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## Third Committee

### Summary record of the 53rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 27 November 2013, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Tafrov . . . . . (Bulgaria)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.12 a.m.*

**Agenda item 27: Social development** (*continued*)

**(c) Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.14/Rev.1*

1. **The Chair** said that he had been advised that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. **Mr. Tuiloma** (Fiji), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the following revisions should be made to the text of the draft resolution. In paragraph 4, the word “*Welcomes*” should be changed to “*Takes note with appreciation of*”; after paragraph 5, two new paragraphs should be inserted, which would read: “*Stresses the importance for the Independent Expert and the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing to work in close coordination, while avoiding unnecessary duplication with each other’s mandates, other special procedures and subsidiary organs of the Human Rights Council, relevant United Nations bodies and treaty bodies;*” and “*Encourages all Member States to be mindful of the upcoming reports of the Independent Expert, including the comprehensive report to be brought to the attention of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing;*”; and in paragraph 42, the word “*Welcomes*” should be changed to “*Notes with appreciation*”.

3. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

4. *Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.14/Rev. 1, as orally revised, was adopted.*

5. **Mr. Nina** (Albania) said that it was his delegation’s understanding that the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing would work in close coordination with the Independent Expert and avoid duplication. His delegation looked forward to constructive engagement at the next session of the Working Group to consider policies, measures and actions to improve the human rights protection of older persons.

6. **Ms. Hampe** (Lithuania), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union acknowledged the serious challenges faced by older persons, many of which could be described as human rights violations. It was very important that there should be no overlap between the work of the Independent Expert and that of other human rights mechanisms, in particular the Open-ended Working Group, which should work in close coordination with the Independent Expert. It was regrettable that the wording in the draft resolution concerning the financial and economic crisis had not been updated to reflect current developments, as agreed in the Second Committee.

7. **Ms. Robl** (United States of America) said that duplication of work must be avoided among the various United Nations entities and mandate holders in order to reduce costs and ensure efficiency; in that regard, it was important to ensure coordination between the Independent Expert and the Open-ended Working Group. Her delegation believed that it would have been better for the General Assembly to suspend the operations of the Open-ended Working Group for the duration of the Independent Expert’s mandate. The Independent Expert should focus on working with States to help them implement existing laws and policies. It was unfortunate that the compromise language agreed upon in the Second Committee was not reflected in the ninth preambular paragraph.

8. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that his delegation had been a sponsor of Human Rights Council resolution [24/20](#) which had established the post of Independent Expert; it was his delegation’s understanding, however, that nothing in that resolution should be taken to mean that the Independent Expert would take precedence over the Open-ended Working Group, an intergovernmental body.

9. **The Chair** suggested that, in accordance with General Assembly decision [55/488](#), the Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the way forward: a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond ([A/68/95](#)).

10. *It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 28: Advancement of women** (*continued*)**(a) Advancement of women** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.78*

11. **The Chair** said that he had been advised that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

12. *Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.78 was adopted.*

13. **The Chair** suggested that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 55/488, the Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on measures taken and progress achieved in the promotion of women and political participation (A/68/184) and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (A/68/340).

14. *It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 65: Promotion and protection of the rights of children** (*continued*)**(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.26/Rev.1*

15. **The Chair** said that he had been advised that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

16. **Mr. Bamrungphong** (Thailand) said that in paragraph 6, the word “follow-up” should be added before the word “report”.

17. The draft resolution was based on the principle of the promotion of the best interests of children and reaffirmed the positive role of the United Nations in child protection. Efforts to combat violence against children should continue to be actively pursued. There was also a need for continued collaboration and close coordination among United Nations child protection mechanisms, which would help address protection gaps, particularly in emergency situations. With numerous actors on the ground, the problem of overlapping mandates should be addressed in order to ensure that the most appropriate mechanism provided the most effective protection to children. Technical cooperation and capacity-building should be promoted at the regional level, especially South-South cooperation; as a developing country, Thailand was aware that often it was not a lack of political will, but a lack of capacity, which impeded national efforts.

18. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Swaziland, Togo, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

19. **Mr. Raja Zaib Shah** (Malaysia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that close coordination among the relevant United Nations agencies would help increase the effectiveness of child protection efforts. It was important for all child protection mandate holders to conduct their work in an independent and impartial manner, and to abide by their mandates; they should strengthen dialogue and cooperation with Member States. The ASEAN member States faced challenges in the promotion and protection of children's rights and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. They were committed to closer South-South cooperation in the protection of children and youth, including through the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children, which ensured close coordination among sectoral bodies. Continued collaboration within the United Nations system would help Member States protect children's rights and achieve development.

20. **Ms. Belskaya** (Belarus) said that her delegation supported the draft resolution, but was disappointed that it made no mention of the need to strengthen the traditional family; that omission reflected a disturbing trend. In all societies, the traditional family was the natural and central element in the upbringing and protection of children. As such, it deserved the protection of society, States, and the United Nations, in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The need for support was even greater in view of the increasing prevalence of abortions and the rising number of divorces and single-parent families, which put children at risk of poverty and of health, educational and behavioural problems, and could be attributed to inadequate attention being paid to the strengthening of the traditional family.

21. *Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.26/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.*

22. **Ms. Hampe** (Lithuania), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union had

serious concerns about the draft resolution, but had joined the consensus in a spirit of compromise. In relation to paragraph 3, it understood the word “continuing” to refer to the sentence in its entirety. Secondly, with regard to paragraph 6, she said that, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/68/253), there was already extensive cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system and considerable progress was being made in the field of child protection. There was therefore no need to request an additional report, without a clear rationale, wasting precious resources that could be used for the protection of children. The information requested was already being provided by the existing reporting mechanisms, including in reports to the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council; in addition, the interactive dialogue within the Committee provided an opportunity for mandate holders to share experiences and receive input from Member States. It was the understanding of the European Union that the report requested in paragraph 6 would be the final report on the topic.

23. **Ms. Taracena Secaira** (Guatemala), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, said that those countries had joined the consensus on the understanding that no language in the draft resolution, particularly in paragraph 3, could be interpreted as having an impact on the independence of United Nations mechanisms concerned with the promotion and protection of the rights of children. The report of the Secretary-General demonstrated that United Nations child protection mechanisms had already strengthened their cooperation, ensuring complementarity in their efforts, and the activities carried out were already covered in reports. There was therefore no need to request an additional report or to adopt any further resolutions on the topic.

24. **Ms. Walker** (Canada) said that her delegation did not see the need for the draft resolution just adopted. The report of the Secretary-General made it very clear that the key child protection stakeholders in the United Nations system were working in a well-coordinated manner in keeping with their distinct but complementary mandates. It was important that they should continue to work with full independence. Those actors were already reporting to various bodies of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Security Council on a regular basis. The report

requested in paragraph 6 should be the final report on the subject; the limited human and financial resources of the United Nations system should be used to enhance child protection services on the ground and advocate for the rights of children.

25. **Ms. Cid Carreño** (Chile) said that her delegation welcomed the coordination and collaboration existing among the various United Nations mechanisms for the protection of children’s rights. It understood that the implementation of the draft resolution would take into account the mandates of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative on Violence against Children.

26. **Ms. Robl** (United States of America) said that her delegation had joined in the consensus although it did not believe that the draft resolution was necessary. It rejected any interpretation of the draft resolution that would suggest a lack of confidence in the work of mandate holders or jeopardize their independence. The report of the Secretary-General highlighted the effective cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system in respect of child protection. Her delegation therefore questioned the need for an additional report; the report requested in paragraph 6 must be the final report on the subject. With regard to the earlier documents mentioned in the draft resolution, their reaffirmation applied only to States which had initially affirmed them.

27. **Ms. Loew** (Switzerland), speaking on behalf of Albania, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, said that those countries were not convinced of the need for an additional report, which would divert resources which could be invested directly in child protection efforts. They believed that it was the responsibility of mandate holders to coordinate their efforts, and were concerned that the draft resolution could undermine their independence. The United Nations child protection system had developed very positively since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report of the Secretary-General provided an overview of existing coordination and collaboration within the United Nations system; the report requested in paragraph 6 would once again demonstrate the strength of existing collaboration and should obviate the need for a further resolution on the subject.

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

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

access information as set forth in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

*The meeting rose at 11.15 p.m.*

*Draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.43/Rev.1*

28. **The Chair** said that he had been advised that the draft resolution had no financial implications.

29. **Mr. Fernandez Valoni** (Argentina), introducing draft resolution [A/C.3/68/L.43/Rev.1](#), said that an oral revision should be made to paragraph 14 of the draft resolution: the words “in the General Assembly, on 24 March 2014” should be replaced by “in observance of the International Day for the Right to Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims, subject to the availability of resources”.

30. The right to truth was one of the four basic pillars in combating impunity, the other three pillars being memory, justice and reparation. It was based on recognition of the right of victims of grave and systematic violations of human rights, and of their families and society as a whole, to know the truth about such violations, the circumstances in which they had been committed, and the identity of the perpetrators.

31. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Montenegro, Morocco, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Ukraine and the United States of America had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

32. *Draft resolution [A/C.368L.43Rev.1](#), as orally revised, was adopted.*

33. **Ms. Walker** (Canada) said that the right to truth could be characterized differently in different legal systems. Canada understood the concept of the right to truth as encompassing in armed conflict the right of relatives to know the fate of their loved ones as well as the right to freedom of expression and the right to