



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Forty-third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1158th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Monday, 11 September 2006, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. DOEK

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The CHAIRPERSON declared open the forty-third session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
2. He recalled the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the almost 3,000 innocent civilians killed in those attacks, as well as the victims of subsequent terrorist attacks in Madrid, London and Istanbul. He also recalled the victims of terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan. The less visible acts of terror committed against children in institutions, such as detention centres and children's homes, and in the family were equally devastating. Specific recommendations for the prevention and elimination of violence against children would be made in the final report of the Secretary-General's study on violence against children in October 2006. He strongly urged all Member States to adopt the recommendations contained in the study and to implement them fully.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF ALL FORMS OF TERROR, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

4. Ms. CONNORS (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the mandate of the recently established Human Rights Council was to address situations of human rights violations, promote human rights education, technical assistance and capacity-building, contribute to the prevention of human rights violations and respond promptly to human rights emergencies. The Council would undertake universal periodic reviews of all States parties' compliance with their human rights obligations and commitments. The General Assembly had stressed that such a mechanism would complement, and not duplicate, the work of the treaty bodies.
5. At its first session, held from 19 to 30 June 2006, the Human Rights Council had decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group to develop the modalities of the universal periodic review mechanism. That issue had also been discussed in several informal consultations and at a seminar held in Lausanne, Switzerland, on 28 August 2006. All proposals for the review mechanism currently under consideration were available on the Council's website. The chairperson of the meeting of chairpersons of treaty bodies had suggested that the concluding observations of the treaty bodies should form part of the basis of the universal periodic review. She had emphasized that treaty body reform should be an open and constructive process, and that the treaty bodies were taking steps to harmonize their working methods.
6. Also at its first session, the Council had adopted the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

7. At its first special session, held on 5 and 6 July 2006, the Council had considered the escalation of the situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories and had adopted a resolution calling for the dispatch of an urgent fact-finding mission to the region. A request to that effect was currently under consideration by the Israeli authorities. At its second special session, held on 11 August 2006, the Council had adopted a resolution on the grave situation of human rights in Lebanon caused by Israeli military operations. The Council had decided to establish and dispatch a commission of inquiry to Lebanon.
8. The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment had entered into force on 22 June 2006. The Protocol provided for a new monitoring mechanism that would enable international and national independent expert bodies to make regular visits to places of detention.
9. The draft international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and its optional protocol would be submitted for adoption to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session. The draft, which had been prepared by an ad hoc committee of the General Assembly, included provisions on the rights of children with disabilities.
10. At the fifth inter-committee meeting and the eighteenth meeting of chairpersons of treaty bodies held in June 2006, discussions had focused on working methods, including follow-up procedures and engagement with (a) the Human Rights Council, (b) special procedures, (c) United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and (d) national human rights institutions, as well as indicators for monitoring compliance with international human rights instruments. Committee members had also considered the outcome of the meeting held on 8 and 9 June 2006 by the working group in charge of examining the approach of treaty bodies to reservations, treaty body reform, the harmonized guidelines on reporting and the proposal of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on a unified standing treaty body. The revised harmonized guidelines had been accepted at the meeting of chairpersons and States parties held on 22 June 2006, with the recommendation that the guidelines should be applied in a flexible manner and be reviewed at the seventh inter-committee meeting in 2008.
11. At the informal brainstorming meeting hosted by the Government of Liechtenstein in June 2006, representatives of regional groups, treaty bodies, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and national human rights institutions had discussed the proposal for a unified standing treaty body. The proposal of the Committee on the Rights of the Child had been included in the compilation of views on treaty body reform that had been distributed to all participants. The issue would be further examined at a meeting of States parties and chairpersons of treaty bodies in February 2007, followed by intergovernmental consultations with States parties to be held in May 2007 at the earliest.
12. In accordance with the High Commissioner's Plan of Action, emphasis had been placed on achieving greater awareness, understanding and support for the implementation of treaty bodies' recommendations in country engagement strategies. To that end, training workshops funded by the European Commission had been held in Mexico, Morocco and Zambia. Others would be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Guyana, Indonesia, Mauritius, Thailand and

Uganda by the end of 2006. A regional follow-up workshop and judicial colloquium on the domestic application of international human rights norms for European countries was scheduled for early 2007. The Committee would also hold regional workshops on follow-up in Costa Rica in October 2006, and in the Republic of Korea and Burkina Faso in 2007.

13. The final report on the Secretary-General's study on violence against children, which would be presented to the Third Committee of the General Assembly on 11 October 2006, was currently available on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner. It included the recommendation that the Secretary-General should appoint a special representative on violence against children. The special representative would be a high-profile global advocate who promoted the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children and would work closely with the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 1 of the provisional agenda) (CRC/C/43/1)

14. The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (agenda item 2)

15. Ms. ANDRIJASEVIC-BOKO (Secretary of the Committee) said that, since its previous session, the Committee had received second periodic reports under the Convention from Sierra Leone and Slovakia and the combined second and third periodic reports of Kazakhstan. Guatemala, Lithuania and Luxembourg had submitted reports under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and Guatemala had submitted a report under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. To date, the Committee had received 24 reports under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and 53 reports were overdue. Eighteen reports had been received under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and 62 were overdue.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.