



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
14 April 2021

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 24

Eradication of poverty and other development issues

Bangladesh and Ireland: draft resolution*

Global drowning prevention

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business, and to leaving no one behind,

Reaffirming also its resolution [69/313](#) of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling its resolution [71/222](#) of 21 December 2016, entitled “International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Sustainable Development’, 2018–2028”, and its resolution [73/226](#) of 20 December 2018, entitled “Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Sustainable Development’, 2018–2028”,

Reaffirming its resolutions [53/199](#) of 15 December 1998 and [61/185](#) of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years, and Economic and Social Council resolution [1980/67](#) of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries,

* In order for the General Assembly to take action on the present proposal, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 24 and to consider it directly in plenary meeting.



Recalling its resolution 74/2 of 10 October 2019, by which it adopted the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage, entitled “Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world”, in which it recognized the need to scale up efforts to address the growing burden of injuries and deaths, including those related to drowning, through preventive measures as well as emergency response as part of integrated health-care delivery,

Recalling also World Health Assembly resolution 64.27 of 24 May 2011, entitled “Child injury prevention”,¹ and recognizing that drowning is a leading global cause of injury-related child deaths that requires preventive measures, including awareness-raising,

Deeply concerned that drowning has been the cause of over 2.5 million preventable deaths in the past decade, but has been largely unrecognized relative to its impact,

Recognizing the association between drowning and development, and noting that over 90 per cent of deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, with Africa recording the world’s highest drowning rates and Asia carrying the highest burden of drowning deaths by number,

Noting that drowning is a social equity issue that disproportionately affects children and adolescents in rural areas, with many countries reporting drowning as the leading cause of childhood mortality and drowning being among the 10 leading causes of death globally for 5- to 14-year-olds,

Noting with concern that the official global estimate of 235,000 deaths per annum excludes drownings attributable to flood-related climatic events and water transport incidents, resulting in the underrepresentation of drowning deaths by up to 50 per cent in some countries,

Recognizing that drowning prevention can increase societal resilience, and noting that drownings affect not only littoral nations but frequently occur in rivers, lakes, domestic water storage and swimming pools in many other countries,

Underlining the relevance of major global frameworks, including the Paris Agreement,² the New Urban Agenda³ and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,⁴ for addressing climate change and reducing disaster risk, noting that water-related disasters increasingly affect millions of people globally owing in part to the escalating adverse impacts of climate change and that flooding affects more people than any other natural hazard, with drowning being the main cause of death during floods, and noting also the importance of national adaptation planning to address these risks,

Observing that drowning prevention would contribute to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda, most notably that drowning prevention represents an effective measure contributing to the prevention of child deaths and can protect investment in child development,

Noting the significant progress made by some Member States with regard to policy and programming interventions to prevent or reduce the incidence of drowning as a cause of death,

¹ See World Health Organization, document WHA64/2011/REC/1.

² See [FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1](#), decision 1/CP.21, annex.

³ Resolution 71/256, annex.

⁴ Resolution 69/283, annex II.

Affirming that drowning is preventable and that scalable, low-cost interventions exist, and emphasizing the urgency of developing an effective and coordinated response among relevant stakeholders in this regard,

1. *Encourages* all Member States, on a voluntary basis, to consider taking the following actions, in accordance with national circumstances:

(a) Appoint a national focal point for drowning prevention;

(b) Develop a national drowning prevention plan, containing a set of measurable targets according to their needs and priorities, including as part of wider national health plans, policies and programmes;

(c) Develop drowning prevention programming in line with World Health Organization recommended interventions, namely, barriers, supervision, swim skills, rescue and resuscitation training, boating regulation and managing flood risk and resilience;

(d) Ensure enactment and effective enforcement of water safety laws, across all relevant sectors, in particular in the areas of health, education, transportation and disaster risk reduction, where appropriate, and consider establishing appropriate and proportionate regulations where they do not yet exist;

(e) Include drowning within civil registration and vital statistics registers and aggregate all drowning mortality data into national estimates;

(f) Promote drowning prevention public awareness and behaviour-change campaigns;

(g) Encourage integration of drowning prevention within existing disaster risk reduction programmes, especially in communities at risk of flooding and coastal inundation, including through international, regional and bilateral cooperation;

(h) Support international cooperation by sharing lessons learned, experiences and best practices, within and among regions;

(i) Promote research and development of innovative drowning prevention tools and technology, and to promote capacity-building through international cooperation, in particular for developing countries;

(j) Consider the introduction of water safety, swimming and first aid lessons as part of school curricula, consistent with the Member State's governance framework for education;

2. *Invites* the World Health Organization to assist Member States, upon their request, in their drowning prevention efforts and to coordinate actions within the United Nations system among relevant United Nations entities, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the United Nations Development Programme;

3. *Decides* to proclaim 25 July as World Drowning Prevention Day;

4. *Invites* all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and subregional organizations, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and individuals, to observe World Drowning Prevention Day annually in an appropriate manner and in accordance with national priorities, through education, knowledge-sharing and other activities, in order to raise awareness of the importance of drowning prevention and the need for urgent coordinated multisectoral action to improve water safety, with the aim of reducing preventable deaths;

5. *Stresses* that the cost of all activities that may arise from the observance of World Drowning Prevention Day should be met from voluntary contributions, in accordance with national capacity;

6. *Invites* the World Health Organization to facilitate the observance of World Drowning Prevention Day, in collaboration with other relevant organizations, mindful of the provisions contained in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution [1980/67](#);

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and civil society organizations for appropriate observance.
