

**Submission on the Draft General Comment of the Human Rights Committee on the Right to Life**

**Transatlantic Christian Council, October 6, 2017**

Transatlantic Christian Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Human Rights Committee’s Draft General Comment (No.36) on article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which protects the right to life.

In general we feel the need to express deep concern especially regarding paragraphs 9 and 10. We strongly disagree with the currently chosen formulation and interpretation of the right to life as including abortion and euthanasia. From a Christian point of view we believe that life is a gift from God and should be protected from conception till natural death. If the current formulation stays the same, all States will be obliged to allow and legalize abortion until delivery and euthanasia or assisted suicide. An international organization as the Human Rights Committee has no legal mandate to decide for state parties on these issues. This illegitimate way of actively and aggressively undermine the sovereignty of state parties should not be followed, the principle of subsidiarity should be respected.

Finally, we call for a reduction of the list of categories for who should be protected or specially recognized as a group, taking out for example the special status of sexual orientation and gender identity (paragraph 64) and LGBTI persons (paragraph 27). It is painful to see that in the extensive list of categories in paragraph 64 there is no place for the helpless innocent unborn children or fragile old people. This especially when the paragraph further states: “Legal protections for the right to life must apply equally to all individuals and provide them with effective guarantees against all forms of discrimination.” So let’s go back to the real respect for every human life in all its stages, especially in this General Comment on the Right to Life.

Henk Jan van Schothorst

Executive Director, Europe Office

Transatlantic Christian Council

In consultative status of ECOSOC

Krooslaan 11

2411 ZP Bodegraven

The Netherlands

 +31 6 558 38 607

[www.tccouncil.org](http://www.tccouncil.org)