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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 26 November 2001, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman)

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01-65802 (E)

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The meeting was called to order to 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 119: Human rights questions (continued)

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (continued) (A/C.3/56/L.40, A/C.3/56/L.51, A/C.3/56/L.52 and A/C.3/56/L.66)

Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.40: Human rights education

1. **Ms. Tobing-Klein** (Suriname) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.40 on behalf also of Cameroon, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Kenya. It was essential to continue to promote the universality of human rights, and education would contribute to the implementation of the principles set forth in the human rights instruments. To that end, the United Nations Association of Suriname had prepared an education project for which it hoped to receive national and international support.

2. During its substantive session, the Economic and Social Council had adopted a similar resolution on human rights education without a vote. In the draft resolution under consideration by the Committee three additional preambular paragraphs (the second, fourth and fifth) had been included and the word "Requests" had been replaced by "Encourages" in paragraph 4. Those changes had been inspired by statements made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, during the preparatory meeting for the Conference on Financing for Development held at Headquarters in October, and during the introduction of agenda item 119.

3. Suriname, which was also a sponsor of the draft resolution on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (A/C.3/56/L.66), believed that Governments and civil society should take concrete and immediate action to promote the achievement of the objectives of the Decade and was of the opinion that the draft resolution on human rights education would help to achieve those objectives.

Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.51: Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance

4. **Ms. Duffy** (Ireland) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.51 on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Afghanistan, Armenia, Malta, Mauritius, Suriname, Tunisia, the United States of America and Uruguay. Although the right to freedom of religion was a fundamental human right proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, it was not universally enjoyed. The report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief provided many examples of the lack of freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief and of acts of violence motivated by religion. Moreover, practices which discriminated against women and vulnerable groups such as those belonging to religious minorities persisted.

5. Her delegation believed that the draft resolution underlined the importance of education in promoting tolerance and eliminating discrimination based on religion or belief. It therefore hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.52: National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

6. **Mr. Bhattacharjee** (India) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.52 on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Afghanistan, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Convinced of the significant role that national institutions could and would continue to play in the promotion and protection of human rights, the General Assembly, at its forty-eighth session, had endorsed the Principles relating to the status of national institutions (resolution 48/134). The Assembly had also recognized that the United Nations could play a catalytic role and act as a clearing-house for the exchange of information and experience between national institutions. The report of the Secretary-General (A/56/255) highlighted the growing interest in the establishment or strengthening of national institutions and in regional and international

cooperation between such institutions through the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions, which should be given the necessary support. The draft resolution reflected those positive developments and the consensus reached in its drafting. It should therefore be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.66: United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education

7. **Ms. Hagon** (Australia) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.66 on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Bangladesh, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Finland, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Mongolia, Morocco, Panama, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Suriname, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay. She referred to the provisions of article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the importance of which had been affirmed at the World Conference on Human Rights. She also pointed out that the resolution had been submitted annually to the Third Committee since the beginning of the Decade and had always been adopted by consensus. She hoped that the current text would also be adopted by consensus since it retained the essential elements of previous years, updated by references to new trends and initiatives within the United Nations system and in civil society. Above all, it highlighted the fact that the United Nations Decade would promote human rights education and thereby contribute to the full enjoyment of human rights.

8. The Decade had provided a framework for education and participation by all elements of society, but efforts must continue to formulate effective and sustainable programmes, support local, regional and international initiatives and encourage all members of society to participate in both formal and informal education and in the mobilization of resources to promote human rights through education.

(c) **Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives** (*continued*)
(A/C.3/56/L.54)

Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.54: Situation of human rights in parts of South-Eastern Europe

9. **Ms. Reynolds** (United States of America) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.54 on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Bulgaria, Iceland, Lithuania, Malta and Panama. The draft resolution reflected the progress that had been made in South-Eastern Europe as a result of the efforts made by the countries of the region to overcome the effects of past conflicts. Her delegation looked forward to the region's continued integration into Europe as well as sustained progress in its cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the protection of minorities, refugees and displaced persons, the return and reintegration of such persons, and the elimination of trafficking in persons. She commended the sincere commitment of the region to build democracy, punish past crimes and protect human rights, and hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.