, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam;
4. Notes that Kazakhstan is currently one of the 47 members of the HRC; points out that the human rights situation in that country has deteriorated further since the brutal police repression of peaceful demonstrators and oil workers, their families and supporters in Zhanaozen on 16 December 2011, which, according to official figures, left 15 people dead and over 100 injured; calls on the HRC to implement without delay the call made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, for an independent international investigation into the killing of oil workers in Kazakhstan; calls on Kazakhstan, as a member of the HRC, to guarantee human rights, repeal Article 164 of its penal code on 'inciting social discord', end the repression of, and lift the administrative obstacles placed in the way of, independent media, release political prisoners – including Vadim Kuramshin, a lawyer for human rights defenders, Roza Tuletaeva, a union activist, and Vladimir Kozlov, an opposition politician – and drop all requests for the extradition of opposition politicians;
5. Continues to oppose 'bloc voting' in the UNHRC; urges the countries that are members of the UNHRC to remain transparent in their voting;
6. Regrets the fact that the space for interaction between civil society and the UNHRC is shrinking and that NGOs are being offered fewer opportunities to speak at these sessions; urges the EU and the UNHRC to ensure that civil society is allowed to contribute as fully as possible to the 25th session of the UNHRC, as well as to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process and other UN human rights mechanisms, without fear of reprisals upon return to their home country; condemns reports of such reprisals, and urges the EEAS and the Member States to ensure that such cases are followed up in a systematic manner;
7. Commends the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, for her continued efforts in the treaty body strengthening processes; strongly reiterates the multi-stakeholder nature of the treaty bodies and stresses that civil society needs to be included on a permanent basis in these processes; emphasises, furthermore, that the independence and effectiveness of the treaty bodies must be preserved and enhanced;

Country-specific issues

Syria

8. Reiterates its strong condemnation of the widespread violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Syrian regime, including all acts of violence, systematic torture and executions of prisoners; condemns all human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by armed groups opposing the regime; expresses serious concern about the severe impact of the three-year conflict on the civilian population, and the continued deterioration of the humanitarian situation within the country and in the region; calls on all armed actors to put an immediate end to the violence in Syria; fully supports the recent round of talks initiated on the basis of the Geneva communiqué, which should be the first step in a process that will lead to a political and democratic solution to the conflict, so as to facilitate a Syrian-led democratic transition that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people;
9. Urges all parties to the conflict, and in particular the Syrian regime, to ensure comprehensive and secure cross-border access for international humanitarian aid efforts, and to fulfil their promise of allowing women and children to escape besieged cities such as Homs and the Yarmouk camp; welcomes UN Security Council Resolution 2139 of 22 February 2014, calling for humanitarian aid convoys to be allowed access throughout the country in order to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population, and calls for its rapid implementation; calls for the release of peaceful activists in government detention and civilian hostages being held by armed groups;
10. Stresses that, in view of the unprecedented scale of the crisis, alleviating the suffering of millions of Syrians in need of basic goods and services must be a priority for the EU and the international community at large; reminds the EU Member States of their humanitarian responsibility towards the Syrian refugees, and notes that tragedies such as that in Lampedusa should not happen again; urges the Commission and the Member States to aid the refugees fleeing the conflict; notes that in its resolution of 9 October 2013, Parliament encouraged the Member States to address acute needs by providing safe entry into the EU to allow temporary admission of Syrians and through resettlement over and above existing national quotas, as well as humanitarian admission;
11. Reiterates its call on the EEAS and the Member States to ensure that the situation in Syria continues to be treated as a matter of the highest priority within the UN framework, notably in the UNHRC;
12. Highlights the fact that deliberate starvation of civilians and attacks on health facilities are prohibited under international law and will be regarded as war crimes; reiterates the importance of ensuring accountability at all levels; commends in this context the work of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria, including its latest report, to be discussed at the UNHRC, and calls on the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the recent report, which includes thousands of photographs of cases of torture reportedly perpetrated by the Syrian military; reiterates its call for the UN Security Council (UNSC) to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court for a formal investigation; asks the Vice-President / High Representative to take demonstrable action in this direction;

Egypt

13. Condemns the human rights abuses perpetrated in Egypt, including the harassment and detention of journalists, civil society and political opposition activists and the excessive use of force resulting in the deaths of a large number of civilians, for instance during the three-year anniversary of the revolution and the days around the referendum in January

2013; urges the Egyptian authorities to ensure that full, transparent and independent investigations are carried out into the deaths of civilians, in order to hold all perpetrators accountable; condemns the fact that tens of thousands of Egyptians are being held in prison and repressed, including the Muslim Brotherhood, which is described as a terrorist organisation, hindering the possibility of the inclusive reconciliation process that is necessary for the country's stability and development; calls on the UNHRC to condemn these human rights violations, to monitor any investigations that are held and to consider launching its own investigation in the absence of progress by the Egyptian authorities; stresses the importance of the swift opening of a regional OHCHR office in Cairo, as agreed by the Egyptian authorities;

14. Takes note of the new Egyptian constitution; notes the reference to the independence of Christian and Jewish religious affairs, and recognises progress with regard to freedom of religion; welcomes the constitution's reference to a civilian government and the equality of all citizens, including the improvement in women's rights, the provision on children's rights, the ban on torture in all its forms and manifestations, the prohibition and criminalisation of all forms of slavery and the commitment to abide by international human rights treaties signed by Egypt; strongly deplores the level of power the constitution places in the hands of the army and the military courts;
15. Is concerned about the fact that thousands of people, mainly refugees from Eritrea and Somalia, including many women and children, are losing their lives, disappearing or being kidnapped and held hostage for ransom, tortured, sexually exploited or killed for the organ trade by human traffickers in Sinai; recalls, in this context, that Article 89 of the new constitution declares that all forms of slavery, oppression, forced exploitation of human beings, the sex trade and other forms of human trafficking are prohibited and criminalised by law in Egypt;

Libya

16. Calls for the adoption of a resolution during the forthcoming UNHRC session, building upon the OHCHR report and strengthening the OHCHR's mandate to monitor and report to the UNHRC on the human rights situation and challenges faced in Libya; is concerned about the illegal conflict-related detentions and the practice of torture and extra-judicial killings, and welcomes in this context the recommendations of the UN Support Mission report on torture; voices its concern about the targeting of media workers and calls for the protection of media pluralism and freedom of expression; urges that support be provided for conflict resolution and national reconciliation;

Tunisia

17. Welcomes the adoption of a new constitution by Tunisia on 26 January 2014, which could serve as a source of inspiration for the countries in the region and beyond; encourages the Tunisian authorities to conduct inclusive, transparent and credible elections later this year;

Morocco

18. Calls on Morocco, as a new member of the UNHRC, to continue negotiations for a peaceful and long-lasting solution to the Western Sahara conflict, and reaffirms the right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination, which should be decided through a democratic referendum, in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions;

Palestine

19. Welcomes the participation of Palestine as a UN non-member observer state since November 2012; reiterates its support for this endeavour; notes the support expressed by the EU for Palestine's becoming a full member of the UN as part of a political solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict; reaffirms that the EU will not accept any changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties; shares, in this regard, the EU Council's conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process of 16 December 2013 that deplored Israel's continuous expansion of settlements, which are illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle to peace; deplores human rights abuses by the Palestinian authorities as well as the continued firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel;

Israel

20. Welcomes Israel's re-engagement with the UNHRC, and the upcoming adoption of the second-cycle UPR report on the country; calls on the Israeli authorities to cooperate with all Special Procedures, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied territories; supports the conclusions of the reports of the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in relation to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, and calls on Israel to implement the recommendations of the independent international fact-finding mission on the implications of Israeli settlements for the human rights of the Palestinian people; expresses its deep concern over the reported cases of political detention of children in Israeli places of detention;

Bahrain

21. Expresses concern about the situation of human rights defenders and political opposition activists in Bahrain; welcomes the statement of September 2013 on Bahrain in the UNHRC, signed by all EU Member States; calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience, political activists, journalists, human rights defenders and peaceful protesters; calls for the EU Member States to work towards the adoption during the next session of the UNHRC of a resolution on the human rights situation in Bahrain, focused on the implementation of Bahrain's commitments made during the UPR process and the recommendations, including those concerning human rights defenders, of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, welcomed by the King of Bahrain;

Saudi Arabia

22. Calls on Saudi Arabia, as a newly elected member of the UNHRC, to heed the recommendations of the 17th Universal Periodic Review Working Group session to put an end to all forms of discrimination against women in legislation and in practice and to allow women to participate fully and equally in society; to take all necessary measures to combat domestic violence and ensure victims have access to mechanisms of protection and redress; to enact a law prohibiting all early and forced child marriages, and establish the minimum legal age of marriage at 18 years; to adopt laws to protect the freedoms of association, expression, peaceful assembly and religion; to impose a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its eventual abolition; to allow for the registration of NGOs active in the area of human rights; and to ratify key human rights instruments;

Iran

23. Welcomes the resolution adopted by the UNHRC in March 2013 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iran; reaffirms its support for the continuation of the mandate, and calls on Iran to allow the UN Special Rapporteur entry into the country as a crucial step towards opening up a dialogue to assess the human rights situation in Iran; reiterates its condemnation of the death penalty in Iran and the significant increase in executions, with 40 people hanged in the first two weeks of 2014, and the continued violation of the right to freedom of belief; notes the early signs of progress that the Iranian Government has shown with regard to human rights, including the release of political prisoners; calls on the EU and the UNHRC to continue to monitor closely the human rights situation, and to ensure that human rights remain a key priority in all dealings with the Iranian Government;

Russia

24. Strongly condemns the 'Foreign Agent' laws in Russia, which are being used to harass NGOs through the use of office raids, fines and other intimidating methods; calls on the EU and its Member States to maintain pressure on Russia, both at the UNHRC and outside, to end these clear violations of the freedoms of expression and of association; expresses strong concern at other continued human rights abuses in Russia, such as repression of the media, discriminatory laws towards sexual minorities, violation of the right of assembly and lack of judicial independence;

Belarus

25. Reiterates its support for the UNHRC's Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Belarus; calls for the mandate of the Special Rapporteur to be extended for another year when it comes to an end in June 2014; welcomes the resolution adopted on Belarus in June 2013 and the continued acknowledgement of, and attention paid to, the significant human rights abuses in the country; urges the EEAS and the Member States to maintain pressure on Belarus on the subject of human rights;

Uzbekistan

26. Welcomes the outcome of the UPR of Uzbekistan; views as regrettable the continued refusal by the Government of Uzbekistan to respond favourably to visit requests by UNHRC Special Procedures; urges the EU Member States to strive for the creation of a dedicated monitoring mechanism at the UNHRC on the situation of human rights in Uzbekistan;

Central African Republic

27. Reiterates its profound concern at the situation in the Central African Republic; calls on the international community to support as a matter of urgency the UN humanitarian appeal, which is severely underfunded, and calls for an improved security situation with a view to ensuring access to humanitarian assistance for the population; hopes that the rapid deployment of the EU CSDP mission will contribute to an improvement in the situation on the ground; welcomes UNSC Resolution 2136 (2014), the UN Human Rights Council resolution, its Special session on the situation in the Central African Republic of 20 January 2014, and the appointment of an Independent Expert on the human rights situation in the

country; urges new interim President Samba-Panza to do all that she can to end the violence and calm sectarian tensions in the country;

Democratic Republic of the Congo

28. Highlights the UN's call for continued support for the conflict-torn eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), so as to ensure that it does not become a forgotten crisis; is seriously concerned about the recent massive displacement of population in the Katanga region; strongly condemns the attacks by rebel forces in the east of the country on the civilian population, including women and children; strongly condemns the systematic use of rape as a weapon of war; expresses deep concern about the ongoing use of children as soldiers and calls for their disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration; considers that the UN Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region remains a key framework for the achievement of sustainable peace; welcomes UNSC Resolution 2136 of 30 January 2014, which renews the arms embargo imposed on the DRC;

Eritrea

29. Urges continued attention and vigilance on the part of the EU and the UNHRC with regard to the human rights situation in Eritrea, as serious human rights violations are creating high numbers of refugees and migrants; welcomes the UNHRC resolution on the human rights situation in Eritrea adopted unanimously in June 2013; commends the first report by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the country; calls for the renewal of the mandate of this Special Rapporteur during the 26th UNHRC session;

Mali

30. Welcomes the appointment of an Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Mali, the continued monitoring of the human rights situation post-conflict, and the strong leadership role played by other African states in improving the human rights situation in the country; calls for the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert;

South Sudan

31. Expresses its deep concern about the situation in South Sudan, including the political fight for leadership of the country, which has provoked increasing ethnic clashes and the displacement of more than 650 000 people; calls on the EU Member States to raise this matter in the UNHRC, in order to keep the issue of the situation in South Sudan high on the international agenda; welcomes the agreement on cessation of hostilities signed on 23 January 2014, but underlines the fact that this is only a first step towards peace and reconciliation; condemns the widespread human rights violations and abuses committed, and underlines that those responsible must be held accountable; welcomes the engagement of the African Union in creating a Commission of Inquiry to serve as a basis for justice and accountability and future reconciliation;

Sri Lanka

32. Condemns the ongoing attacks on religious minorities, and the harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists; acknowledges the progress made in reconstruction and the implementation of some of the recommendations made by the

Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, but regrets the fact that the Government of Sri Lanka continues to fail to provide for independent, credible investigations into past violations of international human rights and humanitarian law; strongly supports the recommendation by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to establish an independent international inquiry mechanism which would contribute to establishing the truth if domestic inquiry mechanisms fail;

Burma/Myanmar

33. Welcomes the resolution adopted by the UNHRC on Burma/Myanmar and the continued work of the Special Rapporteur; calls on the UNHRC not to discontinue or modify the mandate of the Special Rapporteur as long as an OHCHR country office with a full mandate is not established inside the country, and calls on Burma/Myanmar to ensure that the prisoner review committee continues its work on resolving all pending cases and repealing the controversial law affecting freedom of expression and of association (in particular the 2011 Peaceful Assembly and Processions Law); condemns the continued violence and abuses perpetrated against the Rohingya minority in Rakhine State and attacks against Muslim and other religious minorities, and calls for a full, transparent and independent investigation into such violations;

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

34. Welcomes the planned extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the resolution adopted by consensus in March 2013, and the presentation of the report by the Commission of Inquiry on human rights in that country; reaffirms its call for the Government of the DPRK to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur and to facilitate his visit to the country; urges the UNHRC to heed the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry, with a particular focus on the need to condemn international crimes committed in the DPRK, to step up the UN's capacity to document human rights violations in the country, and to set up appropriate international mechanisms to ensure accountability for international crimes committed in the DPRK;

Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Somalia and Sudan

35. Welcomes the extension of the mandates of the independent experts on Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Somalia, and Sudan; urges the authorities of these countries to cooperate fully with mandate-holders;

Thematic issues

Rights of the child

36. Welcomes the work of the UNHRC on the rights of the child, such as the resolution of September 2013 on preventable mortality and morbidity of children under five years of age as a human rights concern, and the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child; calls on states to ratify the 3rd Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which will allow children to submit their complaints to the Committee; commends the upcoming UNHRC resolution on the rights of the child as an excellent example of cooperation between the EU and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries in the United Nations (GRULAC); expresses its deep concern over the cases of torture and

detention of children reported by organisations such as UNICEF and Amnesty International; calls on the UN to further explore such cases and to formulate recommendations for actions;

Women and girls

37. Calls for the EU to participate actively in the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in order not to undermine the ‘*acquis*’ of the UN Beijing Platform for Action, such as access to education and health as a basic human right, including sexual and reproductive rights; strongly condemns the use of sexual violence against women as a tactic of war, including crimes such as mass rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, gender-based forms of persecution including female genital mutilation, trafficking, early and forced marriages, honour killings and all other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity; calls again on the EU and all the Member States to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;

Torture

38. Reiterates the importance of fighting torture and other forms of ill-treatment and the priority that the EU gives this issue, especially with regard to children; calls on the UNHRC to use the annual resolution on torture to renew the Special Rapporteur’s mandate for another three years, and to ensure effective follow-up to past resolutions on torture; urges the EEAS, the Commission and the EU Member States to demonstrate their shared commitment to eradicating torture and to supporting victims, notably by continuing or, where applicable, starting to contribute to the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture and the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture;

Death penalty

39. Reaffirms its strong condemnation of the use of the death penalty, and strongly supports the moratorium as a step towards abolition; calls on the EU, its Member States and the UNHRC to continue to push for abolition worldwide; strongly urges countries still carrying out capital punishment to publish clear and accurate figures on the number of sentences and executions;

Freedom of religion or belief

40. Condemns the continued violations of the right to freedom of religion or belief worldwide; reiterates the importance which the EU places on this issue; calls on the Member States to continue working on this; welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief; restates once again that freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom to change or abandon one’s religion or belief, is a fundamental human right; stresses therefore the need to effectively combat all forms of discrimination against religious minorities around the world;

LGBTI rights

41. Expresses concern about the recent increase in discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity; encourages close monitoring of the situation in Nigeria and Uganda, where new laws seriously threaten the freedom of sexual minorities; condemns the introduction of discriminatory laws and repression of free speech in Russia; reaffirms its support for the

continued work by the High Commissioner on Human Rights to combat these discriminatory laws and practices, and the work of the UN more generally on this issue; recommends active participation by the EU Member States, the Council and the EEAS in combating the attempts to undermine these rights;

Caste-based discrimination

42. Condemns caste-based discrimination; expresses deep concern about the continued widespread human rights violations on the basis of caste and the acts of violence, including sexual violence against women belonging to the communities concerned; welcomes the work of the OHCHR and UN Special Procedures mandate-holders on combating this form of discrimination; urges the EU Member States to promote the endorsement of the draft UN Principles and Guidelines for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work, and calls on the UNHRC to adopt this framework;

Right to peaceful assembly

43. Calls on the EU to support the follow-up of the OHCHR report on effective measures and best practices to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of peaceful protests, notably by supporting efforts to develop the international legal framework relating to the right of peaceful assembly;

Housing

44. Restates its welcome for the importance placed by the UNHRC on the right to housing; reiterates also its call on the Union and its Member States to promote access to adequate housing as a fundamental right;

Water and sanitation

45. Welcomes the resolution adopted in September 2013 by the UNHRC on the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on this issue, specifically through the development of a handbook on how to implement the right to safe drinking water and sanitation; calls on the EEAS, the EU Member States and the UNHRC to maintain focus on this often neglected but vitally important human right to water and sanitation;

Business and human rights

46. Strongly supports the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; calls on the EU and its Member States to take an active role in the 7th session of the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises and to support efforts to align their policies with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights; reiterates its request to the European Commission to report by the end of 2014 on implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the EU Member States; notes the emerging initiative to call for a legally binding international instrument on business and human rights to be concluded within the UN system;

Corruption and human rights

47. Calls on the EU and its Member States to support the establishment of a UN Special Rapporteur on financial crime, corruption and human rights;

Sport

48. Welcomes the resolution adopted in September 2013 on promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal; expresses concern about the situation of migrant workers in Qatar, particularly in the build-up to the 2022 World Cup; takes note of Qatar's initiative to address this concern; calls on the Qatari authorities to reform their labour law, to abolish the sponsorship law ('kafala system') in place throughout the region and to ratify relevant international conventions; urges the EU to ensure that EU companies working in the construction industry in Qatar are not contributing to the human rights abuses faced by migrant workers; emphasises the importance of scrutinising all major sporting events and their interaction with human rights, such as the February 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics in Russia and the continued suppression of freedom of assembly and the rights of sexual minorities, and the forthcoming World Cup in Brazil, where there are reports of house evictions and population displacements throughout the country;

Use of armed drones

49. Is concerned about the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law arising from unlawful targeted killings carried out by armed drones, which have led to unknown numbers of civilians being killed, seriously injured or traumatised outside declared conflict zones; supports the efforts under the relevant UN Special Procedures to promote transparent and accountable use of armed drones by states in line with the established international legal framework; calls on the EU, its Member States and the UNHRC to continue to support investigations into unlawful targeted killings and to follow up on the recommendations by the UN Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and on counter-terrorism and human rights;

International Criminal Court

50. Reiterates its full support for the International Criminal Court, and remains vigilant regarding any attempts to undermine its legitimacy; requests the active development of an EU position on the crime of aggression and the Kampala amendments;

Universal Periodic Review

51. Reaffirms the importance of universality of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), with a view to arriving at a full understanding of the human rights situation in all UN member states, and reiterates the continued importance of this second cycle of review focusing on the implementation of the recommendations accepted during the first cycle; calls again, however, for the recommendations that were not accepted by states during the first cycle to be reconsidered in the continuation of the UPR process;

52. Calls on EU Member States participating in the UPR interactive dialogues to put forward recommendations that are specific and measurable, in order to improve the quality of the follow-up to, and implementation of, accepted recommendations; underlines the importance of the Commission and the EU Member States providing technical assistance in order to help the states under review to implement the recommendations to present mid-term updates in order to help improve implementation;

53. Stresses the need to include the UPR recommendations systematically in the EU's human rights dialogues and consultations and in EU human rights country strategies; reiterates its recommendation that Parliament raise these recommendations during its own delegation visits to third countries;
54. Welcomes all steps that allow a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, to participate fully in the UPR process; stresses the importance of the EEAS and the Member States highlighting in the UNHRC the worrisome issue of the shrinking NGO space in a number of countries around the world;

Special Procedures

55. Reiterates its strong support for the Special Procedures; stresses the fundamental importance of the independence of these mandates and urges all UN states to cooperate fully with the Special Procedures, including by receiving mandate-holders for country visits, replying to their urgent requests for action and in connection with allegations of violations and ensuring proper follow-up to the recommendations made by the mandate-holders; supports the statement released on 10 December 2013 by the 72 Special Procedures experts and is concerned that states' lack of cooperation with Special Procedures hinders their capacity to implement their mandate;
56. Strongly condemns all forms of reprisal against human rights defenders and activists who cooperate with the UPR process and the Special Procedures, particularly in the case of China; calls on the UNHRC to investigate reports that indicate that a Chinese activist, Cao Shunli, who advocated civil society involvement in the UPR, has been detained since 14 September 2013; urges the UNHRC President actively to follow up on this and other similar cases, and for all states to provide adequate protection against such acts of intimidation; stresses that such acts undermine the whole UN human rights system;

EU involvement

57. Reiterates the importance of the EU participating actively in all UN human rights mechanisms, including the UNHRC; encourages the EU Member States to do so by co-sponsoring and leading on resolutions, by actively participating in debates and interactive dialogues, and by issuing statements; strongly supports the increasing practice on the part of the EU of cross-regional initiatives;
58. Reaffirms the importance of integrating the work being done in Geneva in the context of the UNHRC into the relevant internal and external activities of the EU, including those of Parliament, such as the committee and interparliamentary delegations, and UN Special Rapporteurs' contributions to committee meetings;
59. Encourages the EUSR to continue to enhance the effectiveness, coherence and visibility of the EU's human rights policy in the context of the UNHRC and in further developing close cooperation with the OHCHR and the Special Procedures, and regrets the absence of the VP/HR in the High-Level Segment of the UNHRC;
60. Stresses again the importance of effective coordination and cooperation between the EEAS, the Commission and EU Member States on human rights issues; encourages the EEAS, in particular through the EU Delegations in Geneva and New York, to increase EU coherence by means of timely and substantive consultation and to deliver a 'one-voice message';

61. Stresses the importance of the EU Member States supporting the UNHRC, by working together towards the fulfilment of the indivisibility and universality of human rights and, in particular, by ratifying all the international human rights instruments that this body has established; reiterates its regret that no EU Member State has ratified the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; reiterates the fact that several Member States have not yet adopted and/or ratified the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, or the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; reiterates its call for all the Member States to ratify these conventions and protocols; stresses the importance of the Member States' submitting their periodic reports to the UN monitoring bodies in a timely manner; calls on the EU to actively develop an EU position on the crime of aggression and the Kampala amendments;
62. Reiterates the importance of continued EU support in defending the independence of the OHCHR so as to ensure it can continue to exercise its task in an effective and impartial manner; highlights that it is essential to the OHCHR's impartiality and functioning for it to be assured of sufficient funding, especially in view of the current need to open new OHCHR regional offices as a result of emerging situations; underlines the importance of securing sufficient funding to cover the treaty bodies' increasing workload; calls on the EU to take a leadership role in ensuring the effective functioning of the treaty body system, including with regard to adequate funding;
63. Reaffirms that the protection of human rights defenders is a key priority within the EU's human rights policy; values, therefore, the practical and financial support allocated to the urgent protection of, and support for, human rights defenders under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR);

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64. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General, the President of the 68th UN General Assembly, the President of the UN Human Rights Council, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the EU-UN Working Group established by the Committee on Foreign Affairs.