



General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 November 2024

Original: English

Human Rights Council Fifty-seventh session

Summary record of the 46th meeting*

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 9 October 2024, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Zniber(Morocco)

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* No summary records were issued for the 1st to 45th meetings.

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 1: Organizational and procedural matters (A/HRC/57/L.13)

1. **The President** said that statements of the programme budget implications of the draft resolutions under consideration at the current meeting had been published on the Council's extranet.

Draft statement by the President (A/HRC/57/L.13): Report of the Advisory Committee

2. **The President** said that the draft statement, which had no programme budget implications, had been prepared in consultation with all the parties concerned. He understood that it enjoyed the support of all States members of the Council.

3. *The draft statement by the President contained in document A/HRC/57/L.13 was adopted.*

Agenda item 2: Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General (A/HRC/57/L.1, A/HRC/57/L.22 and A/HRC/57/L.24)

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.1: Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka

4. **Mr. Manley** (Observer for the United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Canada, Malawi, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the United States of America and his own delegation, said that the current draft resolution on Sri Lanka was short and of a procedural nature. By adopting the text, the Council would welcome the most recent report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the situation of human rights in Sri Lanka. The report drew attention to a significant number of concerns, including the deepening human rights impacts of the economic crisis in the country, worrying legislative developments, the erosion of democratic checks and balances, and restrictions on civil society.

5. The draft resolution provided for the Office's work on Sri Lanka to be extended for an additional year. The first key element of that work was the submission of reports to the Council that provided a valuable, objective assessment of progress and challenges, together with recommendations for both the Government and the international community on how to address those challenges. The second key element was the Office's Sri Lanka accountability project, through which it collected, analysed and preserved information about and evidence of gross violations of human rights or serious violations of international humanitarian law with the aim of combating long-standing impunity.

6. Since the start of the current session of the Council, Sri Lanka had held peaceful democratic presidential elections and had announced parliamentary elections for the following month. The Council stood ready to engage with the new Government to make progress on the range of human rights challenges identified by the Office. The main sponsors called on the Council to demonstrate its continued commitment to advancing reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka by adopting the draft resolution.

7. **The President** said that two States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the decision

8. **Mr. Payot** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that the European Union looked forward to working with President Dissanayake and continuing its support for reforms designed to bring economic recovery, lasting reconciliation and inclusive prosperity and growth to Sri Lanka.

9. The people of Sri Lanka had demonstrated their commitment to democracy with a high voter turnout for the presidential election in September, which had taken place peacefully in a competitive political environment. Nevertheless, the challenges that lay ahead were manifold and could only be addressed successfully by a united, reconciled country where all Sri Lankans, regardless of ethnicity, religion and belief or political affiliation, lived

together in peace and mutual respect and where civil society had its place within the public discourse.

10. The Sri Lanka accountability project focused on ensuring reconciliation and accountability to create a strong foundation for a peaceful and just society. Accordingly, the European Union welcomed the proposed extension of the project and, while recognizing that many stakeholders were disappointed by the brevity of the draft resolution and of the one-year extension, saw a need to engage with the new Government of Sri Lanka on how the project could best support the authorities and vice versa. The European Union hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus; however, should a vote be requested, the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote in favour and urged others to do the same.

11. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) said that, as a matter of principle, his Government opposed country-specific draft resolutions that did not have the support of the State concerned, as well as any associated actions or mandates. Constructive cooperation and respectful dialogue based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations were the only way to address national challenges in the effective promotion and protection of human rights. Punitive mechanisms only served to reinforce politicization and double standards in the consideration of human rights matters. That was the type of approach that had led to the downfall of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Rather than selective mechanisms, the Council should promote genuine cooperation with OHCHR and the use of mechanisms such as the universal periodic review, which had proved to be effective in addressing human rights issues in all countries on an equal footing.

12. **Mr. Guillemet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that the political context in Sri Lanka was complex, with continuing social, economic and ethnic tensions. It was clear from the recent elections that change was coming, and he hoped it would be for the better. The change of Government was an opportunity for the new authorities to establish an inclusive national vision that addressed the root causes of ethnic conflict, corruption and impunity, which prevented the population from fully enjoying its human rights.

13. His delegation was encouraged by the special interest shown by Sri Lanka in some of the Council's discussions under agenda items 2 and 4, including discussions on countries where a lack of accountability and long-standing impunity had had a devastating, long-term impact on the enjoyment of human rights. He trusted that that interest reflected a renewed commitment by Sri Lanka to the universal human rights system.

14. The proposed extension of the accountability project under the draft resolution was an excellent opportunity for the new Government to lead by example and demonstrate to other parts of the world that it was possible to have an open, constructive and transparent dialogue with OHCHR and the mechanisms established by the Council as tools for improving the human rights situation for all. While that would take time, human rights offered a secure path to justice, peace and lasting reconciliation. His delegation therefore supported the continuation of the Sri Lanka accountability project and called for the draft resolution to be adopted without a vote.

15. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that her Government recognized the efforts of Sri Lanka to promote and protect human rights, which included actively cooperating with human rights mechanisms, combating terrorism, protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, promoting economic reconstruction and improving the population's standard of living, and firmly supported its efforts to maintain political stability, focus on building the economy and achieve national ownership and sustainable development.

16. Her delegation had consistently opposed country-specific draft resolutions that did not enjoy the support of the State concerned and used human rights as a tool to interfere with the internal affairs of States. Therefore, the delegation of China would not join the consensus on the draft resolution. It urged the Council to adhere to the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity in its work. It hoped that all stakeholders would respect the path of human rights development freely chosen by the Sri Lankan people and return to dialogue and cooperation.

17. **The President** invited the State concerned by the draft resolution to make a statement.

18. **Ms. Arunatilaka** (Observer for Sri Lanka) said that, following the model conduct of a free, fair and peaceful election and a dignified transition, President Dissanayake had been sworn in on 23 September 2024. The people of Sri Lanka would exercise their right to vote again in November to elect a new parliament. The rule of law, transparency, accountability and reconciliation would prevail to ensure sustained economic growth and the social well-being of all citizens.

19. In line with the people's aspirations, the Government would prioritize integrity and ethical governance, including by addressing the issues of mismanagement and corruption that had been at the root of the economic collapse. It would also protect democracy and the human rights of all citizens and address past issues. Domestic mechanisms and processes related to reconciliation, accountability and justice would be credible and independent within the constitutional framework, and a truth and reconciliation process worthy of the people's trust would be operationalized. As directed by the President, investigative authorities had already announced the redoubling of investigations into a number of pending accountability cases. The victims of the senseless 2019 Easter Sunday attacks would receive justice. The Government was committed to a Sri Lankan nation that respected diversity and equal citizenship for all without discrimination, in line with the Constitution and the country's treaty commitments.

20. Her Government had opposed Council resolutions 46/1 and 51/1 and therefore rejected the draft resolution before the Council. The detailed reasons for that rejection could be found in the comments submitted by her Government (A/HRC/57/G/1), which had been posted on the Council's extranet. Nevertheless, Sri Lanka would continue its long-standing constructive engagement with the Council, the universal periodic review process and the human rights treaty bodies.

21. At a time of intense cynicism and polarization in the multilateral arena regarding human rights, her delegation urged the sponsors of the politicized draft resolution – which it opposed – to support and encourage the Government's clear intention to address human rights and reconciliation through domestic processes and in line with the country's international obligations.

22. **Mr. Oike** (Japan), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, said that his Government encouraged Sri Lanka to continue making tangible improvements to the human rights situation in the country and to promote confidence-building measures to further national reconciliation. It welcomed the successful holding of the presidential election on 21 September and hoped that the new Government would enhance efforts towards accountability and national reconciliation by establishing a transparent domestic mechanism, as part of an overall commitment to the protection of human rights and vulnerable communities and to governance reform. Japan would continue to support the new Government's efforts and hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

23. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.1 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.22: Responding to the human rights and humanitarian crisis caused by the ongoing armed conflict in the Sudan

24. **Mr. Manley** (Observer for the United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Germany, Norway, the United States and his own delegation, said that the senseless, brutal war that had begun in the Sudan in 2023 had displaced more than 10 million people. The independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan had documented the appalling suffering endured by the people of the Sudan, including rape and sexual abuse, ethnicity-based executions, child recruitment and indiscriminate shelling in civilian areas. Recent reports of attacks by the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces in greater Khartoum were horrifying. Air strikes and shelling by both parties had killed many civilians, and dozens of young men had reportedly been executed for suspected affiliation with the Rapid Support Forces.

25. The situation clearly warranted the Council's attention. It was only through independent monitoring and the documenting of atrocities that the accountability on which lasting peace depended could be achieved. The mandate of the fact-finding mission, which was the only independent mechanism focused on investigating the mass violations and abuses

across the country, must be renewed. There was no other international mechanism doing that work and no feasible national alternative.

26. The main sponsors had consulted extensively with all delegations, including that of the Sudan, and had taken on board many of their suggestions. Unfortunately, the changes made to the text had been insufficient to satisfy the Sudanese delegation. The Sudanese authorities might not be in favour of the draft resolution, but the Sudanese people were. They wanted accountability, peace and a future. He called on the Council to heed the wishes of the Sudanese people by supporting the draft resolution.

27. **The President** said that 10 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the voting

28. **Mr. Hassan** (Sudan) said that the Government of the Sudan attached the utmost priority to the protection and promotion of human rights, including issues related to justice and accountability; that commitment should not be called into question. The fact that there were currently three mechanisms concerning the human rights situation in the country – the OHCHR country office, which also had provincial branches, the Expert on human rights in the Sudan, who had most recently visited the country in July 2024, and the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1591 (2005) – raised questions as to why the sponsors of the draft resolution wished to add a fourth mechanism in the form of the fact-finding mission.

29. Representatives of the national investigation committee headed by the Attorney General had addressed the Council on a number of occasions and had submitted two reports on the committee's activities in accordance with the principles of accountability, justice and the prevention of impunity. It might well be asked how adding a further international mechanism squared with the principle of complementarity.

30. The draft resolution circumvented that principle and failed to reflect the fact that the national investigation committee was the competent body and that the judiciary was independent and capable of administering justice in a fair and transparent manner. The text also disregarded the Government by referring to the "Sudanese authorities", referred to the armed forces rather than to the Government and equated the Sudanese Armed Forces with the militia, thus misrepresenting the reality on the ground. That approach had emboldened the rebel militia to continue committing unprecedented atrocities and violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. The Sudan categorically rejected the draft resolution.

31. **Mr. Payot** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that in the previous 18 months, the world had seen the situation in the Sudan spiral out of control. The Council had been told that indicators of genocide had been observed. It had heard about famine, gruesome sexual and gender-based violence, extrajudicial and mass killings and utter disregard for human life and dignity. It also continued to see no genuine national effort to independently and impartially investigate the crimes committed by both sides. Impunity persisted. Only if that trend was reversed could there be a chance of a different future and lasting peace for the Sudanese people.

32. Sudanese civilians had asked the Council to make their voice heard. It was of the utmost importance to send a clear signal to the perpetrators that the international community would not turn a blind eye. Should a vote on the draft resolution be requested, the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote in favour of it and invited other delegations to do the same.

33. **Mr. Nkosi** (South Africa) said that South Africa stood in solidarity with the people of the Sudan and acknowledged the cooperation of the Sudan with OHCHR and the designated Expert.

34. His delegation was deeply concerned about the ongoing armed conflict in the country and the accompanying violations and abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law, some of which might amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Innocent civilians continued to bear the brunt of indiscriminate bombings, the use of explosive

weapons with wide-area effects in densely populated areas, ethnically motivated killings and sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, the hostilities were destroying critical infrastructure, displacing millions and decimating livelihoods, thereby exacerbating an already dire humanitarian crisis, including the emergence of famine. Given the human tragedy unfolding in the Sudan, the South African Government reiterated its call for an immediate ceasefire and urged the parties to grant full humanitarian access without delay.

35. There could be no military solution to the crisis, which must be resolved peacefully through an inclusive, Sudanese-owned and Sudanese-led dialogue. In that regard, his Government recognized the mediation initiatives that had been undertaken and underscored the need for a coordinated international effort for the Sudan under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. It welcomed the field mission conducted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as well as the opening of the Adré border crossing following engagement by the Aligned for Advancing Lifesaving and Peace in Sudan group, and supported the work of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan. It called on all parties to respect international law; non-compliance with or overly permissive interpretations of international humanitarian law could not be countenanced. Lastly, it appealed for an end to external interference. The flow of arms must stop and the guns must be silenced.

36. **Ms. Gillhoff** (Germany) said that, in the light of the severity of the crisis, Germany had already exceeded the €244 million it had pledged for the Sudan and neighbouring countries in 2024. The independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan had elaborately described the situation on the ground in its report, and, during the negotiations on the draft resolution, no one had denied the human rights and humanitarian catastrophe unfolding under the warring generals. Yet, regrettably, instead of focusing on the dire situation of the Sudanese people, the Council had engaged in a recurring debate on whether resolutions should be adopted without the consent of the State concerned. When those in power were the very ones committing human rights violations, it was natural to wonder whether they could be relied on to ensure accountability.

37. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights had explicitly welcomed the establishment of the fact-finding mission. The draft resolution was meant to send a signal to those struggling for power in the Sudan and ruthlessly destroying the country and its people in their wake. It was meant as a response to civilians who had asked the Council to renew the mandate and shine a spotlight on their suffering. Therefore, her Government strongly believed that the draft resolution should be adopted by consensus, failing which her delegation would vote in favour of it and called on others to do likewise.

38. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that more than half the population of the Sudan had been thrust into acute food insecurity in the 18 months since the beginning of the conflict. Famine had been confirmed at the Zamzam displacement camp and 11.2 million people had been forcibly displaced. The Sudan had become the greatest humanitarian crisis in the world.

39. Both parties to the conflict, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, had committed war crimes and the Rapid Support Forces and their allied militias had committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Women and girls reported systematic and horrific use of conflict-related sexual violence by both forces.

40. The draft resolution was a call for the warring parties to stop their abuses and allow access to humanitarian assistance. As part of that effort, the United States had been working with its partners through the Aligned for Advancing Lifesaving and Peace in Sudan group to press for nationwide or localized cessation of hostilities agreements, unrestricted humanitarian access and protection of civilians. Since the start of the conflict, the United States had provided more than \$2.1 billion in humanitarian assistance for the response in the Sudan and neighbouring countries.

41. The Council had a responsibility to promote accountability and justice for the people of the Sudan. For that reason, her delegation called upon all Council members to vote in favour of the draft resolution if a vote was called. Failure to hold wrongdoers accountable would only prolong the cycle of suffering and sow the seeds of future atrocities. First,

however, the fighting must end. So long as the conflict continued, the ones who stood the most to lose were the people of the Sudan.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

42. **Mr. Hassan** (Sudan) said it was not true that the sponsors of the draft resolution had shown flexibility with regard to amending its content, especially the most controversial paragraphs, which had remained unchanged. Those paragraphs were unacceptable. In fact, none of the observations made by his delegation in a position paper circulated to members had been taken into account. With a view to avoiding the politicization of the Council and in accordance with the Charter principles of State sovereignty and respect for legitimate State institutions, his delegation requested a vote on the draft resolution and called upon members to reject it.

43. **The President** announced that France had withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution.

44. **Mr. Bonnafont** (France) said that the human rights and humanitarian situation in the Sudan had continued to deteriorate, while the conflict was escalating and spreading to new parts of the country. The situation was all the more unacceptable because it had been brought about entirely by the parties to the conflict in a confrontation between two generals who had come to power as a result of a coup d'état. The Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces and allied armed groups must comply with international law. His Government urged them to ensure the protection of civilians and the delivery of humanitarian aid and food aid, in keeping with the commitments made during the 2023 ceasefire talks in Jeddah and the 2024 ministerial meetings in Paris and New York.

45. The extension of the mandate of the fact-finding mission was crucial for ensuring that perpetrators of war crimes and possible crimes against humanity against the people of the Sudan did not go unpunished. The mission must have the necessary resources to pursue its work. France reiterated its solidarity with the Sudanese people and called for an end to the fighting. In that regard, his Government welcomed the mediation efforts undertaken, in particular those of the African Union. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called upon other members of the Council to do the same.

46. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that the first priority in the protracted conflict in the Sudan was to achieve a ceasefire, put an end to the violence, settle differences through dialogue and restore stability in the country as soon as possible. The Government of the Sudan had made many efforts to promote and protect human rights, including the establishment of a national investigation committee and steps to ensure accountability for human rights violations and engage in constructive dialogue and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms.

47. China believed that, ultimately, the Sudanese people themselves should resolve the issues affecting them. The Government of the Sudan had repeatedly stated its opposition to the establishment of an international fact-finding mission. Imposing such a human rights mechanism against its will would only complicate the situation. All parties should respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Sudan and promote a political solution to the Sudanese question.

48. Her delegation supported the call by the Sudan for a vote on the draft resolution. In the light of its consistent position on country-specific resolutions, it would vote against the draft and called upon members of the Council to do likewise.

49. **Mr. Antwi** (Ghana) said that his Government was genuinely alarmed by the human rights violations that had been unfolding in the Sudan. It reiterated its demand for an immediate end to the fighting and for the armed parties to engage in meaningful dialogue under the African Union road map for peace in the Sudan.

50. His Government acknowledged the genuine concerns of the Sudanese authorities. However, it remained convinced that, in situations of systemic and widespread human rights violations, the international community must exercise its duty in a fair and impartial manner to help the country concerned to protect its citizens. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution because the Council's continued oversight of the unfolding situation in

the Sudan was critical for safeguarding human rights and saving the lives of innocent civilians. He called upon the Council to provide the Sudanese authorities with all the necessary support, particularly in relation to the domestic judicial processes that had been established to investigate all alleged violations.

51. **Mr. Da Silva Nunes** (Brazil) said that his Government was seriously concerned about the dire human rights and humanitarian situation in the Sudan. The fact-finding mission, by monitoring human rights violations on the ground, could give greater urgency to efforts to increase humanitarian assistance and stop the violence. It could also help ensure accountability. For those reasons, and taking into account the gravity of the situation, his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution. However, it would appreciate greater efforts by the main sponsors to foster cooperation between the Sudanese authorities and the mechanisms of the Council, especially the fact-finding mission, together with the African Union. It also considered that the draft far exceeded the mandate of the Council, as it touched on matters that should be dealt with in the appropriate forums, namely the Security Council and the General Assembly.

52. **Mr. Ghirmai** (Eritrea) said that the highest priorities for the Sudan were the immediate cessation of hostilities and the implementation of measures to address the dire humanitarian situation that had resulted from the ongoing conflict. Therefore, his delegation strongly believed that the resources and attention of the Council should be focused on finding a durable solution to end the violence and prevent further loss of life.

53. Although the importance of establishing mechanisms for accountability should not be underestimated, such mechanisms must respect the principle of complementarity and allow the national institutions of the Sudan to exercise their rightful jurisdiction. External mechanisms that disregarded the sovereignty of the State and imposed themselves without the consent of the Sudan only served to deepen divisions and obstruct real progress.

54. His delegation, which had participated in the consultations on the draft resolution, had been very discouraged to see States repeatedly calling for an extension of the mandate of the mechanism in question. A closer examination of the text of the draft resolution revealed the sponsors' clear lack of genuine interest in ending the conflict in the Sudan. In particular, paragraph 17 included a request for the so-called fact-finding mission to submit a comprehensive report as late as the sixtieth session of the Council, in 2025. It was disingenuous to call for an end to the conflict while simultaneously encouraging the Council to prolong the discussions on the matter. Eritrea stood in solidarity with the Sudan and its people. For the reasons he had outlined, his delegation supported the call for a vote on the draft resolution and would vote against it, and encouraged other members of the Council to do the same.

55. **Ms. Widyaningsih** (Indonesia) said that her Government was deeply concerned about the ongoing crisis in the Sudan, which had had a devastating impact on civilians. Her delegation called for an immediate and complete ceasefire in the Sudan and urged all parties to ensure rapid and unimpeded humanitarian relief to those in need, in line with the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan. Her Government, for its part, had delivered more than 22 tons of medical supplies to the Sudan since 2023.

56. There was no military solution to the conflict in the Sudan. All parties must engage in an inclusive Sudanese-led dialogue and support the strengthening of the country's national human rights mechanism. The Sudan must recommit itself to a transition towards civilian rule. In the meantime, the international community should focus its efforts on securing peace and providing humanitarian assistance. Without peace and stability, it was almost impossible for the Sudan to fulfil its human rights obligations. Extending the mandate of the fact-finding mission without full cooperation from the Sudan risked undermining the very peace and stability that the Council sought to achieve.

57. While discussing the Sudan, the Council must not lose sight of the need to respond to the situation in other parts of the world. A horrific tragedy was unfolding before its eyes in Gaza, where over 42,000 people, including many women and children, had been killed in what amounted to genocide. Some members of the Council deliberately turned a blind eye to the situation in Gaza. With limited resources at its disposal, the Council should reflect on which issues deserved its greatest commitment. Her delegation could not condone such

double standards and selective scrutiny. It took the same prudent approach in considering all country-specific resolutions. For all those reasons, it could not support the draft resolution and would vote against it.

58. **The President** announced that Costa Rica had withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution.

59. **Mr. Guillemet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that Costa Rica adhered to the principle of the universality of human rights. His delegation remained deeply concerned about the people of the Sudan. There were ongoing reports of egregious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including allegations of the use of food as a weapon of war to starve civilian populations.

60. Accountability was essential. For 20 years, the lack of accountability had represented a significant obstacle to resolving the conflict. The reports of OHCHR and the fact-finding mission demonstrated that efforts to ensure accountability had been inadequate and ineffective, which had led to impunity and a worsening of the situation. The fact-finding mission supported efforts to strengthen accountability, establish the truth and bring justice to victims. For those reasons, his delegation supported the draft resolution, including the renewal of the mandate of the fact-finding mission, and encouraged all delegations to vote in favour of it.

61. *At the request of the representative of the Sudan, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Paraguay, Romania, South Africa, United States of America.

Against:

Burundi, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Indonesia, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Somalia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives.

62. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.22 was adopted by 23 votes to 12, with 12 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.24: Situation of human rights in Afghanistan

63. **Mr. Turbék** (Observer for Hungary), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the European Union, said that, as the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan had stated before the Council, the Taliban, having reached a crossroads, appeared to have taken a direction that only led back to the appalling conditions of the late 1990s. The recent so-called morality law marked a new phase in the ongoing regression in respect for human rights, in particular for women and girls. The Taliban's repressive control over half the population might amount to gender persecution. Furthermore, persons belonging to minorities, persons in vulnerable situations, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, human rights defenders and media workers, former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces continued to face human rights violations and abuses, often compounded by intersecting forms of discrimination.

64. A key factor underlying those and other violations was the persistent lack of accountability. His delegation therefore welcomed initiatives to hold Afghanistan accountable, including under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Taliban had opted to disengage from the State's international human rights obligations, as was made clear by the recent refusal to grant the Special Rapporteur access to the country. The draft resolution was intended to address the current human rights crisis and included a call on the Taliban to reverse policies and practices that violated the human rights of the Afghan people. If adopted, it would extend and strengthen the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and underscore important principles on

accountability laid down in the OHCHR report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan (A/HRC/57/22). For those reasons, his delegation called upon all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

65. **The President** announced that four States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the decision

66. **Mr. Bonnafont** (France) said it was essential that the Council should remain actively engaged with the situation in Afghanistan and provide OHCHR with the resources it needed to carry out its mission. The international community had witnessed a severe deterioration in the human rights situation in Afghanistan since August 2021. The Taliban authorities' systematic exclusion of women and girls from all spheres of public life, including through the recent so-called "law on propagation of virtue and prevention of vice", was appalling.

67. France firmly condemned those violations and the system of discrimination imposed on women and girls by the Taliban, which constituted a policy of segregation and persecution. France reaffirmed its unwavering support for Afghan women and girls and would continue to support humanitarian actors that provided assistance to the Afghan population. Moreover, the crimes of the Taliban must not go unpunished. His Government would continue to demand that the Taliban should respect its international obligations, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2593 (2021), while supporting international mechanisms that contributed to the fight against impunity, such as the mandate of the Special Rapporteur. His delegation called upon all States members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

68. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that, in the previous three years, the international community had witnessed with grave alarm the deteriorating human rights situation in Afghanistan. The United States underscored that the Taliban's discriminatory edicts and harsh enforcement targeting Afghan women and girls constituted gender persecution. The Taliban had issued over 80 edicts, culminating in the most recent so-called morality law that sought to erase Afghan women from public life. Religious and ethnic minorities, especially Hazaras, and other marginalized groups faced systemic discrimination and violence. Members of the LGBTIQ+ community remained particularly vulnerable.

69. The United States remained the largest donor of humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan, providing approximately \$2.1 billion in assistance since August 2021. It called upon the Taliban to allow the Special Rapporteur access to Afghanistan.

70. Her Government rejected any claim that the Taliban exercised any legitimate authority over Afghanistan. While her delegation supported the draft resolution as a means of promoting accountability for the human rights abuses taking place in Afghanistan, including by the Taliban, it noted generally that only States had obligations under international human rights law. References in the text to human rights violations committed by non-State actors should not be understood to imply that such actors bore such obligations. Nevertheless, the United States was firmly committed to promoting accountability for human rights abuses by non-State actors in Afghanistan, including the Taliban. In addition, the United States did not necessarily understand the characterization of certain acts or situations using international law terms of art to mean that, as a matter of law, such terms were applicable to any specific act or situation.

71. Her delegation wished to reiterate its deep gratitude to all those who advocated respect for the human rights of all Afghans, especially the courageous human rights defenders in Afghanistan who continued to speak out at grave personal risk. Promoting accountability for human rights abuses was not only necessary in its own right; it was also an imperative for an economically viable, secure and stable Afghanistan. All Council members should once again join together to support the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

72. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that her delegation associated itself with the draft resolution's condemnation of the systematic and institutionalized discrimination imposed by the Taliban, which included restricting access to education for girls, excluding women from most forms of employment, imposing male guardianship requirements for travel and even

silencing women's voices in public spaces. The deepening human rights crisis in Afghanistan called for joint international action.

73. Her Government called for stronger accountability mechanisms that provided for sanctions and investigations related to human rights abuses and was especially grateful to the main sponsors of the draft resolution for including language on accountability, which was a prerequisite for ensuring effective transitional justice and ending impunity in Afghanistan. The text was a clear sign that the Council stood in solidarity with the women and girls of Afghanistan. There was a broad consensus on the need to continue to raise the profile of grave human rights violations in Afghanistan after the return of the Taliban to power in 2021. Her delegation called upon the members of the Council to support the draft resolution by allowing it to be adopted by consensus.

74. **Mr. Nkosi** (South Africa) said that the draft resolution deeply resonated with the history of South Africa, a country that had been able to claim its rightful place in the community of nations because of the bravery of countless women who had fought on the front lines of its struggle against apartheid and had made sacrifices so that the South African people could be free. Those heroines had been fighting for the dignity and equality of women and girls not only in South Africa, but everywhere, including in Afghanistan.

75. Accordingly, South Africa was extremely concerned that women and girls in Afghanistan were suffering from gross human rights violations. Several decrees had been issued since 2021 denying women and girls their human rights and institutionalizing an organized and systemic campaign to erase them from public life. Those measures could amount to gender persecution, which was recognized as a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. His delegation was therefore pleased that the draft before the Council acknowledged such persecution and the need for the international community to ensure that those responsible were held accountable. That included the possibility of establishing an independent mechanism with the capacity for collecting, preserving and analysing evidence that would serve to complement the work of the Special Rapporteur. His delegation was similarly pleased that the draft made implicit provision for accountability for both past and current crimes in Afghanistan as part of a comprehensive approach, as the current impunity derived from violations and abuses committed by multiple perpetrators over the course of decades. While more explicit language on those matters would have been preferable, the draft provided a very good basis on which the Council could and indeed must build with a view to promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan.

76. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that his Government remained deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Afghanistan and about the recent so-called morality law, which severely restricted the freedom and rights of the people of Afghanistan, particularly women and girls. It was also concerned about the Taliban's public announcement that it would not permit the Special Rapporteur to visit Afghanistan. His delegation supported the Special Rapporteur's mandate and urged the Taliban to reverse its decision. In the face of the dire human rights situation in Afghanistan, the international community must unite and issue a clear message. He therefore hoped that the Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

77. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that his Government was gravely concerned about the absence of the rule of law, the steady deterioration of living conditions and the shrinking civic space, particularly for women and girls, in Afghanistan. Systematic and institutionalized repression through more than 70 edicts had exacerbated multiple forms of discrimination and gender-based violence against women and girls that undermined their human rights and human dignity and excluded them from public life.

78. By adopting the draft resolution, the Council would extend the mandate and support the work of the Special Rapporteur. Furthermore, it would condemn in the strongest possible terms all violations of human rights and humanitarian law committed in Afghanistan. His delegation encouraged all States members of the Council to adopt the draft by consensus.

79. **Mr. Chen Xu** (China) said that, over the previous two years, the interim Government of Afghanistan had taken a series of measures to stabilize the situation, develop the economy and improve people's livelihoods. The overall situation in Afghanistan was stable, with a

significant decline in violence and a steady increase in tax revenues and in import and export volumes. Such positive developments deserved the international community's recognition and encouragement.

80. At the same time, Afghanistan still faced daunting challenges in terms of the humanitarian situation, the threat of terrorism and the protection of the rights of women and girls. His Government hoped that the Afghan authorities would embrace moderate governance, develop friendly relations with neighbouring countries, protect the rights of ethnic minorities and women and children, and act in the interests of the Afghan people. China called upon the international community to continue to provide timely humanitarian and economic support to Afghanistan. In view of his Government's principled position on country-specific resolutions, his delegation would not join the consensus on the draft resolution.

81. **The President** invited the State concerned by the draft resolution to make a statement.

82. **Mr. Andisha** (Observer for Afghanistan) said that, three years after the military takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban, the country found itself at a critical juncture. The approach of so-called pragmatic engagement had failed to improve the situation on the ground. In fact, the Taliban had been further emboldened, and human rights continued to deteriorate as discrimination, oppression and exclusion became more systematic. Women and girls were denied access to education and were unable to leave their homes or escape their abusers. Former government officials and security personnel feared for their lives, and lawyers, judges, journalists and human rights defenders were unable to carry out their vital work.

83. At the same time, the country's rich and dynamic cultural landscape was being completely erased. The large-scale establishment of extremist madrasas was creating a dangerous road to radicalization that would inevitably extend beyond Afghanistan. The Taliban de facto authorities continued to exclude almost every segment of society – including women, young persons and ethnic and religious communities – from decision-making processes at every level. The country lacked a constitution or civil laws and was governed by a series of draconian edicts. As the Taliban themselves had acknowledged, around 12,000 persons were being held in prison without charge. He called upon the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to discover the identities and whereabouts of those persons.

84. He welcomed the proposal to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan. The fact that the Taliban denied the Special Rapporteur access to the country merely underscored the need to provide him with sufficient resources and capacity to capture the full extent of the violations and abuses taking place. Although disappointed that the text did not provide for the establishment of an independent investigative mechanism, as called for by Afghan civil society groups and international organizations, his delegation nonetheless supported the draft resolution and encouraged the Council to adopt it by consensus.

85. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.24 was adopted.*

86. **The President** invited delegations to make statements in explanation of vote or position or general statements on any of the draft resolutions considered under agenda item 2.

87. **Mr. Da Silva Nunes** (Brazil) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.24](#) on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan. As a member of the Council, Brazil had a duty to promote gender equality for women and girls in all public and private spheres and to oppose all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination, in particular multiple and intersecting forms. His Government defended the active engagement of the United Nations in Afghanistan and remained highly concerned about the setbacks that women's rights had suffered in the country, notably through the recent "law on propagation of virtue and prevention of vice", which should be repealed.

88. **Mr. Hassan** (Sudan) said that he wished to thank the delegations that had upheld the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations by voting against draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.22](#) on the Sudan. By doing so, they had also expressed their support for General Assembly resolution 60/251, whereby the Human Rights Council had been established to

replace the former Commission on Human Rights, which had foundered due precisely to the politicization and double standards evident in draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.22](#).

89. No member of the Council was doing more than the Sudan to promote and protect human rights. State institutions continued to operate and all violations of national and international law were promptly and adequately investigated. There was thus no need to impose an external monitoring mechanism such as that envisaged in the draft resolution. It was important to recall that the national army was an official institution that protected the honour and territory of the nation. The attempt in the draft resolution to establish an equivalence between the army and a rebel militia set a worrying precedent to which no State was immune.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

Agenda item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development
([A/HRC/57/L.2](#), [A/HRC/57/L.5](#), [A/HRC/57/L.7](#), [A/HRC/57/L.9](#), [A/HRC/57/L.10](#), [A/HRC/57/L.17/Rev.1](#) and [A/HRC/57/L.21](#))

Draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.2](#): Marking the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

90. **Mr. Chen Xu** (China), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Denmark, France, Kenya, Mexico and his own delegation, said that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were key global policy documents on gender equality. They had been adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995, and, in the 30 years since then, the status of women had been significantly raised. Yet, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations had said, challenges remained and progress towards equality had been far too slow.

91. The purpose of the draft resolution was to revitalize the spirit of the Declaration and Platform for Action, to consolidate consensus and to unite common efforts towards a brighter future for women. By adopting the text, the Council would decide to convene a high-level panel discussion to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Conference, to be held during the fifty-eighth session of the Council, and would invite the President of the Council to consider the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration and Platform for Action as the theme for the annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming, also to be held at the fifty-eighth session. At the same time, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights would be invited to liaise with all stakeholders with a view to ensuring their participation in the panel discussion and to prepare a summary report on the discussion, to be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its sixtieth session and to the General Assembly at its eightieth session.

92. The main sponsors had held open and transparent discussions with all stakeholders, including OHCHR and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). His delegation was pleased to see that the text enjoyed very wide support and hoped that the Council would adopt it by consensus.

93. **The President** said that 32 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the decision

94. **Mr. Bonnafont** (France) said that equality between men and women was an essential condition for sustainable development, peace and democracy. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 by 189 countries, had united the world in recognition of the universality of the rights of women and girls. The President of France had designated equality between men and women as a key priority of his administration. Nonetheless, major inequalities persisted. Around 730 million women and girls around the world suffered violence at least once in their lives. Women were disproportionately affected by extreme poverty and climate change and they remained underrepresented in political, economic and social life. At the current rate, it would take the international community 300 years to achieve full gender equality. It was thus vital that the next generation should be the generation of equality. To achieve that end, it was necessary to pursue the Beijing review process and to

promote dialogue between States, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, also with a view to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5. His delegation called upon the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

95. **Ms. Schroderus-Fox** (Finland) said that her delegation welcomed the draft resolution on marking the anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a landmark global policy framework for advancing the rights of women and girls. Finland reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality and to the human rights of women and girls, and would actively participate in the thirtieth anniversary commemorations. Her country had seen first-hand how advancing women's rights benefited society as a whole, as the prosperity and development of Finland after the Second World War could be attributed largely to its emphasis on women's rights and gender equality. By investing in education, enacting legal reforms and implementing social policies that supported women's participation in the workforce, Finland had not only rebuilt its economy but also fostered a more equitable society. The Council should adopt the draft resolution by consensus and thereby renew its commitment to the Declaration and Platform for Action, which continued to guide the global struggle for the empowerment of women around the world.

96. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that her delegation wished to thank the main sponsors of the draft resolution on marking the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, documents which had lost none of their relevance since their adoption. In fact, they continued to underpin and guide efforts to remove all barriers and discrimination that stood in the way of the full enjoyment of human rights by women and girls around the world. The activities provided for in the draft resolution would prompt States to reflect on their own obligations in that regard. Her Government, for its part, reaffirmed its firm commitment to all initiatives aimed at achieving equality and empowerment for women and girls in the multilateral sphere. She hoped that the members of the Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

97. **Mr. Staniulis** (Lithuania) said that 2025 would mark a significant milestone in the global pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment, being the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Over the previous three decades, those documents had inspired numerous policies and initiatives worldwide, serving as a comprehensive framework for advancing women's rights and addressing critical issues such as education, health and political participation. Nonetheless, his delegation was concerned that persistent challenges remained, including sexual and gender-based violence and economic disparities. Lithuania had a legal framework that upheld equality of rights and opportunities for women and men and prohibited gender-based discrimination. In fact, the country had ranked ninth in the Global Gender Gap Index ranking for 2023, published by the World Economic Forum. His delegation would join the consensus on the draft resolution and encouraged other members of the Council to do the same.

98. **Mr. Alimbayev** (Kazakhstan) said that his delegation appreciated the constructive negotiations that had been held on the draft resolution. The initiative to convene a high-level panel discussion to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was particularly welcome. Such an initiative would provide an opportunity for States and other stakeholders to explore policy options and strategies, including innovative approaches and good practices for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. As Co-Chair of the forthcoming Beijing+30 Regional Review Meeting, Kazakhstan warmly welcomed the draft resolution and called upon the Council to adopt it by consensus.

99. **Ms. Hussein** (Sudan) said that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action had brought about important institutional changes and practical developments that had served to promote and protect the rights of women around the world. Thirty years after their adoption, the Declaration and Platform for Action stood in need of review, particularly the provisions relating to gender equality, discrimination against women and girls, gender-based violence in the context of armed conflicts, poverty and economic empowerment. The draft resolution expressed recognition of the progress that had been made and the need to highlight best practices in the implementation of the Declaration and Platform, while also acknowledging the challenges that remained. Her delegation wished to thank the main sponsors of the text, which, she hoped, would be adopted by consensus.

100. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that his country was firmly convinced of the vital importance of gender equality and was a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other relevant international human rights instruments. In keeping with the spirit of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, his Government intended to launch a programme dedicated to nurturing the rising generation of leaders in the field of gender. In doing so, it would prioritize the empowerment of women, children and young persons and promote universal health coverage and quality education. Its efforts in that regard were being further strengthened by a new programme on gender equality.

101. In 2025, Japan and Norway would co-chair the high-level meeting of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, which was an indispensable forum for sharing best practices, encouraging cooperation between countries and promoting the women and peace and security agenda. Expectations for the meeting were particularly high, as 2025 would also mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. He wished to thank the main sponsors for streamlining the work of the Council by including, in the draft resolution, an invitation to the President to consider the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration and Platform for Action as the theme for the annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming, to be held at the fifty-eighth session.

102. **Mr. Kah** (Gambia) said that his delegation wished to extend its sincere gratitude to the main sponsors for presenting the draft resolution, which was a milestone that reaffirmed the Council's collective commitment to advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls globally. In the future, members should work together inclusively, equitably and sustainably to ensure that the rights of women and girls remained a priority on the international agenda. The Gambia was proud to be part of the consensus on the draft resolution.

103. **Mr. Alcántara** (Dominican Republic) said that, for 30 years, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action had guided global efforts to ensure that women were able to enjoy their human rights on an equal footing with men. The thirtieth anniversary of their adoption was a good opportunity to reflect on the progress that had been made and on the problems that still remained. His delegation therefore welcomed the draft resolution, which referred not only to achievements but also to challenges. Women and girls continued to face challenges such as gender-based violence, the pay gap and structural barriers that hindered their access to education and decent work. International cooperation and the exchange of best practices were vital if those challenges were to be met and overcome. He invited all members of the Council to join the consensus on the draft resolution, in recognition of the fact that the empowerment of women and gender equality were vital for the sustainable development of society.

104. **Mr. Foradori** (Argentina), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, said that his delegation would join the consensus on the draft resolution and reaffirmed its commitment to the defence of all human rights, particularly those of women and children. In that context, he wished to recall two interpretative declarations that Argentina had made when ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In its declaration concerning article 1, Argentina stated that it considered a child to be "every human being from the moment of conception up to the age of eighteen". In its declaration concerning article 24 (f), Argentina stated that questions relating to family planning were "the exclusive concern of parents in accordance with ethical and moral principles" and that the State's obligation was "to adopt measures providing guidance for parents and education for responsible parenthood". It was important to recall, moreover, that the preamble of the Convention accorded protection to children "before as well as after birth". Lastly, he wished to point out that Argentina had incorporated the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as part of its Constitution.

105. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.2 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.5: The role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights

106. **Mr. Różycki** (Observer for Poland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Australia, Chile, the Republic of Korea, South Africa and his own delegation, said that the primary aim of the text was to highlight the significant impact – both positive and negative – that the development of artificial intelligence systems could have on good governance. The text included a request to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to prepare a study on that subject, while taking due account of relevant work already done by stakeholders such as States, United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations and OHCHR. Such a study would be a valuable resource for making substantive updates to future resolutions on the subject. The text was the result of two rounds of open and inclusive consultations, and he was pleased to note that it enjoyed broad cross-regional support. He hoped that the Council would adopt it by consensus.

107. **The President** said that 20 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

General statements made before the decision

108. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that transparency, accountability and inclusivity were fundamental principles of good governance, which was necessary for the promotion and protection of human rights, particularly those of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups. The draft resolution underscored those principles while also highlighting how digital technologies such as artificial intelligence could positively influence governance and administration by streamlining public services, boosting anti-corruption measures and improving government efficiency and responsiveness. However, artificial intelligence also posed significant challenges, particularly in terms of accountability and the protection of human rights. It was critical to maintain control and prevent misuse of such technologies as they became more widely used. For that reason, the draft resolution included a request to the Advisory Committee to conduct a study into the impact of artificial intelligence, looking at both the opportunities it provided and the steps needed to ensure that its use respected human rights and promoted open and accountable governance. Her delegation believed that the draft resolution was critical if the Council was to continue promoting good governance and ensuring that digital technologies were used responsibly. She called upon the members of the Council to adopt it by consensus.

109. **Mr. Dan** (Benin) said that human rights could not be fully and sustainably protected without good governance, which had been the mainstay of the programme of action of the Government of Benin since 2016. The Government had adopted a package of reforms and of legislative, political and social measures that effectively addressed the four main aspects of the relationship between good governance and human rights: democratic institutions, rule of law, transparent public services and anti-corruption measures. Benin had also accelerated its move towards online public services with a view to promoting good governance and achieving user satisfaction. His delegation was particularly interested in the study that the Advisory Committee would be requested to carry out on the impact of artificial intelligence systems on good governance and human rights. He supported the draft resolution and invited members of the Council to adopt it by consensus.

110. **Mr. Foradori** (Argentina), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, said that his delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution. Argentina guaranteed freedom of expression in accordance with international treaties while strongly condemning hate speech. Nevertheless, the Government was concerned that the imprecise application of the term “hate speech” might lead to the abuse of the concept, which in turn might be detrimental to pluralist debate. Consequently, he wished to make clear that his Government understood hate speech as “any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence”, as defined in article 20 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, read in conjunction with article 19 (3), which provided that the right to freedom of expression could be subject to certain restrictions.

111. Furthermore, it should be noted that the 2012 report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (A/67/357) stated that the risks that legal provisions prohibiting hate speech might be “interpreted loosely and applied selectively by authorities” underlined “the importance of having unambiguous language and of devising effective safeguards against abuses of the law”. Paragraph 44 of the same document contained definitions of “hatred”, “advocacy” and “incitement”, all of which informed his Government’s understanding of the subject.

112. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.5 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.7: Countering cyberbullying

113. **Mr. Foradori** (Argentina), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Germany, Greece, Israel and his own delegation, said that cyberbullying encompassed the use of information and communication technologies to harm a victim or victims in deliberate, repeated and hostile ways. Although not easily recognized, it had severe and lasting consequences for its victims. The magnitude and pervasiveness of cyberbullying had been exacerbated by the ubiquitous presence of technology. The challenge, which all countries faced, was to develop comprehensive and inclusive responses to prevent, address and eradicate the problem.

114. The focus of the draft resolution was on countering cyberbullying against persons with disabilities, who were significantly more likely to experience cyberbullying than those without disabilities and who faced a disproportionate risk of violence and abuse in digital environments. The draft resolution also stressed the current lack of awareness of cyberbullying through the lens of disability and the importance of making relevant information available in accessible formats. By adopting the text, the Council would reaffirm that efforts to counter cyberbullying against persons with disabilities must be centred on their autonomy, choice and agency and would call upon States to take appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, including the establishment of accessible mechanisms and channels for the reporting of cyberbullying. Furthermore, the draft resolution emphasized the importance of meaningful engagement with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including in the conduct of human rights due diligence, to better understand their concerns around cyberbullying and the barriers to their safe participation in digital spaces.

115. In an effort to contribute to the efficiency of the Council, the sponsors had decided not to request the organization of a new panel discussion; instead, the text included a decision to include the topic of countering cyberbullying against persons with disabilities in the Council’s next annual interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities, to be held at its fifty-eighth session. The draft resolution also included a request for OHCHR to prepare a report on countering cyberbullying against older persons, to be presented to the Council at its sixty-second session. His delegation hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

116. **The President** announced that 13 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the decision

117. **Mr. Staniulis** (Lithuania) said that the draft resolution would increase understanding of how persons with disabilities were exposed to cyberbullying and the measures that should be taken to eradicate such behaviour. His delegation particularly welcomed the references to the disproportionate risk of hate speech, violence and abuse in digital environments, which contributed to the exclusion of persons with disabilities; the lack of awareness of cyberbullying through the lens of disability; and the need to empower children, including children with disabilities, with knowledge and skills in the digital environment. The fight against the cyberbullying of persons with disabilities, especially through national policies, was crucial to fostering an inclusive and respectful online environment.

118. Persons with disabilities were often subjected to targeted harassment and discrimination, and cyberbullying could severely impact their mental health, self-esteem and overall well-being. Actively combating such behaviour was a means of protecting the dignity

and rights of persons with disabilities and promoting a culture of empathy, understanding and support. The text before the Council was strong and balanced and should be adopted by consensus.

119. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that the United States recognized the profoundly negative impact of online harassment, particularly on persons with disabilities, children and members of marginalized groups. Cyberbullying transcended borders and was detrimental to the mental health, well-being and human rights of individuals around the world. In joining the sponsors of the draft resolution, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive digital environment where everyone could participate without fear of harassment or abuse. The United States strongly supported the international community's coordinated approach to the development of strategies to curb cyberbullying. Together, the international community could create a digital world that upheld the dignity and rights of all individuals.

120. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that the draft resolution would enable the Council to reaffirm its commitment to combating cyberbullying, which had an adverse impact on the enjoyment of human rights and was harmful to mental health. It was important to ensure appropriate safeguards and human supervision in the application of new and emerging digital technologies, so as to reduce exposure to cyberbullying.

121. The draft resolution expressed the Council's recognition that persons with disabilities were significantly more likely to experience cyberbullying than those without disabilities and that they faced a disproportionate risk of hate speech, violence and abuse in digital environments, contributing to their exclusion and mistreatment. Consequently, the text included a call upon States to adopt and implement sustained, inclusive and accessible education programmes, including the expansion of digital literacy initiatives, to support the responsible use of digital spaces and self-protection of personal data. States were also encouraged to raise public awareness of strategies to prevent and respond to cyberbullying against persons with disabilities and to expand awareness of the tools and resources available to support those who experienced or witnessed cyberbullying. The draft resolution also highlighted private companies' responsibility to implement human rights due diligence. In the light of those considerations, his delegation encouraged all States members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

122. **Mr. Bonnafont** (France) said that his delegation was pleased to be among the sponsors of the draft resolution. Digital technology had come to occupy a place in people's lives that had been inconceivable at the time of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. While new technologies had created many opportunities, their misuse presented new threats, including cyberbullying and exposure to illegal content and hatred online, to which persons with disabilities were especially vulnerable. For that reason, France promoted a policy of zero tolerance for online violence; however, effective protection from online risk was a complex task with no quick solution. The Government was convinced of the need for a multilateral, multi-stakeholder approach complemented by a strong, integrated transnational regulatory framework. It therefore supported the draft resolution, which served as a reminder of the opportunities presented by the digital space, pointed out its risks and reaffirmed the need to prevent all forms of abuse and harassment against vulnerable persons. It was essential that mechanisms to combat cyberbullying and to support and care for affected persons should take account of factors such as gender in order to be fully effective. His delegation invited all States members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

123. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.7 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.9: Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order

124. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, said that transforming the current international order was of fundamental importance for developing countries, which for years had been disadvantaged in areas such as access to international trade, technology transfer, wealth distribution, the international financial architecture, decision-making, sovereign control over natural resources and the

realization of the right to development. Although those circumstances did not relieve States of their responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights, they imposed serious limitations on the full enjoyment of those rights – especially economic, social and cultural rights – and perpetuated inequality by hindering national development.

125. The draft resolution introduced two new substantive issues that were crucial for achieving an equitable international order: the need for the transformation of the international financial architecture and a comprehensive solution to the problem of foreign debt; and the fulfilment of development financing commitments, including with regard to official development assistance.

126. Regrettably, some delegations maintained a rhetorical position on the issue under consideration. It could scarcely be argued that the current unfair and unequal international order, which condemned the majority to poverty while bestowing opulence upon a few, had no impact on the realization of human rights. For the reasons he had given, his delegation requested all States members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

127. **The President** announced that 12 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

General statements made before the voting

128. **Ms. Osman** (Malaysia) said that her delegation supported the draft resolution, which was crucial for fostering fairness and inclusivity in global governance. All States, regardless of their size, geographical location or gross domestic product, must have an equal voice in shaping international relations, economic systems and global decision-making processes. The transformation of the current international order was necessary to address growing inequalities, which had been aggravated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and other global challenges. Overhauling the outdated international financial architecture, which had been designed after the Second World War, was particularly important. The mention of that issue in the draft resolution was welcome, as it was key to addressing the foreign debt burden of many developing countries. Malaysia also supported the draft resolution's call for a comprehensive solution to the problem of foreign debt and for the fulfilment of development financing commitments, including with regard to official development assistance, climate finance and technology transfer. Such action was essential for closing the gap between developed and developing nations and enabling all States to pursue their development goals and human rights commitments free from debt dependency. Her delegation called on States to support the draft resolution as part of a collective effort to build a fair system that gave priority to human rights and sustainable development.

129. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that the world faced increasing challenges, including the division of nations into different political camps, economic deglobalization, the fragmentation of international governance and unbridled hegemonism and unilateralism. Humankind stood once more at a crossroads. The Government of China attached importance to building a more equitable international order and supported an equal and orderly multipolar world with inclusive economic globalization. His delegation therefore welcomed the draft resolution and had joined the sponsors, considering that the text reflected the aspirations of many developing countries.

130. **Ms. Arias Moncada** (Honduras) said that the draft resolution clearly reflected the challenges faced by the international community in the search for a fairer, more equitable and more democratic global order. A democratic international order was essential for the full enjoyment of human rights, sustainable development and world peace, all of which were fundamental values that guided the foreign policy of Honduras and its participation in multilateral forums. In an increasingly interdependent world, human rights could be fully upheld only if States worked together on the basis of mutual respect, equity and solidarity. The draft resolution rightly highlighted the need to urgently correct the structural inequalities that persisted in the international system and reaffirmed the importance of respecting the cultural, political and economic diversity of nations. Honduras supported the calls for the consolidation of international institutions and the transformation of the international financial architecture to address the problem of debt, which were in line with the recent Pact for the Future. The text also highlighted the importance of strengthening international cooperation

to address the global challenges posed by climate change, poverty, pandemics and migration crises, which disproportionately affected less developed countries. Her delegation welcomed the reference to the fulfilment of commitments with regard to climate finance, technology transfer and development assistance, and was pleased to note that the draft resolution expressed recognition of the essential value of multilateralism for addressing global challenges. Her Government shared the view that multilateralism should be inclusive and that all nations, irrespective of their size or level of development, should have a say in decisions affecting their future.

131. The draft resolution represented a valuable contribution to the development of a more inclusive, equitable and democratic international system, and was a step towards the realization of the human rights of all. Her delegation therefore supported the text and called on the members of the Council to adopt it by consensus or, if a vote was requested, to vote in favour of it.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

132. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that a democratic and equitable international order was an important topic that should not be lightly dismissed. However, the concept as expressed in the draft resolution was unclear; it could not be considered to be an internationally established human right. Furthermore, the Council was not the appropriate forum in which to address many of the issues raised, which in fact fell outside the Council's mandate. For those reasons, his delegation requested a vote on the draft resolution and would vote against it.

133. **Mr. Payot** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that the European Union continued to work towards a democratic and equitable international order. However, the concerns it had raised in relation to previous resolutions on the same subject remained valid. The topic had not been dealt with in a comprehensive way, and some elements had been selected arbitrarily, were taken out of their appropriate context or went beyond the Council's mandate. Consequently, the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council did not support the draft resolution and would vote against it.

134. *At the request of the representative of Japan, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Qatar, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

Against:

Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Romania, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Morocco, Paraguay.

135. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.9 was adopted by 27 votes to 15, with 5 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.10: Use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination

136. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, said that the Council had an obligation to address mercenarism, including its new forms and manifestations, and its implications for human rights. Concerns had been raised in relation to the persistent practices of recruitment, financing, arming and use of mercenaries for the violation of sovereignty and the commission of violent, destabilizing or subversive acts for the purpose of regime change. The activities of private military and security companies, including in the humanitarian space, were also worrying.

137. One of the aims of the draft resolution was to shed light on the impact of mercenaries and mercenary-related activities on the protection, enjoyment and realization of human

rights. The text incorporated some suggestions made by the Working Group on the use of mercenaries and included a request that the latter should address the online dimension of the problem, taking into account existing concerns about the misuse of new technologies and financial instruments and the use of social media to organize, support and finance mercenaries and mercenary-related activities. For the reasons he had outlined, his delegation invited the States members of the Council to support the adoption of the draft resolution.

138. **The President** announced that five States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

139. **Mr. Payot** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that, despite the engagement of those States during the consultations, the draft resolution left their long-standing concerns unresolved. For example, the draft conflated the roles and actions of mercenaries, as clearly defined in international humanitarian law, with the legal activities of private military and security companies. Moreover, by associating mercenaries with the right to self-determination, the draft resolution went beyond the mandate of the Council. For those and other reasons, the European Union could not support the text. He therefore requested a vote on the draft resolution and noted that the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote against it.

140. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that the United States condemned the misuse of private military and security companies by some States and the grave threat that certain armed non-State actors continued to pose to States' ability to promote and protect human rights and maintain order. However, a sharp distinction must be drawn between irresponsible or destabilizing mercenary activities and the proper role that private military and security companies could play. The United States, maintaining its long-standing position on the subject, would vote against the draft resolution and encouraged other delegations to do the same.

141. *At the request of the representative of Belgium, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Qatar, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

Against:

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Romania, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Dominican Republic, Morocco, Paraguay.

142. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.10 was adopted by 29 votes to 14, with 4 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.17/Rev.1: Social reintegration of persons released from detention and persons subjected to non-custodial measures.

143. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely the Gambia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Romania and his own delegation, said that the text was meant to bring a clear human rights perspective to the issue of the social reintegration of persons who had been released from detention or subjected to non-custodial measures, given that, in other forums, the issue had been treated in a stigmatizing and discriminatory manner or with a narrow focus on crime prevention. The main sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would help to fill a gap in the universal human rights system.

144. Social reintegration depended on more than the success or failure of rehabilitation during detention. An important factor was whether or not the individual was guilty of an

offence: thousands of people had been detained for months or years before being found innocent or released without a conviction. On the other hand, persons whose guilt had been established and who had served their sentence should not be subjected to continued punishment in the form of failure to respect their human rights. It was important to recognize that, in addition to overcoming the traumatic experience of deprivation of liberty, persons released from detention must overcome significant human rights-related barriers and challenges in order to become reintegrated into society.

145. The draft resolution contained a request for OHCHR to prepare a study, which the Council would subsequently use to assess the benefits of more detailed work on the issue, such as the development of guiding principles. The draft resolution represented a first step towards addressing the social reintegration of released persons from a human rights perspective; he therefore hoped that all members of the Council would support it.

146. **The President** announced that 14 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the decision

147. **Ms. Popa** (Romania) said that Romania was pleased to be among the main sponsors of the first draft resolution on the social reintegration of persons released from detention and persons subjected to non-custodial measures, which was intended to promote a human rights-based approach to the issue, grounded in the fundamental principles of dignity, equality and non-discrimination. The draft resolution addressed the need to find avenues to help the individuals concerned with a view to preventing their potential marginalization or exclusion from mainstream society due to a lack of financial means, disability, homelessness, stigma or discrimination. Her delegation fully supported institutional mandates that addressed social reintegration with the aim of reducing crime, especially that of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the draft resolution was intended simply to introduce a complementary human rights perspective to ensure a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to reintegration. The delegation of Romania called on all member States to support that aim and to join the consensus on the draft resolution.

148. **Mr. Kah** (Gambia) said that the Gambia was proud to sponsor the draft resolution, which reflected a shared commitment to upholding human rights, promoting sustainable reintegration and supporting individuals as they re-entered society with dignity and respect. The text underscored the importance of collaborative efforts between Governments, civil society and the private sector. It emphasized the need to provide comprehensive support, ranging from vocational training and education to healthcare and social services, to ensure that persons who had been subjected to a sanction involving deprivation of liberty or to non-custodial measures could lead law-abiding and self-supporting lives. Moreover, it drew attention to the unique challenges faced by vulnerable groups such as women, children and persons with disabilities and highlighted the importance of tailored programmes that responded to their specific needs. His delegation encouraged all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

149. **Mr. Alimbayev** (Kazakhstan) said that, while social reintegration could have a huge impact on reoffending rates and lead to economic savings, the draft resolution addressed reintegration as a human rights issue, with a focus on the human rights challenges people faced upon leaving prison and on what States could do to better support them. By adopting the draft resolution, the Council would call upon States to facilitate proactively the social reintegration of persons released from detention in accordance with their human rights obligations and commitments and upon all relevant stakeholders to contribute to greater government efforts and international cooperation. Along with many other countries, Kazakhstan had already taken positive steps in that regard. Effective post-release support practices could have significant benefits, not only for prisoners but for the sustainable development of communities as a whole. Throughout the negotiation process, the main sponsors, his delegation included, had sought to ensure that the text reflected the views and concerns of all delegations in order to achieve a balanced text and broad support for the draft resolution. They therefore called on all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

150. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that her delegation welcomed the efforts by the main sponsors to introduce a draft resolution on a topic that had not been sufficiently addressed by the human rights system, namely the situation of particular vulnerability in which persons found themselves after serving a prison sentence and trying to become reintegrated into society. The draft resolution was therefore a step in the right direction. Social reintegration should be approached from a community support perspective instead of being seen as the exclusive responsibility of families or civil society. The draft resolution successfully embodied the principle of leaving no one behind, as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The draft resolution was a balanced text which, if adopted, would support the development of fairer and more equitable societies. Her delegation called on the members of the Council to allow the draft resolution to be adopted by consensus.

151. **Mr. Bichler** (Luxembourg) said that deprivation of liberty should always be the exception, not the rule, in the fight against crime. All States had an obligation to support the social reintegration of people who had served their sentences, especially people belonging to particularly vulnerable groups. Like other countries, Luxembourg was endeavouring to modernize its criminal law and procedures in order to move away from a purely punitive approach towards a more restorative one aimed at rehabilitation and reintegration. His delegation welcomed the inclusion in the text of references to the important work done by OHCHR and to the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information-Gathering (the Méndez Principles). His delegation was pleased to join the consensus on the draft resolution.

Statements made in explanation of position before the decision

152. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that the draft resolution brought important focus to the human rights dimensions of the reintegration of persons released from detention into society. Her delegation welcomed the recognition of the importance of input from victims of crime when considering the societal reintegration of former detainees and the references to best practices such as restorative justice. It also appreciated the recognition of the unique challenges faced by women and girls, young people and members of other marginalized populations who had been incarcerated. While her delegation acknowledged that there had been many important United Nations efforts on matters related to the treatment of prisoners, as noted in the sixth preambular paragraph, it was not appropriate to include the Méndez Principles, which had not been negotiated by States and did not incorporate State input, in the list of documents adopted by consensus. Her delegation recognized the potential value of an OHCHR study on the human rights dimensions of the social reintegration of persons released from detention. In view of the work already being done by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, however, it did not agree that OHCHR was the appropriate body to establish guiding principles, as any such principles should be negotiated and decided upon by States, which had oversight over reintegration efforts. Those points would be explained in more detail in her delegation's global statement on the resolutions adopted under agenda item 3, to be posted on the website of the Permanent Mission of the United States and included in the *Digest of United States Practice in International Law*. A commitment to social integration after incarceration by the Council should in no way be invoked by any State to justify using incarceration as a means of forced assimilation.

153. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that his delegation recognized the importance of the topic addressed by the draft resolution and had engaged constructively in the informal consultations on the text. It had pointed out that the initiatives proposed in the draft resolution overlapped with the UNODC model strategies on reducing reoffending. In that respect, while his delegation acknowledged the need for a comprehensive study, as requested in paragraph 8, it remained concerned about potential inconsistencies with existing UNODC work. Any initiatives based on the draft resolution should be undertaken with due attention to that work and to the processes initiated by criminal justice practitioners, such as the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, while ensuring consistency with existing standards, including the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules). On a separate but related point, during the negotiations, many delegations, including that of Japan, had suggested removing the reference to the development of guiding principles in paragraph 8. While the main sponsors had reconsidered the wording of that paragraph, the reference had ultimately been retained. He hoped that, in future, full

consideration would be given to the views of participating delegations. In the spirit of constructive engagement, the delegation of Japan would join the consensus on the draft resolution.

154. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that China was committed to taking comprehensive measures to protect the rights and fundamental freedoms of persons released from detention and persons subjected to non-custodial measures and to help them become better reintegrated into society. The social reintegration of such persons fell within the scope of the sovereign rights of States, and individual historical, cultural and social contexts must be taken into account. The draft resolution should be based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and should be in keeping with existing international mechanisms. The Chinese delegation had participated in the constructive informal consultations on the text. There appeared to be a general view that it would be premature to have a debate on the issue in the Council, and there was as yet no consensus on multiple parts of the text addressing the formulation and implementation of specific legal policies. His delegation hoped that the main sponsors would continue to engage with other States on the issue so as to maximize cohesion among all stakeholders. In the light of those considerations, China had decided to join the consensus on the draft resolution.

155. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.17/Rev.1 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.21: World Programme for Human Rights Education: the plan of action for the fifth phase

156. **Mr. Sorreta** (Philippines), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Senegal, Slovenia, Thailand and his own delegation, said that human rights education was the first line of defence against the injustices, intolerance and discrimination that undermined the most fundamental of truths about human existence: that all were born free and equal in dignity and rights. The World Programme for Human Rights Education had been established in 2005 and centred on the principle that human rights education should embrace and draw inspiration from the diversity of civilizations, religions, cultures and traditions while respecting the universality of human rights. By adopting the draft resolution, the Council would reaffirm the continuation of the Programme and launch its fifth phase, taking into account the plans of action from the previous phases as guidance documents for States and other relevant stakeholders in crafting national strategies and programmes. The fifth phase would focus on the nexus between human rights and digital technologies, the environment and climate change, and gender equality, three of the most crucial issues currently facing the international community. The draft resolution included language acknowledging the work of OHCHR in preparing the plan of action for the fifth phase based on a multi-stakeholder consultative process, as mandated by Council resolution 54/7. Through the draft resolution, the Council would also decide to convene a panel discussion at its sixty-third session to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. The main sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

157. **The President** announced that 20 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

General statements made before the decision

158. **Mr. Da Silva Nunes** (Brazil) said that human rights education was fundamental to building inclusive, just and sustainable societies and that his delegation was proud to be among the main sponsors of the draft resolution. Brazil attached great importance to the Programme and was fully committed to advancing its objectives. Over the previous four phases, the Programme had encouraged progress in integrating human rights education into formal and informal education settings. His delegation was particularly pleased that the fifth phase would address digital technologies, climate change and gender equality and would focus on children and adolescents as the primary target audience. Young people equipped with the knowledge and tools to understand and uphold human rights would be better prepared to face global challenges and promote equality and justice in their communities. The adoption of the draft resolution by consensus would encourage States to engage in the effective implementation of the Programme over the next five years.

159. **Ms. Schroderus-Fox** (Finland) said that human rights education for children and young people was an integral part of the right to education. Her Government welcomed the focus of the upcoming fifth phase on children and young people, with a special emphasis on human rights and digital technologies, the environment and climate change, and gender equality. The Programme aligned educational strategies with the broader goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and played a vital role in creating a more just, equitable and peaceful world without discrimination. Educating people about their rights helped build societies that valued human dignity, equality, tolerance and participation in democratic decision-making and contributed to the long-term prevention of abuses and violent conflicts. Her Government wished to reiterate its full support for the crucial work of OHCHR in preparing the plan of action for the fifth phase. For those reasons, her delegation supported the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

160. **Mr. Staniulis** (Lithuania) said that his delegation welcomed the fact that the fifth phase of the Programme would continue to focus on youth while expanding to include children as a priority group, with a special emphasis on human rights and digital technologies, the environment and climate change, and gender equality. The goal of developing a comprehensive human rights education strategy based on internationally agreed principles for children and youth at the national level was of particular importance. His delegation believed that the text of the draft resolution was strong and well balanced and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus, as previous resolutions on the topic had been.

161. **Mr. Bichler** (Luxembourg) said that there was no better way to build a society that respected human rights than through human rights education. His delegation welcomed the particular emphasis on the global challenges of gender equality, the environment and digital technologies in the next phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. However, it regretted the amendments made to the draft resolution, which had weakened the recommendations on education for gender equality and non-discrimination initially proposed by OHCHR. Simply ignoring an issue would not make it disappear, and depriving people of their rights was not the way to work towards a more egalitarian society. OHCHR, operating with full impartiality and in consultation with all stakeholders, was best placed to make recommendations for the implementation of an education programme aimed at the full enjoyment of human rights. The delegation of Luxembourg wished to commend the Office for the work accomplished in preparing the fifth phase of the Programme. It encouraged all delegations to implement the Programme's recommendations and hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

162. **Mr. Verdún Bitar** (Paraguay) said that Paraguay had traditionally supported the draft resolution on the World Programme for Human Rights Education. The plans of action proposed under the Programme must be adaptable to all contexts and should therefore avoid addressing issues that were still under discussion between and within States. For that reason, his delegation had decided not to join the sponsors of the draft resolution at the current session. Any definitions on controversial issues that were included in the plans, and the application of those concepts at the national level, could not be disconnected from States' domestic legal framework or from their individual development priorities.

163. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that Chile believed that education was a pillar for the construction of more just societies that were inclusive and respectful of human rights. Accordingly, the delegation of Chile had played a vocal role in the negotiations on the draft text. Human rights education must be transformative and empower people to become active advocates for their own rights and the rights of others. Her delegation welcomed the thematic focuses selected for the fifth phase of the Programme. For human rights education to be truly inclusive, gender equality efforts must be expanded to fully embrace all persons, in line with the fundamental principles of equality and non-discrimination that underpinned the work of the Council and the international human rights system. OHCHR played a fundamental role in ensuring that international human rights efforts were translated into concrete and effective action at the national level, and its work in promoting and coordinating those efforts would be essential to achieving the objectives of the plan of action for the fifth phase. Her Government supported the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus and reaffirmed its commitment to working together with the international community, with the guidance of

OHCHR, to build a world in which human rights education was a reality for all, especially for young people and vulnerable groups.

164. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that, as one of the main sponsors of the draft resolution, Costa Rica wished to express its full support for the work that had been carried out since the proclamation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education by the General Assembly in 2004. The plan of action for the fifth phase expressly outlined the consultation process that had been carried out for the preparation of the document, which focused on three pillars agreed upon by consensus at the Council's fifty-fourth session, all of which were essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Human rights education was an issue that should unite rather than divide the Council. In that regard, his delegation regretted that, during the informal consultations on the text, several delegations had criticized the content of the plan of action and objected to well-established concepts contained in numerous international and national instruments adopted over the years. Some had argued that the plan of action made no mention of the role of the family, parents, caregivers and religious leaders, even though paragraphs 14, 20, 22 and 36 promoted the active participation of those actors in the promotion of human rights education. The highly confrontational questioning of the independence, objectivity and role of OHCHR was very worrying and not in the spirit of the Council's working methods. In the draft resolution, States and other relevant stakeholders were encouraged to develop and implement human rights education initiatives within their capabilities and in line with national needs and priorities. The main sponsors hoped that the members of the Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

165. **Mr. Alcántara** (Dominican Republic) said that the draft resolution addressed an issue of great importance for his country and for the international community as a whole. Human rights education was a fundamental pillar for strengthening democratic and just societies. The draft resolution reflected a comprehensive approach that recognized the crucial role of new technologies, climate change and gender equality in shaping the societies of the future. States must take a proactive approach to incorporating those issues into their education systems and training programmes for all sectors of society, from youth to media professionals and public officials. The Dominican Republic called on all States to commit to the full implementation of the plan of action for the fifth phase, thus ensuring that future generations were equipped with the necessary tools to address global challenges. His delegation invited all Council members to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

Statements made in explanation of position before the decision

166. **Mr. Foradori** (Argentina) said that, while his Government supported the draft resolution, it wished to emphasize that, according to the Argentine constitutional and treaty framework, parents had a prior right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children, in line with article 26 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child must be respected, in accordance with article 14 (1) and (2) of the Convention. His Government therefore maintained that parents had a prior right vis-à-vis the State to educate their children according to their convictions.

167. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said her Government believed that human rights education and training was an invaluable tool for the advancement of human rights. However, to have the greatest possible impact, human rights education programmes must be fully inclusive of members of all marginalized and vulnerable populations. In joining the consensus on the draft resolution, her delegation hoped to underscore the importance of ensuring that education programmes operated with the aim of cultivating respect for the human rights of all individuals, without distinctions based on race, sex, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other factors. The delegation of the United States was disappointed that some delegations had sought to downplay the importance of such inclusion; it welcomed the commitment to inclusion in the OHCHR plan of action and continued to support the Office's independence in producing such plans.

168. *Draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.21](#) was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.