

General comment No. 36 on article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life



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Life Network Foundation Malta strongly objects to the proposed alterations on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life, imposing on countries legislation that demeans the value and dignity of every human life.

No foundational human rights document recognizes a right to abortion or a right to die. It would be pertinent for the present Human Rights Council to examine the historical setting of the 1948, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the aftermath of the horrific mass violations of human rights in World War II. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) declares that freedom, justice, and peace in the world rely on the “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family.”

There is no doubt that the preborn child is human, as are the vulnerable, and disabled and sick members of our human family. No right to liberty or privacy can override the fact that human rights cannot and must not, in the name of true justice, come at the expense of exterminating another human life.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is a treaty intended to implement into law the rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). A “declaration” like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has no binding legal effect; it is not “law.”

However, conventions like the ICCPR, as treaties, bind those nations that ratify them. Echoing the UDHR, Article 6 of the ICCPR clearly affirms a legally protected right to life: "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life."

Any alteration to the ICCPR in this respect is therefore unacceptable and puts countries like Malta under pressure to change our laws protecting life from conception.

It is shocking to see such proposals being discussed at the level of the Human Rights Council when there are so many urgent issues to discuss worldwide to alleviate human suffering.

History has many lessons to teach us as universal citizens and guardians of the world we live in. Just as surely as the time when Black slavery was exposed and rejected for what it was, that is the oppression, exploitation and violence done to our human brothers and sisters. By the same reason abortion should be exposed for what it is and what it does to preborn human beings. Abortion involves the violent extermination of preborn human life. The human rights of the human preborn child are not taken into account, neither are the long term effects of the devastation of abortion on the mother.

In consequence in the abortion debate, 'the abortion issue was not seen in the progression of laws securing constitutional rights, and the issue of the unborn was considered peripheral to the case. As in the case of slavery, segregation, the exploitation of workers and child labour, the constitutional issue was given a legal cover that became the focus of the dispute and the deciding factor in the majority opinion'.

As in the case of slavery, one day the truth will win the day.

In the case of a created 'right to die' one has only has to look at the figures coming from the Netherlands to see that this is not a solution. What was once proposed as a law with safeguards to be applied in cases of severe irreversible suffering is now the death sentence of the demented, depressed, disabled and those who have had 'enough of life'.

What people want and need is support and end of life care. Professional palliative care delivered with dignity. People need a message of hope, that all of us, in any stage of our life have human dignity and that our lives have value.

Life Network Foundation Malta strongly objects to the proposed alterations on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life, which go directly against their remit to protect life - all of life. Furthermore, we object strongly to the imposition of this viewpoint on our country's legislation. The Human Rights Council's prerogative should include a brief to protect all human lives, because all lives matter.

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Ref:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The RIGHTS OF the UNBORN The Constitutional Challenge to Roe v. Wade, Clifford Stevens