

**Special High-Level Event “Uniting Nations for a Family Friendly World”
May 16, 2016, ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters**

Statement in support of the family

We, the Members of the Group of Friends of the Family, including the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Republic of Belarus, the Union of the Comoros, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Iraq, the State of Kuwait, the Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Nicaragua, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Sultanate of Oman, Pakistan, the State of Qatar, the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of the Sudan, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the Republic of Uganda, the Republic of Yemen, the Republic of Zimbabwe, having met on May 16, 2016 in the United Nations Headquarters in New York at the special High-Level event “Uniting Nations for a Family Friendly World” dedicated to the International Day of the Family

1. *Recognize* that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State as envisaged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and binding international instruments, in particular International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
2. *Acknowledging* that the family plays a key role in development and as such should be strengthened, with attention to the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of its members;
3. *Recognize also* the family as uniquely suited to advance the social and economic wellbeing of all its members, as well as society at large, and, in particular that the family has the responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children and that children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love, and understanding;
4. *Stress* that the family as the natural environment for the growth and economic wellbeing of all its members, particularly children and youth, should be assisted and protected so that it may fully assume its responsibilities within the community;
5. *Highlight* the role of family members, especially parents and other legal guardians, in strengthening the self-image, self-esteem and status of girls and boys and in protecting their health and well-being;
6. *Stress* that equality between women and men, women’s equal participation in employment and shared parental responsibility are essential elements of a policy on the family;
7. *Note* that the family, while respect for the rights of its members is ensued, is a strong force for social cohesion and integration, intergenerational solidarity and development, and that the family plays a crucial role in the preservation of cultural identity, traditions, morals, heritage and the values system of society;
8. *Underline* the importance of strengthening intergenerational partnerships and solidarity among generations, and *stress* the need in this regard to promote opportunities for voluntary, constructive and regular interaction between young people and older generations in the family, in the workplace and in society at large;
9. *Recognize* that stable, supportive and nurturing family relationships, supported by communities and, where available, professional services, can provide a vital shield against substance abuse, particularly among minors;
10. *Note with concern* that the contribution of the family in society continues to be largely overlooked

and underemphasized, and *note* the potential of the family to contribute to national development and to the achievement of major objectives of every society and of the United Nations, including the eradication of poverty and the creation of just, stable and secure societies;

11. *Convinced* that the family can also contribute to eradicating hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
12. *Acknowledge* the role family plays as a contributor to sustainable development and *stress* that it will be impossible to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Development and its promise that “no one will be left behind” unless the family is empowered to effectively fulfill its role within society;
13. *Recognize* the important role of civil society, including research institutes and academia, in advocacy, promotion, research and policymaking and, as appropriate, evaluation of family policy development and capacity-building;
14. *State* our disappointment regarding the attempts to withdraw the theme of the family from the United Nations Agenda for the sake of controversial issues;
15. *Invite* the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other United Nations organizations, agencies and entities, including relevant special procedure mandate holders and treaty bodies, within their respective mandates and competence, to pay due attention in their work to the protection and assistance to the family as the natural and fundamental group unit of society and to refrain from any inherent controversial actions that depart from the widely accepted family concept;
16. *Express* our full support to the annual G77 and China initiative on the International Year of the Family to be presented at the 71st session of the General Assembly of the United Nations;
17. *Commit* ourselves to working together with other Member States, the United Nations and civil society to protect the family everywhere, and to adopt pro-family policies at all levels to secure a more safe and prosperous future for the family and all its members, in particular children;
18. *Decide* to remain seized of the matter.