



Resolution 2565 (2024)¹

Safeguarding human rights for future generations

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly emphasises that a sustainable world must not only meet the needs of the present generation: it must also guarantee that future generations can likewise meet their needs. This is nothing less than respecting intergenerational equity and is all the more an absolute imperative in the face of the climate change challenges of today.
2. Protecting the planet for future generations also means repairing the environmental damage already caused.
3. Moreover, the Assembly stresses that while the climate crisis has rightly been identified as the biggest existential emergency facing humankind, we must not overlook other significant risks to the rights of future generations, such as those generated by growing socio-economic inequalities, public health emergencies, wars and conflicts, and rapid technological advances.
4. Recalling its previous work on artificial intelligence, as set out in [Opinion 303 \(2024\)](#) “Draft Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law”, the Assembly notes that the unprecedented pace of technological progress will likely become one of the key factors affecting the lives of future generations. To this end, it welcomes the adoption of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. The Assembly reiterates its readiness to contribute to the preparation of additional binding and non-binding instruments that will ensure that technological advancement is accompanied by respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
5. The Assembly notes that numerous constitutional texts now contain references to future generations and that the notions of future generations and intergenerational equity are ever more frequently used before national and international courts in environmental litigation.
6. The Assembly welcomes the fact that the Reykjavik Declaration, adopted at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held on 16 and 17 May 2023, has recognised the scale of the task ahead and that the Heads of State and Government of Council of Europe member States committed therein to meeting the current and future challenges, rising up to the expectations of future generations and making the environment and intergenerational solidarity visible priorities for the Organisation.
7. The Assembly notes with grave concern that human activity is threatening the extinction of one million species of plants and animals, leading to an irreversible loss of biodiversity and the collapse of ecosystems. To this end, the Assembly welcomes the adoption by the Standing Committee of the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (ETS No. 104, Bern Convention) of its Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030, which sets out goals for halting the decline in biodiversity, recovering wildlife and habitats, improving the lives of people and contributing to the health of the planet. The Assembly recalls that States are under a continuous international legal obligation to prevent activities on their territory causing significant harm or damage to the environment of another State or areas beyond national control.

1. *Assembly debate* on 28 June 2024 (23rd sitting) (see [Doc. 15999](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Mr Pedro Cegonha; and [Doc. 16016](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Ms Gala Veldhoen). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 28 June 2024 (23rd sitting).



8. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly invites Council of Europe member States to seize and build upon this strategic moment in the Organisation's existence, and to strongly promote both at the national level and in international forums:

8.1. their political will to uphold, protect and develop the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights – both at the individual and the collective level – of future generations, based on the fundamental principle of equality and non-discrimination found in human rights law;

8.2. their political will to advance rapidly and with determination on the existing environmental standards and practices, from a less anthropocentric perspective and taking into account recent legal developments in environmental matters, in particular the case law of the European Court of Human Rights in climate-related cases;

8.3. the swift signature and ratification of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, encouraging them to extend the potential of recognising the full applicability of the principles and obligations set forth therein (Chapters II to VI) to activities of private actors.