

STATEMENT ON HUMAN CLONING

The WYA Statement on Human Cloning strongly maintains that any form of human cloning is a threat to the dignity of each human person. Human cloning treats the person as an object to be created and destroyed at will and fails to uphold the dignity of the person as a primary criteria of scientific research.

As the sixth committee revisits discussions in pursuit of a convention against human cloning, the World Youth Alliance continues to encourage the international community to pursue a convention against all forms of human cloning.

As representatives of youth from diverse cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds, we call upon you, as members of the United Nations, to seek a convention that will serve as the benchmark for the world.

The World Youth Alliance and its members continue to hold the position that any form of human cloning procedure intended for either reproductive or research ("therapeutic") purposes poses a considerable threat to human dignity.

"Therapeutic" cloning, by definition, necessarily involves the destruction of a human life. As such, it represents a unique threat to human life and dignity, being the first time in history that human beings would be created solely for their destruction – their inherent value disregarded and their genetic material seized for utilitarian purposes.

The world community has reached a deep understanding that human dignity is the source of all rights, and has expressed this sentiment in various human rights instruments. This dignity must also be recognized in the case of human cloning.

Several recent developments in biotechnology, including adult stem cell technologies, have seen successful treatment of nerve and spinal cord damage, retinal damage, Parkinson's disease, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, diabetes, stroke and liver disease, among others. As expressed in recent days, many nations are troubled by research cloning because it requires the destruction of embryos. Therefore, other methods of biotechnology that do not abridge human dignity should be pursued in preference to research cloning.

The international community should place its financial support behind other biotechnologies that are consistent with respect for human dignity. The World Youth Alliance also encourages "States and other entities to direct funds that might have been used for human cloning technologies to pressing global issues in developing countries such as famine, desertification, infant mortality and diseases, including the human HIV/AIDS." (A/C.6/58/L.2)

In addition to the assault on the integrity and dignity of nascent human life, human cloning for any purpose poses a particular and potentially grave threat to the dignity of women. It is cause for deep concern that even implicit legal consent for human cloning would necessarily create a high demand for large quantities of human eggs, thereby utilizing women's bodies as a market commodity. We must further fear that in order to meet this demand for oocytes, women, particularly those in developing nations, may be subject to risky drug treatments and possibly even financial coercion or other forms of exploitation. Although this concern has been raised in recent discussions in the sixth committee we strongly encourage the international community not to underestimate the serious setback that human cloning poses to the recognition of the dignity of women.

On another practical level, delegations and experts believe that only a complete ban would protect against reproductive cloning. Once the cloned human beings are created for research, it would be virtually impossible to monitor whether these embryos are being implanted for reproductive purposes.

Over one million youth from all continents, who are members of the World Youth Alliance, believe that only a total, comprehensive ban on human cloning would protect and respect the dignity of all human persons. We respectfully ask you to support the Costa Rican resolution and work toward a comprehensive convention against all forms of human cloning.