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Chair: Mr. Haniff (Malaysia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 64: Report of the Human Rights Council *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.64/Rev.1: Report of the Human Rights Council

1. **Ms. Maduhu** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the African Group, introduced the draft resolution, which took note of the report of the Human Rights Council and the recommendations contained therein.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.66: Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure

2. **Mr. Gavalec** (Slovakia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, recalled that a communications procedure had been discussed when the Convention had been adopted twenty years previously. Thanks to the efforts of civil society, the idea had been revived. The Human Rights Council had established a working group to draft the optional protocol in 2009, and in June that year had adopted a resolution recommending to the General Assembly the final adoption of the optional protocol and its opening for signature in 2012. The draft resolution sought to fulfil that recommendation, taking up the language recommended by the Human Rights Council. The main sponsors had held informal consultations on the text and in a spirit of compromise had agreed to revise the first preambular paragraph, although the amendment represented a departure from the recommended language. The words “*Welcoming the adoption*” should be replaced with the words “*Taking note with appreciation of the adoption*”.

3. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was the only international human rights treaty without a communications procedure mechanism. By adopting the draft resolution, the Committee would be helping to fill a significant legal gap and making an important contribution to improving the protection of children’s rights. He thanked all parties involved in the initiative, including representatives of States, civil society, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and in particular the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Optional Protocol, who had successfully led the negotiations. Given the significance of the draft resolution for the

protection of children’s rights, he hoped that the Committee would adopt it by consensus.

Agenda item 67: Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance *(continued)*

(b) Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance: Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.68: Global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

4. **Mr. Cesa** (Argentina), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the recent adoption of the political declaration commemorating the ten-year anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was evidence of the international community’s commitment to eliminating racism and intolerance. The draft resolution aimed to ensure that the major issues emphasized in the Durban Declaration remained a priority in the international agenda. The text also sought to establish 2012-2022 as the Decade for People of African Descent.

Agenda item 69: Promotion and protection of human rights *(continued)*

(a) Promotion and protection of human rights: Implementation of human rights instruments *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.27/Rev.1: World Down Syndrome Day

5. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

6. **Mr. Almeida** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the main sponsors, said that Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, the Philippines, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. The draft resolution aimed to raise awareness of the inherent dignity of persons with intellectual disabilities and designated 21 March as

World Down Syndrome Day, to be observed every year beginning in 2012.

7. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Iraq had been incorrectly listed as a sponsor of the draft resolution. He announced that Albania, Armenia, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Colombia, Eritrea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritania, Monaco, Morocco, Montenegro, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

8. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.27/Rev.1 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.28/Rev. 1: Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

9. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

10. **Ms. Raabymagle** (Denmark) noted that one of the fundamental principles of the United Nations was the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Torture nevertheless continued to be used all over the world.

11. Following consultations and meetings with interested delegations, she wished to introduce oral revisions to the text of draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.28/Rev.1.

12. The ninth preambular paragraph should begin with “*Deeply concerned with*,” rather than “*Deeply concerned about*”. The words “persons exercising their rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression” should replace “peaceful protesters,” and “in all situations and” should be deleted.

13. Paragraph 8 was to follow paragraph 5 and be renumbered *5bis*. In paragraph 14, “notes” should replace “acknowledges,” and “, bearing in mind its principle of complementarity”, should be inserted before “and encourages States”. In paragraph 22, “can” should replace “is known to”.

14. In addition to the 68 sponsors mentioned in the revised document, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Iraq, Israel, Mali, Paraguay, San Marino, Timor-Leste and Tunisia had joined as sponsors.

15. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Nicaragua, the Niger, Sierra Leone and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

16. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.28/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.*

**(b) Promotion and protection of human rights:
Human rights questions, including alternative
approaches for improving the effective
enjoyment of human rights and fundamental
freedoms (continued)**

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.43: Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization

17. **Mr. Sammis** (United States of America), introducing the draft resolution, said that the holding of periodic and fair elections was integral to a democracy. The landmark events of the past year had only emphasized the importance of genuine elections. He hoped the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

18. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Andorra, Benin, Botswana, Côte d’Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Malta, Morocco, Paraguay, Peru and San Marino had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.46: Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*

19. **Mr. Strasser** (Austria), introducing the draft resolution, said that his delegation had consistently acted as the main sponsor of resolutions on the rights of persons belonging to minorities not only within the Third Committee, but also within the Human Rights Council. The draft resolution drew attention to the importance of the protection of rights of persons belonging to minorities for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts. It also placed a special focus on the twentieth anniversary in 2012 of the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. He recalled that the Declaration provided guidance to States in ensuring non-discrimination and served as the main reference for the work of the United

Nations to ensure the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The upcoming anniversary offered an opportunity to reflect on achievements and challenges in implementing the Declaration.

20. He announced that Armenia, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Malta, Mauritius, Panama, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Ukraine had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. He noted that editorial changes had been made to previously agreed upon language in paragraphs 8, 16 and 19 and said that the original language used would be restored.

21. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Timor-Leste had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.52: Protection of migrants

22. **Ms. Díaz Gras** (Mexico), introducing the draft resolution, said that, Mexico being both an origin and transit country for migrants, her Government viewed migration issues as a shared responsibility. The draft resolution did not seek to promote migration or the hiring of undocumented workers, but rather affirmed that an individual's human rights should not depend on his or her legal status. The text had adapted language developed by the Human Rights Council emphasizing States' responsibility to protect the human rights of migrants, in particular the right of child migrants to education, regardless of the structure of the Government. The importance of dialogue between civil society and Government with regard to migration issues was also highlighted. She announced that Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Turkey and Uruguay had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution and urged Member States to adopt it by consensus.

23. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Eritrea, Guyana, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria and Tajikistan had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.42: Sub-regional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (continued)

24. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

25. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Morocco, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe had joined as sponsors.

26. **Ms. Muhimpundu** (Burundi) said that Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Djibouti, the Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mozambique, Namibia, Pakistan, Romania, Spain, Uganda, the United Kingdom and the United States had joined as sponsors of the draft resolution.

27. A major contribution had been made by the Centre to human rights awareness-raising and training in the region. The Centre, now celebrating its tenth anniversary, had strengthened the capabilities of the national human rights institutions in Member States in the Central African region, and had facilitated the setting up of transitional mechanisms of justice in countries of the sub-region affected by conflict. The themes of the Centre's programme would be continued during 2012-2013. She invited all other delegations to join the sponsors, and hoped that the Committee would adopt the resolution by consensus, as had been the case in previous years.

28. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, France, Hungary, India, Lesotho, Lithuania, Mali, Mauritania, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, the Sudan, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had joined as sponsors.

29. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.42 was adopted.*

Agenda item 27: Social development (continued)**(b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (continued)**

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.12/Rev.1: Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family

30. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

31. **Mr. Cesa** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted that the draft resolution reflected a number of amendments resulting from consultations.

32. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Azerbaijan, Belarus, El Salvador, the Russian Federation and Turkey had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

33. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.12/Rev.1 was adopted.*

34. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the States members of the European Union, said that the European Union attached great importance to family-related issues. As early as 1989, the European Commission had established the European Observatory on National Family Policies, which had advocated for policies that supported the reconciliation of work and family life and the provision of assistance to vulnerable families. While the European Union shared the view expressed in the draft resolution that the family contributed to strengthening society, it also believed that family policies must be inclusive in their definitions of family. The family was an ever-evolving, dynamic entity and the European Union was committed to recognizing that diversity. The major international summits of the 1990s had promoted respect for diversity as a value; that position should be extended to include the family in its many forms. The European Union therefore took all references to the family in the draft resolution to reflect an inclusive definition of the family unit.

35. **Mr. Sammis** (United States of America) said that his Government attached great importance to the family, as evidenced by the declaration by the President of September 27 as Family Day. With regard to the draft resolution, his delegation regretted that it

had not included the critical concept that “in different cultural, social and political systems various forms of the family exist”, as expressed in the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and echoed in General Assembly resolution 65/277, known as the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.14: Brain Education as a tool for implementing the Millennium Development Goals and contributing to global Peace and Development

36. **Mr. Funes** (El Salvador) withdrew the draft resolution, without prejudice to the possibility of reintroducing it in the future.

Agenda item 62: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.67: Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

37. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

38. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) clarified that Peru had been incorrectly listed as a sponsor of the draft resolution.

39. **Mr. Jafarov** (Azerbaijan) thanked those delegations that had sponsored the draft resolution and invited others to join as sponsors.

40. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, India, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Togo and Turkmenistan had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

41. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.67 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.