



DEMOCRACY  
COALITION  
PROJECT

For more information contact:

Ted Piccone  
Executive Director, DCP  
202-721-5630

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**VOTING AT UN HUMAN RIGHTS BODY  
SHOWS LITTLE IMPROVEMENT**

**Mixed Results for UN Democracy Caucus as India and South Africa  
Veto Efforts to Censure Zimbabwe, Cuba**

Action by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) to censure human rights violators was obstructed again by a unified bloc of non-democratic governments and weak collaboration among democratic nations, according to a new survey by the **Democracy Coalition Project**.

A comparison of the voting records of the 53 governments represented on the UN's top human rights body this year reveals that non-democratic regimes were united in opposing strong resolutions critical of the human rights situation in countries like Sudan, China and Zimbabwe. In striking contrast, democratic countries were inconsistent in their support of more critical resolutions. Notably, **South Africa** and **India**, which serve on the Community of Democracies steering committee, repeatedly chose to align themselves with non-democratic regimes in blocking censure motions.

The Democracy Coalition Project survey, as further detailed in the accompanying charts, compared the recorded votes of the 53 members of the Commission on seven different resolutions -- two thematic motions on democracy and good governance, and five on country-specific situations (Belarus, Cuba, North Korea, Turkmenistan and Zimbabwe). Of the 53 members on the Commission, 21 states (40%) are regarded as dictatorships or other authoritarian regimes with low scores on protection of human rights and democracy. Thirty-two states on the Commission (60%) are members of the Community of Democracies, which pledged at the first Community of Democracies Ministerial meeting in Warsaw "to form caucuses...to support resolutions aimed at the promotion of democratic governance."

Many of the democratic states have joined an effort led by **Chile**, the Chair of the Community of Democracies Convening Group, to form a Democracy Caucus at the UN. Other governments actively involved in the initiative include Poland, South Korea, the United States, Italy, Peru and Romania. "Votes cast in Geneva by states participating in

the Community of Democracies are a real test of their commitment to establish a functioning Democracy Caucus at the UN. Forging common positions is essential if we are to improve respect for democracy and human rights,” stated Ted Piccone, Executive Director of the Democracy Coalition Project.

The survey found that non-democratic regimes voted as a unified bloc against most resolutions critical of human rights violations. The voting records show that the non-democratic bloc was more unified in voting against such resolutions than democracies were in voting for such resolutions. For example, 90 percent of the non-democratic regimes voted to block a resolution on Zimbabwe, while only 68 percent of the democracies voted the other way. The non-democratic bloc voted 100 percent against or to abstain on motions critical of Belarus and Turkmenistan, while 75-78 percent of the democracy group voted for these resolutions, with the remaining democratic states voting to abstain or against.

One of the most contentious resolutions, which reiterated a call on Cuba to accept a visit to the island by an appointed expert, barely passed by one vote in large part because 31.2 percent of the democracy group voted against or to abstain. Only one state in the non-democratic group (Armenia) voted for the resolution. Even the resolution on North Korea, one of the most repressive societies in the world, drew support from only 75 percent of the democracy group, joined by 23.8 percent of the non-democratic bloc.

In addition to South Africa and India, other states belonging to the Community of Democracies broke ranks to vote against or abstain on important resolutions. Indonesia, Russia and Nigeria, for example, consistently voted against motions to censure North Korea, Cuba and Turkmenistan.

On the two softer thematic resolutions studied in the survey, the performance of the democracy group was markedly better. All of the Community of Democracies members voted for the two resolutions, while the non-democratic bloc mostly abstained or supported them, with only one state, Cuba, voting against. Governments actively involved in the new Democracy Caucus, specifically Romania, Chile, Peru, South Korea and the United States, led the effort behind the two democracy resolutions.

The Democracy Coalition Project has joined a coalition of leading international figures and NGOs in calling upon democratic governments in the UN to strengthen the Human Rights Commission. The group argues that democratic governments should work together to serve on the Commission and support each other in regional elections to the body. The nongovernmental coalition criticized the results of the most recent UN elections held May 4 which resulted in the election of states like Sudan and Pakistan as members of the Commission.

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**SCORECARD: HOW DEMOCRACIES VOTED ON RESOLUTIONS  
AT THE 2004 UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Country	Regional orgs and democracy	Good Governance	Belarus	Cuba	DPRK	Turkmenistan	Zimbabwe*
Argentina	Yes	Yes	Abst	Abst	Yes	Yes	No
Australia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Bahrain	Yes	Yes	Abst	No	Abst	No	Yes
Brazil	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abst	Yes	Yes	Abst
<b>Chile</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Costa Rica	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Croatia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dominican Republic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
France	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Guatemala	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Honduras	Yes	Yes	<i>Abst</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>India</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abst</b>	<b>Abst</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Indonesia	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Japan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Abst</b>
Nepal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abst	Abst	Yes
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Nigeria	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Abst	Yes
Paraguay	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abst	Yes	Yes	No
Peru	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Russian Federation	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Abst	Yes
<b>South Korea</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Abst</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abst</b>	<b>Abst</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Sri Lanka	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abst	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>United States</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>100% (Y)</b>	<b>100% (Y)</b>	<b>75% (Y)</b>	<b>68.8% (Y)</b>	<b>75% (Y)</b>	<b>78.2% (Y)</b>	<b>68.8% (N)</b>
			<b>9.4% (A)</b>	<b>12.5 (A)</b>	<b>15.6% (A)</b>	<b>15.6% (A)</b>	<b>6.2% (A)</b>
			<b>15.6% (N)</b>	<b>18.7% (N)</b>	<b>9.4% (N)</b>	<b>6.2% (N)</b>	<b>25% (Y)</b>

\*A vote of Yes was a vote to block consideration of a resolution on Zimbabwe.  
Governments in italics are members of Community of Democracies Convening Group.

**SCORECARD: HOW NON-DEMOCRACIES VOTED ON RESOLUTIONS  
AT THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Country	Regional orgs and democracy	Good Governance	Belarus	Cuba	DPRK	Turkmenistan	Zimbabwe*
Armenia	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Abst	No
Bhutan	Abst	Yes	Abst	Abst	Yes	Abst	Yes
Burkina Faso	Yes	Yes	Abst	No	Abst	Abst	Yes
China	Abst	Abst	No	No	No	No	Yes
Congo	Yes	Yes	Abst	No	Abst	Abst	Yes
Cuba	Abst	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Egypt	Yes	Abst	No	No	No	No	Yes
Eritrea	Yes	Abst	Abst	Abst	Abst	Abst	Yes
Ethiopia	Yes	Abst	Abst	No	Abst	Abst	Yes
Gabon	Yes	Abst	Abst	No	Yes	Abst	Yes
Mauritania	Yes	Abst	Abst	Abst	Abst	Abst	Yes
Pakistan	Yes	Abst	Abst	No	Abst	No	Yes
Qatar	Yes	Yes	Abst	No	Abst	No	Yes
Saudi Arabia	Abst	Abst	Abst	No	Yes	No	Yes
Sierra Leone	Yes	Yes	No	No	Abst	Abst	Yes
Sudan	Abst	Abst	No	No	No	No	Yes
Swaziland	Abst	Abst	Abst	No	Abst	Abst	Yes
Togo	Abst	Abst	Abst	No	Abst	Abst	Yes
Uganda	Yes	Yes	Abst	Abst	Abst	Abst	Yes
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Zimbabwe	Abst	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>38% (A)</b>	<b>52.4% (A)</b>	<b>38% (N)</b>	<b>76.2% (N)</b>	<b>23.8% (N)</b>	<b>43% (N)</b>	<b>90.5% (Y)</b>
	<b>62% (Y)</b>	<b>42.8% (Y)</b>	<b>62% (A)</b>	<b>19% (A)</b>	<b>52.4% (A)</b>	<b>57% (A)</b>	<b>9.5% (N)</b>
		<b>4.8% (N)</b>		<b>4.8% (Y)</b>	<b>23.8% (Y)</b>		

\* A vote of Yes was a vote to block consideration of a resolution on Zimbabwe.

**Enhancing the Role of Regional, Sub-regional and other organizations and arrangements in promoting and consolidating democracy:**

**Approved**

**45 Yes, 0 No, 8 Abstained**

Co-sponsored by CHR members: Argentina, Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Germany, India, Mexico, Nepal, Paraguay, Peru, South Korea, United Kingdom, United States

**The Role of Good Governance in the Promotion of Human Rights: Approved**

**41 Yes, 1 No, 11 Abstained**

Co-Sponsored by CHR members: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Chile, Croatia, France, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, Peru, Qatar, South Korea, South Africa, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States

**Situation of Human Rights in Belarus: Approved**

**23 Yes, 13 No, 17 Abstained**

Co-sponsored by CHR members: Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States

**Situation of Human Rights in Cuba: Approved**

**22 Yes, 21 No, 10 Abstained**

Co-sponsored by CHR members: Australia, Honduras, Peru

**Situation of Human Rights in Democratic People's Republic of Korea: Approved**

**29 Yes, 8 No, 16 Abstained**

**Situation of Human Rights in Zimbabwe: Motion to not consider draft Resolution Adopted**

**27 Yes, 24 No, 2 Abstained**

Resolution Co-Sponsored by CHR members: Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States

**Situation of Human Rights in Turkmenistan:**

**Approved**

**25 Yes, 11 No, 17 Abstained**

Co-sponsored by CHR members: Australia, Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States