
I. Respect for the Family

The stability and peace of the family, the fundamental unit of society, will ultimately determine the stability and peace of the world. When forming public policies, government leaders should carefully consider the impact on, and ability to strengthen, the individual family units – recognizing marriage between a man and a woman as the beginning of the legal family unit.

Language recognizing the importance of the family unit (see examples on the following pages):

- “the family is the basic unit of society”
- “the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society”
- “the family is . . . entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support”
- “the family is . . . a strong force of social cohesion”
- “constructive role of the family”
- “primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children”
- “the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members”
- “stable, supportive and nurturing family relationships”

Language recognizing governments consideration of the family:

- “promote family friendly policies and services”
- “the family . . . should be strengthened”
- “governments should . . . create an environment supportive of the family”
- “helping the family in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles”
- “assess their impact on family well-being”
- “contributing to the welfare of the family”
- “role of parents and legal guardians in the family”
- “strengthen policies to support family security”
- “impact on families”
- “grant particular assistance to families in difficult life situations”

Language related to problems in the family:

- “causes and consequences of family disintegration”
- “displacement compounded by . . . family disintegration and separation”
- “eliminate all obstacles to human dignity and equality in family”
- “physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family”
- “facilitate family reunification of documented migrants”
- “insufficient protection and support to their respective families”
- “millions of children and youths are left to their own devices”
- “one-person households”
- “child abuse and domestic violence”

FUNDAMENTAL GROUP UNIT OF SOCIETY

Universal Declaration, Article 16-3.....42
 “The family is the **natural and fundamental group unit of society** and is entitled to protection by society and the State.”

ICESCR, Article 10-146
 “The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the **natural and fundamental group unit of society**, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses.”

ICCPR, Article 23-152
 “The family is the **natural and fundamental group unit of society** and is entitled to protection by society and the State.”

CRC, Preamble (*sixth paragraph*).....57
 “Convinced that the family, as **the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members** and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,”

Children’s Summit 1990, 14.....71
 “. . . The family, as a **fundamental group and natural environment for the growth and well-being of children**, should be given all necessary protection and assistance.”

Disabilities, Preamble-x.....541
 “Convinced that the family is the **natural and fundamental group unit of society** and is entitled to protection by society and the State, and that persons with disabilities and their family members should receive the necessary protection and assistance to enable families to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities,”

Doha Declaration, Preamble.....517
 “Taking into consideration the academic, scientific and social findings collected for the Doha International Conference, which collectively demonstrate that the family is not only the **fundamental group unit of society but is also the fundamental agent for sustainable social, economic and cultural development;**”

BASIC UNIT OF SOCIETY

ICPD, Principle 9.....130
 “The family is the **basic unit of society** and as such should be strengthened. It is **entitled** to receive comprehensive protection and support.”

Social Summit, 80.....206
 “The family is the **basic unit of society** and as such should be strengthened. It is **entitled** to receive comprehensive protection and support. . . .”

Beijing Plan of Action, 29218
 “. . . The family is the **basic unit of society** and as such should be strengthened. It is **entitled** to receive comprehensive protection and support. . . .”

Habitat II Agenda, 31278
 “The family is the **basic unit of society** and as such should be strengthened. It is **entitled** to receive comprehensive protection and support . . .”

Social Summit +5, 25363
 “There has been continued recognition that the family is the **basic unit of society** and that it plays a key role in social development and is a strong force of social cohesion and integration. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist.”

Social Summit +5, 56370
 “Recognize that the family is the **basic unit of society** and that it plays a key role in social development and is a strong force of social cohesion and integration. . . .”

Beijing +5, 60388
 “. . . The family is the **basic unit of society** and is a strong force for social cohesion and integration and as such should be strengthened. . . .”

Istanbul +5, 30403
 “Reaffirm that the family is the **basic unit of society** and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. . . . should take into account the constructive role of the family . . .”

Children’s Summit +10, 15.....472
 “The family is the **basic unit of society** and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support.”

FAMILY POLICY

ICPD, 5.2-a	136
“ To develop policies and laws that better support the family , contribute to its stability and take into account its plurality of forms, particularly the growing number of single-parent households;”	
ICPD, 5.9	137
“Governments should formulate family-sensitive policies in the field of housing, work, health, social security and education in order to create an environment supportive of the family, . . .”	
Social Summit, 27-a	191
“Analysing policies and programmes, . . . assessing their impact on family well-being . . .”	
Social Summit, 81-a	206
“. . . Encouraging social and economic policies that are designed to meet the needs of families and their individual members , especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members, with particular attention to the care of children;”	
Beijing, 58-b	221
“. . . Analyse . . . policies and programmes . . . assess their impact on family well-being . . .”	
Beijing, 285-a	264
“. . . Formulate policies and programmes to help the family , . . . its supporting, educating and nurturing roles . . .”	
Habitat II Agenda, 40-k	280
“. . . encouraging social and economic policies that are designed to meet the housing needs of families and their individual members . . .”	
Beijing +5: 72-q	392
“Promote or improve information programmes and measures including treatment for the elimination of the increasing substance abuse . . . including information campaigns about the risks to health and other consequences and its impact on families . . .”	
Beijing +5: 82-d	394
“Design, implement and promote family friendly policies and services, . . .”	
Habitat III, New Urban Agenda, 13-b	592
“. . . prioritize safe, inclusive, accessible, green and quality public spaces that are friendly for families ,”	

ROLE OF THE FAMILY

Children Summit, 18	74
The family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children from infancy to adolescence.	
CRC, Article 18-1	59
“. . . Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child .”	
Children Summit Decl., 20-5	72
“We will work for respect for the role of the family in providing for children and will support the efforts of parents, other care-givers and communities to nurture and care for children, from the earliest stages of childhood through adolescence. ”	
Social Summit Decl., 29, Commitment 4-k	180
“Strengthen institutions that enhance social integration, recognizing the central role of the family and providing it with an environment that assures its protection and support. . . .”	
Social Summit, 74-e	203
“Encouraging . . . institutions that tend to strengthen social integration, paying particular attention to policies that assist families in their support, educational, socializing and nurturing roles ;”	
Beijing Plan of Action, 285-a	264
“Formulate policies and programmes to help the family, as defined in paragraph 29 above, in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles , . . .”	
Habitat II Agenda, 40-k	280
“Helping the family, in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles , . . . with particular attention to the care of children;”	
Information Summit, 57	515
“. . . The widest possible protection should be accorded to the family and to enable it to play its crucial role in society .”	
Social Summit +5, III, 56	370
“. . . Greater attention should be paid to helping the family in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles , . . .”	

SUPPORT (STRENGTHEN) THE FAMILY

ICPD, 5.2-a136
“To develop policies and laws that better **support the family**, . . .”

ICPD, 5.8137
“The objective is to ensure that all social and economic development policies are fully responsive to the diverse and changing needs and to the rights of families and their individual members, and **provide necessary support and protection**, particularly to the most vulnerable families and the most vulnerable family members.”

Social Summit, 39-a196
“Particular efforts should be made to protect children and youth by: **Promoting family stability and supporting families** in providing mutual support, including in their role as nurturers and educators of children;”

Social Summit, 40.....196
“Particular efforts should be made to protect older persons, including those with disabilities, by: **Strengthening family support systems;**”

Habitat II, 182-m308
“. . . Promoting the representation of intergenerational interests, including those of children and future generations in decision-making processes, **while strengthening families;**”

Cairo +5, 18-e347
“Develop innovative ways to provide more effective assistance to **strengthen families** in extreme poverty, such as providing micro-credit for poor families and individuals;”

Ageing, 105-h466
“Develop social **support systems**, both formal and informal, with a view to **enhancing the ability of families** to take care of older persons within the family...”

Information Summit, 57515
“. . . The widest possible **protection should be accorded to the family** and to enable it to play its crucial role in society.”

MARRIAGE

Universal Declaration, Article 16-1 and 2.....42
“**Men and women of full age**, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have **the right to marry and to found a family**. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
“Marriage shall be entered into only with the **free and full consent** of the intending spouses.”

ICCPR, Article 23-2 and 452
“The right of men and women of marriageable age to **marry and to found a family** shall be recognized . . . take appropriate steps to ensure **equality of rights and responsibilities** of spouses as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. . .”

Social Summit, 80.....206
ICPD, Principle 9.....130
Habitat II Agenda, 31278
Habitat +5: 30403
“. . . Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses, and **husband and wife should be equal partners.**”

Beijing Declaration, 15.....213
“. . . equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by **men and women**, and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families . . .”

Beijing +5, 26384
“Legal reforms have been undertaken to prohibit all forms of discrimination and discriminatory provisions have been eliminated in civil, penal and personal status law governing **marriage and family relations**, . . .”

Disabilities, 23-a546
“**The right of all persons with disabilities who are of marriageable age to marry** and to found a family on the basis of free and full consent of the intending spouses is recognized;”

Doha Declaration,518
“**Uphold, preserve and defend the institution of marriage;**
“Take effective measures to **strengthen the stability of marriage** by, among other things, encouraging the full and equal partnership of husband and wife within a committed and enduring marital relationship;”

NURTURING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

2030 Agenda, 25578
 “. . . We will strive to **provide children and youth with a nurturing environment** for the full realization of their rights and capabilities, helping our countries to reap the demographic dividend including through safe schools and cohesive communities and **families.**”

CRC, Preamble57
 “Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an **atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,**”

Children Summit, 18.....74
 “The family has the **primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children from infancy to adolescence.** Introduction of children to the culture, values and norms of their society begins in the family. For the full and harmonious development of their personality, children should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Accordingly, all institutions of society should respect and support the efforts of parents and other care-givers to **nurture and care for children in a family environment.**”

Social Summit +5, 72371
 “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. . . .”

Ageing, 105-h466
 “Develop social support systems, both formal and informal, with a view to **enhancing the ability of families to take care of older persons** within the family, including in particular the provision of long-term support and services for the growing number of frail older persons;”

Children Summit +10, 6470
 “We recognize and support parents and families or, as the case may be, legal guardians as the primary caretakers of children, and **we will strengthen their capacity to provide the optimum care, nurturing and protection.**”

REUNIFICATION OF THE FAMILY UNIT

ICPD, 4.28136
 “. . . Such laws and policies should also encourage maintenance or **reconstitution of the family unit.** . . .”

ICPD, 10.12155
 “. . . recognize the **vital importance of family reunification** . . . in order to ensure the protection of the unity of the families of documented migrants. . .”

ICPD, 10.13155
 “. . . Governments are urged to promote, through **family reunion,** the normalization of the family life of legal migrants who have the right to long-term residence.”

Social Summit, 77-b205
 “. . . recognize the **vital importance of family reunification** and promote its integration . . . to ensure protection of the unity of the families of documented migrants. . .”

Beijing, 147-k241
 “. . . ensure that the **vital importance of family reunification** is recognized;”

Cairo +5, 24-a348
 “To intensify efforts to . . . **facilitate family reunification** of documented migrants; . . .”

Social Summit +5, 68371
 “Intensify efforts to ensure the . . . facilitation of **family reunification** of documented migrants and their equal treatment under the law.”

Social Summit +5, 75371
 “. . . Greater attention should be given to children, including unaccompanied refugee minors, displaced children, **children separated from their families,** those acting as soldiers and those involved in armed conflicts.”

Children Summit +10, 44-29479
 “Give priority to programmes for **family tracing and reunification,** . . .”

Racism, 49488
 “We highlight the importance of creating conditions conducive to greater harmony, tolerance and respect between migrants. . . **family reunification has a positive effect on integration and emphasize the need for States to facilitate family reunion;**”

EXTENDED FAMILIES

Children Summit, 19.....75
“Every effort should be made to prevent the separation of children from their families. . . . **Extended families, relatives** and community institutions should be given support to help to meet the special needs of orphaned, displaced and abandoned children. . . .”

ICPD, 5.11137
“Governments should support and develop the appropriate mechanisms to assist families caring for children, **the dependent elderly** and family members with disabilities, . . . and **support the viability of multigenerational families.**”

ICPD, 6.18139
“. . . provide support to elderly people through the **encouragement of multigenerational families**, and the provision of long-term support and services for growing numbers of frail older people.”

Social Summit, 40-a196
“Particular efforts should be made to protect older persons, including those with disabilities, by . . . **strengthening family support systems;**”

Cairo +5, 21-c347
“. . . support systems to **enhance the ability of families** and communities to **care for older family members**; the ability of the elderly to care for family members and community victims of HIV/AIDS; and generational solidarity with the goal of maintaining and improving social cohesion.”

Ageing, 31.....456
“. . .sustaining the **traditional extended family network** and reciprocity system . . . ”

Ageing, 96.....465
“. . . **traditional environment of an extended family.**”

ICPD, 5.2-a136
“To develop policies and laws that better support the family, . . . particularly the **growing number of single-parent households;**”

ICPD, 5.6137
“Governments should **maintain and further develop mechanisms** to document changes and undertake studies on family composition and structure, especially on the prevalence of one-person households, and single-parent and multigenerational families.”

FAMILY INSTABILITY

ICPD, 5.7137
“Families are sensitive to strains induced by social and economic changes. It is essential to **grant particular assistance to families** in difficult life situations. . . . Increased labour migrations and refugee movements are an additional source of **family tension and disintegration** and are contributing to increased responsibilities for women. In many urban environments, millions of children and youths are left to their own devices as **family ties break down**, and hence are increasingly exposed to risks such as dropping out of school, labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.”

Beijing, 22.....217
“. . . **family disintegration**, population movements between urban and rural areas within countries, international migration, war and internal displacements are factors contributing to the rise of female-headed households.”

Habitat II Declaration, 4273
“. . . we must combat the deterioration of conditions that . . . have reached crisis proportions. To this end, we must address comprehensively . . . **family instability.** . . .”

Social Summit +5, 56370
“. . . Greater attention should be paid to helping the family in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles, to the causes and consequences of **family disintegration**, . . .”

Beijing +5, 19382
“. . . Displacement compounded by loss of home and property, poverty, **family disintegration** and separation and other consequences of armed conflict is severely affecting population, especially women and children. . . .”

HIV/AIDS, 63447
“By 2003, develop and/or strengthen strategies, policies and programmes, which recognize the **importance of the family in reducing vulnerability**, inter alia, in educating and guiding children and take account of cultural, religious and ethical factors, to reduce the vulnerability of children and young people . . . and **involving families** and young people in planning, implementing and evaluating HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes, to the extent possible;”