



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child Thirty-eighth session

Summary record (partial)* of the 1000th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 10 January 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Doek

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chairperson** declared open the thirty-eighth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Tribute to the victims of the tsunami in South Asia

2. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, a minute of silence was observed in tribute to the 150,000 people killed by the tsunami of 26 December 2004 in South and South-East Asia and in Africa.*

Adoption of the agenda (item 1 of the provisional agenda) (CRC/C/145)

3. *The agenda was adopted.*

Solemn declaration by the newly elected member of the Committee (agenda item 2) (CRC/C/145)

4. At the invitation of the **Chairperson, Ms. Anderson**, who replaced Ms. Taylor following the latter's resignation on health grounds, made the following solemn declaration, in accordance with rule 15 of the provisional rules of procedure: "I solemnly declare that I will perform my duties and exercise my powers as a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child honourably, faithfully, impartially and conscientiously."

Statement by the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

5. **Ms. Williams** (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) paid a tribute to the victims of the tsunami in Asia and Africa, particularly to children and parents faced with a tragedy of exceptional magnitude, and said that the United Nations had clearly shown its determination and capacity to address the situation.

6. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was in full agreement with the priorities set out by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for its action to help children who had survived the disaster, with the focus first and foremost on keeping them alive, while also addressing the needs of children separated from their families in the region. The highest priority was to locate children who had lost their parents, to identify them and to bring them together with members of their extended families and their communities. The next step was to ensure that children, who were particularly vulnerable in such circumstances, did not fall victim to exploitation. Relief operations must therefore be organized in such a way as to avoid any risk of trafficking in children, illegal adoption or sexual exploitation. In that connection, she commended the measures taken by the Indonesian Government to prevent any abduction of children in the Aceh region. Lastly, the humanitarian campaign must help children overcome their trauma by ensuring that they returned to school as soon as possible.

7. At the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Member States had shown their confidence in the Committee by supporting its proposal that it should be

authorized to work in parallel chambers, beginning in October 2005, with a view to fulfilling its mandate more effectively, dealing with the backlog of reports and thus serving the cause of children better. Such a reform of the Committee's working methods, which would initially entail additional work for conference services and the Department of Public Information, could act as an inspiration for the current reform of the United Nations human rights bodies in general. The General Assembly had also decided to invite — for the first time — the Chairperson of the Committee to come and report at its sixtieth session on the Committee's activities.

8. The Subregional Workshop on the Implementation of the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, organized by OHCHR in Bangkok in November 2004, with support from the Thai Government and UNICEF and with participants from five States parties (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam), had focused on four principal themes: the establishment and organization of national human rights institutions; HIV/AIDS; juvenile justice; and the economic exploitation of children, including trafficking in and the sale of children. OHCHR intended to organize similar regional workshops in Qatar and Argentina in 2005.

9. The Independent Expert for the United Nations Study on Violence against Children, Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro had been provided with a secretariat and would thus be in a position to carry out his mandate. Preparations for regional meetings were under way and an editorial committee, of which the Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child was a member, had been set up in the second half of 2004.

10. Under an agreement between OHCHR and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, three representatives of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child would attend some of the Committee's meetings at the current session and Ms. Aluoch, in her capacity as both Chairperson of the African Committee and member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, seemed the obvious person to bring together all the parties concerned and ensure that the African Committee's visits provided an opportunity to enhance mutual understanding and the exchange of experiences between the two Committees.

11. **The Chairperson** thanked OHCHR for its efforts towards the successful outcome of the Committee's proposal to the General Assembly. With 500 days of meetings and some 6,000 hours of work to its credit, the Committee was currently holding its 1,000th meeting and fully intended to contribute ever more effectively to the implementation by State parties of the rights of the child.

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 10.35 a.m.