

Historic Pro-Family Resolution Passed by UN General Assembly

by Thomas W. Jacobson (2004)

More ambassadors representing their nations to the United Nations are becoming increasingly courageous in defending the institutions of marriage and family. From 1993 to 2001 (and to a lesser extent before 1993), Europe, Canada, Brazil, the United States (during the Clinton Administration), and a few other nations (a minority of the 191 Member Nations) promoted policies harmful to, or destructive of, human life, and traditional marriage and family. These nations pressured other nations to accept such policies, often directly connecting financial aid or political favors (or consequences) to compliance with desired policy positions. At the UN, if Europe and the U.S. – whose combined contributions to the UN exceed 60 percent of its revenues, and who are the sources of most aid to other nations – took a certain policy position, it was nearly impossible for the other nations to successfully oppose them.

That coercive pattern has been increasingly thwarted since 2001 as new leaders emerged from the United States, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico, Australia and other nations. Once the U.S. started defending life and true human rights instead of abortion, and family instead of language disguised to support same-sex unions, the power block was broken. At the 2002 Child Summit and since then, an increasing number of presidents, first ladies, officials and ambassadors have delivered pro-life or pro-family statements at the UN, despite strong opposition from European and a few other nations, or even UN officials.

On December 6, 2004, the UN General Assembly, to formally conclude the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, held a special session *and* at least 135 nations supported the pro-family resolution below (see statements in: *UN General Assembly Concludes Int'l Year of the Family with Renewed Support for Family*, 2004-17).

As you read the resolution, recognize its significance. Notice the tone – it is positive on the family; and notice what is not present – phrases like “various forms of the family,” which is language used by some nations to promote same-sex marriage or to redefine the “family” as any combination of any number of individuals regardless of blood- or marriage-relation. Furthermore, because the General Assembly negotiated the resolution (negotiations were ongoing for at least 3 weeks before the December 6 meeting, and continued quietly on the floor and in the halls right through the meeting), *this pro-family statement stands as the most recent agreed language on the family at the UN at its highest level of authority.*

Mr. Jacobson originally wrote this paper in 2004 when he was serving as Representative to the United Nations for Focus on the Family (U.S.A.), from 2001 to 2010.

Thomas W. Jacobson, Executive Director, Global Life Campaign
www.GlobalLifeCampaign.com † info@GlobalLifeCampaign.com

Sponsors and co-sponsors: Qatar [representing 132-nation G77 group, including China], Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, United States.

Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 44/82 of 8 December 1989, concerning the proclamation, preparations for, and observance of the International Year of the Family in 1994, and resolutions 50/142 of 21 December 1995, 52/81 of 12 December 1997 and 54/124 of 17 December 1999 concerning the follow-up to the International Year of the Family,

Recalling also its resolutions 56/113 of 19 December 2001, 57/164 of 18 December 2002 and 58/15 of 3 December 2003 concerning the preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General [A/59/176] on the preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004,

1. *Reaffirms* its resolution 58/15;
2. *Welcomes* the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family on 6 December 2004 at United Nations Headquarters;
- 3-4. *Welcomes* the hosting of the Regional Conference on the Family in Africa by Benin and welcomes the hosting of the Doha International Conference for the Family by the State of Qatar and takes note of their outcome [e.g., Doha Declaration, documents];
5. *Commends* all governments that made contributions in support of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family;
6. *Encourages* Governments to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and to integrate a family perspective in the planning process;
7. *Notes with appreciation* the contribution of the non-governmental organizations through local and regional meetings, as well as the programmes and activities throughout civil society undertaken in support of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family;
8. *Recommends* that all agencies of the United Nations system, civil society organizations, the media, religious and community-based organizations as well as the private sector contribute to developing strategies and programmes aimed at strengthening the livelihood of families;
9. *Encourages* United Nations agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and research and academic institutions, to work closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in a coordinated manner on family-related issues, inter alia, by sharing experience and findings, in recognition of their valuable role in family policy development at all levels;
10. *Requests* the Secretary General to include in his report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session [2004-2005] information on the progress achieved in the follow-up to the International Year of the Family, and decides to consider this issue on a biennial basis and to consider a follow-up programming upon the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014.