



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Human Rights Committee 132nd session

Summary record (partial)* of the 3780th meeting

Held via videoconference on Monday, 28 June 2021, at 12.30 p.m. Central European Summer Time

Chair: Ms. Pazartzis

Contents

Opening of the session

Adoption of the agenda

Organizational and other matters, including the adoption of the report of the Working Group on Communications

Tribute to the memory of Christof Heyns, former member of the Human Rights Committee

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

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The meeting was called to order at 12.35 p.m.

Opening of the session

Opening statement by the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

1. **Mr. Walker** (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that he was pleased to declare open the Committee's 132nd session, which was being held online. Since the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Committee had continued to discharge its mandate with commendable resilience, flexibility and efficiency in order to limit the human rights protection gap. During that period, it had adopted Views on 203 individual communications, 8 reports on follow-up to concluding observations and follow-up to Views, 40 lists of issues and lists of issues prior to reporting, and general comment No. 37 (2020) on the right of peaceful assembly.

2. He welcomed the Committee's decision to hold constructive dialogues online with States parties on an exceptional basis while it was unable to hold meetings in person owing to the pandemic. It had held two such dialogues during its 131st session, with the delegations of Finland and Kenya, and it would meet with the delegation of Togo, as well as civil society actors and other stakeholders from Togo, during its current session. As a testament to the importance of the contribution of civil society actors to its work, the Committee would also hold informal consultations with various civil society organizations and authors of individual communications to discuss ways to improve the implementation of its Views. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Committee had persevered with its work under the first Optional Protocol to the Covenant and had adapted its working methods to make the best possible use of the online platform. For example, it had agreed to spend more time reviewing documents ahead of each session and to split the Working Group on Communications into subgroups in order to transcend language barriers.

3. He recognized that remote meetings were challenging for a number of reasons and wished to acknowledge the Committee's efforts to deliver on its mandate despite those challenges and without an honorarium. The Office was acutely aware that the Committee needed to resume in-person meetings as soon as possible, particularly in view of the growing backlog of reports of States parties and individual communications. In that regard, he was pleased to inform the Committee that the full budget allotment for 2021 had been received and that the restrictions on entry to Switzerland were being progressively eased. The Office was closely monitoring the health and travel situation and would keep the Committee informed of any developments.

4. The thirty-third annual meeting of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies had been held from 7 to 11 June 2021. It had been an opportunity for the Chairs to discuss various strategies, building on their position paper on the future of the treaty body system ([A/74/256](#), annex III), their previous statements and the report of the co-facilitators of the treaty body review process ([A/75/601](#), annex). The issues discussed at the meeting had included the development of a predictable review cycle in order to ensure full reporting compliance, the ongoing harmonization of working methods and the digital transition.

5. **The Chair**, welcoming the news that the full budget allotment for 2021 had been received, said that the Committee's main concern was the serious backlog of reports of States parties and individual communications that had built up as a result of the pandemic. Despite the Committee's efforts to avoid a human rights protection gap, such a gap did exist because the Committee was simply unable to perform its mandate in full while meeting remotely. The Committee looked forward to receiving further updates from the Office, preferably before the end of the session, on the possibility of resuming in-person meetings.

Adoption of the agenda (CCPR/C/132/1)

6. *The agenda and the programme of work were adopted.*

Organizational and other matters, including the adoption of the report of the Working Group on Communications

7. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that the Working Group on Communications had met via videoconference on 16 June and from 21 to 25 June 2021. It had considered 38 draft proposals in respect of communications involving 19 different countries and a wide range of issues, including arbitrary detention, deportation and torture. The seven-member Working Group had split into two subgroups based on the members' working languages. It recommended finding a violation of the Covenant in 24 cases and finding no violation in 6 cases. One case had given rise to two differing interpretations. In seven cases, the Working Group recommended findings of inadmissibility. A further three cases that had already been discussed at the 131st session of the Committee would also be presented during the current session, bringing the total number of draft proposals to be considered by the Committee to 41.

8. *The report of the Working Group on Communications was adopted.*

Tribute to the memory of Christof Heyns, former member of the Human Rights Committee

9. **The Chair** paid tribute to the memory of Christof Heyns.

10. *At the invitation of the Chair, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.*

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 1 p.m.