

Ethical, scientific and social implications of cloning in human health

The Fifty-first World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolution WHA50.37 and its condemnation of human cloning for reproductive purposes as contrary to human dignity;

Noting the general consensus reached at the national and international levels since the Fiftieth World Health Assembly regarding human cloning for reproductive purposes;

Noting in particular UNESCO's Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights and the Council of Europe's Additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine, which deal with the prohibition of cloning of human beings;

Considering that the currently available information from animal studies involving cloning by somatic cell nuclear transfer indicates that this would be an unsafe procedure for reproductive purposes in the human;

Recognizing that developments in cloning have unprecedented ethical implications and raise serious matters for concern in terms of safety of the individual and subsequent generations of human beings,

1. REAFFIRMS that cloning for the replication of human individuals is ethically unacceptable and contrary to human dignity and integrity;
2. URGES Member States to foster continued and informed debate on these issues and to take appropriate steps, including legal and juridical measures, to prohibit cloning for the purpose of replicating human individuals;
3. REQUESTS the Director-General:
 - (1) to establish a group, involving also government experts, with the aim of clarifying concepts and developing guidelines relating to the use of cloning procedures for non-reproductive purposes;
 - (2) to continue to monitor, assess and clarify, in consultation with other international organizations, national governments and professional and scientific bodies, the ethical, scientific, social and legal implications of the use of cloning for human health;
 - (3) to ensure that Member States are kept informed of developments in this area in order to facilitate decisions on national regulatory frameworks;

(4) to report to the Executive Board at its 103rd session and to the Fifty-second World Health Assembly on action taken by the Organization in this field.

Tenth plenary meeting, 16 May 1998
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