



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
TO THE UNITED NATIONS & OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA



*Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva*

Geneva, the 16th of February 2009

Excellency,

We are writing to you in order to kindly request the holding of a Special Session of the Human Rights Council on the 20th of February 2009, to address “The Impact of the Global Economic & Financial Crises on the Universal Realization and Effective Enjoyment of Human Rights”. This is a joint initiative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the African Group and the Federal Republic of Brazil.

As you are aware the world is facing global economic and financial crises, in which despite the fact that some will suffer more than others, all will be affected. In this context we would like to highlight the following:

1. Recent studies point to slowdowns and recession in major economies and emerging countries. There is a general understanding that global economic growth will fall; exports volumes and revenues will decrease; foreign direct investment would adversely be affected; unemployment will rise and incomes will fall. Human rights would thus be negatively affected by these crises.
2. As the main human rights body of the United Nations, the Human Rights Council must have a say on the issue from its own perspective and contribute positively to the ongoing international and multilateral efforts, as well as to avoid that these crises become also a human rights crisis.
3. A Special Session of the Human Rights Council will thus provide an equally important forum to raise awareness on the urgency of addressing the economic and financial crises from the human rights perspective. It will offer an opportunity to share concerns when dealing with its effects, as well as to highlight the importance of taking into consideration the human rights dimension of policy decisions.



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4. Among other issues, UN Member states and other stakeholders should discuss:
- What are the already existing and foreseeable impacts of the economic and financial crises to human rights;
 - How can the international community avoid and alleviate the negative impacts of these crises on the universal realization and effective enjoyment of human rights;
 - What role should be played by special UN human rights mandate holders on this issue; and
 - Follow-up on the possible repercussions of these crises on human rights.
5. Representatives of international organizations from different sectors – finance, trade and development, among others – should also be invited to attend the special session with a view to provide UN membership with their assessment on the impacts of the economic and financial crises on the universal realization and effective enjoyment of all human rights.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to renew to your Excellency the assurances of our highest consideration.

Ambassador Hisham Badr
Permanent Representative of Egypt to the ONUG
on behalf of the African Group

Ambassador Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the ONUG