CWA Applauds United Nations for Passing Declaration to Ban All Forms of Human Cloning

2/19/2005

UNITED NATIONS - The United Nations has called on Member States to adopt urgent legislation outlawing all cloning practices "as they are incompatible with human dignity and the protection of human life." The declaration, introduced by Honduras, also calls on countries to "prevent the exploitation of women." Cloning requires harvesting eggs from women.

The decision ends three years of deadlock caused by countries seeking approval for cloning research. The United Kingdom, Belgium and Singapore led the opposition for a total ban, insisting that a ban only apply to letting a cloned human live while allowing cloned embryos to be used for research which would kill them. The declaration represents the international community uniting in condemning all human cloning as exploitative and unethical.

At the insistence of delegates from developing countries who feared their women being turned into "egg farms," the declaration calls on Member States to introduce measures to prevent the exploitation of women. Delegates expressed concern that poor women would be targeted to extract the vast numbers of eggs that would be needed, inevitably inflicting painful, dangerous and invasive procedures on vulnerable women.

Included is a proposal calling for wealthier nations to direct attention and funding to pressing medical issues such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. It also condemns all applications of any genetic engineering techniques which threaten human dignity.

This declaration represents a significant step forward in advancing respect for human life. Previously, some countries have blocked moves to ban all cloning with claims that stem cells from cloned embryos will treat various maladies (so-called "therapeutic cloning"). Yet not a single person has ever been helped by these stem cells, while ethical adult stem cells are providing miraculous treatments for numerous conditions, including spinal cord injuries, Parkinson's Disease, cancer, heart failure and blindness – doing what cloning supporters can only promise.

The declaration has the same immediate effect as if the committee endorsed a convention in that it sets an international standard. It sends a clear signal to countries that encourage
the practice, such as the United Kingdom in particular where two "licenses" for research cloning have been issued. The first is currently subject to a legal challenge on the basis that the cloning "license" is unlawful and unnecessary. It is due to be heard in the High Court shortly. Cloning opponents welcomed the UN's resolution and look forward to Member States fulfilling their international obligations.

To schedule an interview with Wendy Wright, senior policy director for Concerned Women for America, please call 202-488-7000, ext. 126.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The NGO Coalition for Ethical Biomedical Research is a coalition of pro-life organizations and individuals from around the world.

Current applications of adult stem cell treatments can be seen at: www.stemcellresearch.org and www.corethics.org.

Details of exploitation which would arise from cloning may be obtained from www.cloninginformation.org.

More information on the UK lawsuit due to be heard in the UK High Court may obtained from www.lawcf.org.

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