



**The European Union would like again to thank Forum for 21<sup>st</sup> Century for initiating the discussion and organizing the conference on global issues, notably the new concept and redefinition of fundamental human rights and freedoms. At the same time we express our full support towards solving essential challenges occurring in the new global scenario. After an in-depth analysis of the second draft proposed by Forum for 21<sup>st</sup> Century let us annotate it and include our suggestions as well.**

### **In the section *Notes*:**

- The European Union once again acclaims its commitment to respect for human rights and its position of defender of human rights in its internal and external policy. As written in Preamble of Fundamental Rights of the European Union „The peoples of Europe, in creating even closer union among them, are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values.“ The European Union is founded on indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity. It is also based on principles of democracy and the rule of law. The Union contributes to the preservation and to the development of these common values while respecting the diversity of the cultures, traditions and national identities of its citizens.
- With due regard for the powers and tasks of the Community and the Union and the principles of subsidiarity, the rights as they result, in particular, from the constitutional traditions and international obligations common to the Member States, the Treaty on European Union, the Community Treaties, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Social Charters adopted by the Community and by the Council of Europe and the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Communities and of the European Court of Human Rights. Protection of human rights is founding principle of the European Union and is an indispensable prerequisite for its legitimacy.
- The European Union welcomes the idea of supporting and strengthening international and regional framework for the protection and promotion of human rights. At the same



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time, the European Union would like to point out that given the number of existing national, European and other international human rights tribunals, another human right tribunal within the UN could present a situation of “rights saturation rather than rights deprivation”. The European Union would like to encourage a more systematic use of existing mechanisms.

- ❁ The European Union agrees with the necessity to strengthen the protection of fundamental rights in the light of changes in society, social progress, scientific and technological developments by making rights more visible and universal and to sign a new international accord, serving as a basis for legislation while respecting principles of subsidiarity as human rights are lacking concrete review and benchmarking mechanisms, which are compounding their weakness.
- ❁ Question of universality of human rights is the cornerstone of this discussion. All human rights are indivisible, whether they are civil, political, economic, social or cultural. The improvement of one right facilitates advancement of the others and likewise. The European Union believes that human rights and democracy are not “Western” values but universal values but is recognizing the right to object, in particular in traditional areas and the shaping of their own social, economic and cultural development and their own identities.
- ❁ As the European Union proclaimed in its first position, we strongly believe that effective poverty reduction is not possible without implementation of human rights in poverty reduction strategies. The EU also believes that democracy is a universal value that should be vigorously promoted around the world. Human rights and democracy are integral to effective work on poverty alleviation and conflict prevention.

#### **In the section *Proposals*:**

- ❁ The European Union insists on supporting action on human rights and democracy issues. The EU is committed to continue supporting civil society and democratization efforts and considers that the promotion, development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, essential in maintaining peaceful future. In accordance to this, the



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European Union recognize that the practice of democracy can look very different from one country to the next, and political institutions must match local conditions. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to democracy. The European Union also understands that democracy cannot be imposed from outside as well as human rights, genuine democratic and human rights oriented transition must always come from within. This transition needs long-term commitment and patience. There should be prioritized institutional long-term support rather than short-term and project based grants support.

- The European Union stresses that work being done and through civil society organization is essential. Non Governmental Organizations offers independence of action, allowing for the delivery of assistance without the need for governmental consent, which is crucial in the sensitive areas of democracy and human rights. Their objective is to encourage and promote a transparent and structured dialog on many fields that is accessible, inclusive, fair and respectful.

Finally, European Union would like to repeat its opinion on the necessity to lead a constructive dialog on issues related to gender equality.

- The European Union is committed to discussing gender equality with its partner countries and to mainstreaming gender issues in all its external actions. The European Union recommends leading constructive dialogue on issues related to gender equality. The relevant legislation is regarded as insufficient; there is a lack of institutions with concrete and specific functions in this area. The EU sees the necessity to promote gender equality and implement the rights of women in practice. The gender equality issues aim in particular to make better of women's potential, thereby contributing to overall economic and social goals. The European Union sees five essential priorities:
  - Getting more women into the labor market,
  - Putting forward targeted initiatives to get more women into top jobs in economic decision-making,
  - Promoting female entrepreneurship and self employment,
  - Race awareness of the fact that women continue to earn less than men,
  - Combating violence against women, especially eradicating female mutilation.