



**International covenant
on civil and
political rights**

Distr.
GENERAL

CCPR/C/SR.2627
16 July 2009

Original: ENGLISH

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Ninety-sixth session

SUMMARY RECORD (PARTIAL)* OF THE 2627th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Monday, 13 July 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. IWASAWA

CONTENTS

OPENING OF THE SESSION

OPENING STATEMENT BY MR. BACRE WALY NDIAYE, DIRECTOR OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND TREATIES DIVISION, ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SOLEMN DECLARATION BY A NEWLY-ELECTED MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 38 OF THE COVENANT

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

Working Group on Communications

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

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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 ninety-sixth session of the Human Rights Committee.

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2. Mr. NDIAYE (Director, Human Rights Council and Treaties Division) welcomed Committee members and wished them a productive and successful session. He particularly wished to welcome Mr. Ayat, a newly-elected member who would bring considerable competence and experience to the Committee. He also welcomed Mr. Bouzid, Mr. Fathalla, Mr. Salvioli and Mr. Thelin, who had already participated in the ninety-fifth session in New York but were participating in the Committee's work in Geneva for the first time.
3. Referring to the Committee's important contribution to the promotion of civil and political rights, which was recognized and appreciated both nationally and internationally, he drew attention to the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference 2009, the purpose of which was to bring real change for millions of victims of racism throughout the world. The High Commissioner for Human Rights had described the Conference as a "platform for a new beginning"; it was important that the Committee should incorporate the recommendations of the Conference in its work.
4. By the end of the fifth session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), held from 4 to 15 May 2009, a total of 80 countries had been reviewed. Azerbaijan, Chad and the Netherlands had undergone the UPR process and the relevant documents had been made available to the Committee, which would consider reports from those countries at its current session. Additionally, the five countries in respect of which the Committee would adopt a list of issues, namely Argentina, Ecuador, Mexico, New Zealand and Uzbekistan, had also been reviewed.
5. The recommendations of the treaty bodies underpinned the UPR process and it was essential that those bodies should pay the greatest attention to the commitments and promises made by States and to the recommendations made during the review. Even non-acceptance of recommendations was a significant indicator for the Human Rights Committee.
6. Regarding the treaty body system, the ninth Inter-Committee Meeting and the twenty-first Meeting of Chairpersons of Treaty Bodies had been held from 29 June to 2 July and on 3 and 4 July 2009 respectively. Discussions at the Inter-Committee Meeting had again focused on the working methods of treaty bodies, including their coordination and possibilities for further harmonization in various areas, such as: standardization of terminology and cross-referencing the work of other treaty bodies; making the identity of the country rapporteur public; and cooperation with national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Inter-Committee Meeting had been presented with a joint NGO

submission which, with the points agreed on at that Meeting and the report of the Chairpersons' Meeting, had been forwarded to the Committee. The Inter-Committee Meeting had invited each treaty body to consider the suggestions made by the NGOs in their submission.

7. The Inter-Committee Meeting had also discussed the issue of statistical information relating to human rights and the use of indicators to promote and monitor their implementation. Work had been initiated in that regard at the request of the Inter-Committee Meeting in 2005 and, in June 2008, the Meeting had recommended that the work be pursued, including at country level, and that the secretariat develop resource materials and tools to implement and disseminate the conceptual framework adopted and the list of indicators identified in relation to a number of human rights instruments. The Meeting had recommended that the secretariat brief all treaty bodies periodically on the matter; a briefing had accordingly been scheduled during the Committee's current session.

8. The tenth Inter-Committee Meeting, to be convened later that year, would focus on two main issues also dealt with at the ninth Meeting, namely follow-up to concluding observations and views, and the UPR mechanism.

9. With regard to the compliance of States parties with their reporting obligations under the Covenant, since the Committee's ninety-fifth session Serbia had submitted its second periodic report, Slovakia its third report, Jordan its fourth report, and Hungary and Mongolia their fifth reports. Sri Lanka and Yemen had both sent notes verbales informing the Committee that they would submit their periodic reports in August 2009.

10. Turning to the present session, he had been pleased to see that the Committee would devote one afternoon to a meeting with States parties to the Covenant. The meeting would be the fifth of its kind in the Committee's history. He hoped that it would provide an opportunity for a fruitful exchange of views with States parties on the preparation and consideration of periodic reports, on follow-up to the Committee's conclusions and recommendations, and on any relevant issues that States parties might wish to raise. The meeting should also provide an opportunity to consider how the work of the Committee could be enhanced in an effective and mutually beneficial manner and thus further contribute to the protection of civil and political rights.

11. Other work to be undertaken at the current session included consideration of the progress reports by the Special Rapporteur for Follow-up on Concluding Observations and the Special Rapporteur for Follow-up on Views. He assured the Committee that it would receive the full support of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

SOLEMN DECLARATION BY A NEWLY-ELECTED MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 38 OF THE COVENANT

12. Mr. AYAT, making the solemn declaration for new members of the Human Rights Committee, said that he had worked for some 12 years for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and had left his post there recently in order to join the Committee. Sharing the contents of a farewell letter he had written to his former colleagues, he said that the Tribunal had done essential work which had helped the process of reconciliation for Rwandans. He would never abandon his commitment to that country. In the same spirit, he joined the Human Rights Committee with the intention of contributing to its important mission.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (CCPR/C/96/1)

13. The provisional agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

Working Group on Communications

14. Sir Nigel RODLEY, speaking as Chairperson/Rapporteur of the Working Group on Communications at the current session of the Committee, said that it had met from 6 to 10 July 2009 and had been composed of Ms. Chanet, Mr. Fathalla, Mr. Iwasawa, Ms. Keller, Ms. Motoc, Mr. O'Flaherty, Mr. Rivas Posada and Mr. Salvioli. Mr. Bhagwati had been unable to attend for health reasons.

15. A total of 30 drafts had been prepared for the Working Group; consideration of 1 draft and 2 recommendations had been deferred until the October session. Three recommendations had not been considered due to lack of time. A total of 24 drafts and recommendations had been adopted: 6 recommendations to declare communications inadmissible; 1 recommendation with several inadmissibility options; 1 recommendation with admissibility and inadmissibility options; 2 recommendations with the options admissible, inadmissible and merits consideration; 1 decision declaring a communication admissible; and 13 recommendations for adoption of Views under article 5, paragraph 4, of the Optional Protocol.

16. It had not been possible to reach a quorum at some of the meetings held during the earlier part of the week and it was recommended that practical measures be taken to ensure that there was always a quorum in future.

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 10.40 a.m.