

Input to Human Rights Council resolution 29/22 on the protection of the family

KCSSZ: The Confederation of Family Associations in the Carpathian Basin (KCSSZ) was founded in 2001. The founders' intention was to spread the pro-family approach both in the Carpathian basin and on the international platform. Besides, they decided to coordinate the collaboration of the family associations of the area and of the civil movements standing for their interests.

NOE: The National Association of Large Families in Hungary (NOE) is one of the oldest Hungarian NGOs founded in 1987. With cc. 14,000 registered member families and 5 family members on the average in every family, it is among the biggest NGOs in Hungary in terms of membership.

We, as NGOs focusing our work on representation of the interest of families, protection of child rights and women's rights in response to the need of our membership and beyond, in the whole area of activity striving for the well-being of families and of the family members, welcome the initiatives of Human Rights Council resolutions 26/11 and 29/22, inviting States to further strengthen the execution of their obligations towards families recognizing it to be a crucial issue for the future of our society.

We believe that acknowledging the family as the base unit of society and recognizing individuals as parts of a family framework is a step forward because this perspective focuses on the organic nature of human relations and mankind. Therefore, we especially support the view of the family as a natural and fundamental group of society that is entitled to the protection of society and of the state *per se*. Also, we find it fitting to recognize the role of families in many fields of social development, like transmitting tradition and values through generations, establishing identity, being a fundamental environment in teaching respect for others, respect of human rights, responsibility to care for others, especially for the elderly, contribution to sustainable development, part in the elimination of poverty and creation of a just, stable and secure society.

Furthermore, family as a natural unit provides the environment for children to grow up and in doing so a harmonious and loving atmosphere is crucial. In the best interest of the child states are to give all assistance to the child and the family to be nurtured in their natural family environment. That is, states must help family preservation, integration, reunification and prevent their disintegration. Naturally, a family is composed of children and their parents, as children have the right to grow up in their own family. Being an NGO for large families we certainly must call attention to large families as an important form of families that need special respect. These families should no way be discriminated but supported. Respect, adaptation and sharing our common goods can be learned in large families which are crucial values for a sustainable future. ~~Although~~ families might be of different composition like single-parent families or broken families and special attention has to be paid to these or other economically vulnerable families like large families and families including older or disabled people.

In fact, action must be taken to give the opportunity for all families to be able to provide for their children and create appropriate circumstances for them in the family framework. Since child poverty, mostly means the poverty of the whole family, it impedes children to be nurtured in an environment of optimal physical, mental, psychic and moral development, where they could explore their talents. However, stability and predictability is crucial in this field due to the sensitivity of the families. Therefore, states must take extra care in assigning family allowances and other economic policies to avoid child poverty. Thus, it is highly welcome and recommended that states scanned their policies through ~~infocusing to~~ the interest of families, and examined possible effects on them as they are both a vulnerable and yet a fundamental unit in society. In cases when the natural family is absolutely unsuitable to nurture the child, states must do all feasible to mitigate the consequences of family breakdown.

Another important issue is parents' right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children in the fields of culture, beliefs, religion, conscience. We find it problematic that these rights are limited by centrally taught ideologies that parents do not agree with especially in connection with family life. We strongly advise states to respect these parental rights.

As for ~~equality between men and the inequality of~~ women, we find it fundamental to provide a real choice for women, that is, states should create an environment where women can freely decide whether they want to focus on their family roles, they want to concentrate on their career and to be able to harmonize the two according to their decision. Daycare services should be made available to all families, as well as family friendly workplaces and part-time and alternative work schedules, also childcare fees should reach a level to provide for an adequate standard of living.

We see the appreciation of invisible work as a core element of the abrogation of gender inequality. The invisible work covers unpaid work which is indispensable for the maintaining of family life and has a definite and measurable social benefit. The term incorporates a huge scale of activities from taking care of disabled family members, through nursing children to supporting old parents or other family members and general housework. The only common features of these activities are that they usually remain without adequate compensation from the community or the state, and that of the bulk of them are performed by women. Invisible work done by whichever party should be acknowledged by the state and the community, otherwise it will soon lead to greater inequalities, poverty and social tension.

Whereas discussion ~~onf~~ these issues is a very important step and these resolutions show a positive future for families' interest to be taken into account, it may only take effect if states are willing to participate. Therefore, we encourage the Human Rights Council and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, States Parties and all stakeholders to find possible ways of involving more states who embrace the initiative of discussions and actions in favor of the family as a natural and fundamental group unit of society.