

HRC RESOLUTION ON DARFUR ADOPTED WITHOUT A VOTE

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The following are excerpts from a report by WFM-IGPs ReformtheUN.org project on the HRC Darfur resolution.

The Human Rights Council's High-level Mission to Darfur presented its report to the Council on 12 March, leading to extensive discussion and disagreement over its contents and validity. On 30 March, the Council adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Darfur, which did not condemn the government of Sudan or endorse the findings or recommendations of the Mission. The resolution established a new working group to continue monitoring human rights violations in the region.

The Mission's leader, Jody Williams, presented conclusions from the report to the Human Rights Council on 16 March, drawing much more discussion than the few hours worth it was allotted. Much of the discussion was directed at the issue of its validity rather than the human rights violations assessed in the report.

The Mission's report highlights the fact that grave human rights abuses have continued unabated. It states that the government of Sudan has failed to protect civilians by, among other things, restricting access for humanitarian assistance, contributing to the displacement of civilians and failing to hold accountable those responsible for human rights abuses. Using the framework of the **Responsibility to Protect**, the report then analyzes the response of the international community. According to Sudan's delegation, the reports use of the **Responsibility to Protect** framework to assess Darfur's human rights crisis was a result of the influence of Mr. Ramcharan's bias on the Mission.

A resolution drafted by Germany (on behalf of the European Union) and Algeria (on behalf of the African Group) was adopted on the last day of the Council's Fourth Session (Friday, 30 March). The resolution is a compromise between the positions of the EU and African states. It acknowledges the report of the High-level Mission but does not endorse it or mention making use of it in the future. The report notes regret that the Mission could not enter Sudan. The document does not criticize the government of Sudan for its actions during the Mission's fact-finding trip or hold it responsible for its role in the current human rights situation in Darfur. The resolution calls for full cooperation by Sudan, reiterates the Council's great concern for the human rights situation in the region, and establishes a working group mandated to ensure appropriate follow-up to the resolutions and decisions and to monitor the human rights situation on the ground.

The new working group will consist of six individual experts on various areas of human rights. The Secretary-General's Special Rapporteur of the Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan will act as president. It will work with the African Union and the Sudanese government.

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