



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council Fifty-seventh session

### Summary record of the 48th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 10 October 2024, at 3 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Zniber .....(Morocco)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development** (*continued*)  
(A/HRC/57/L.19)

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 resolution A/HRC/57/L.19: The right to development*

2. **Mr. Kafeero** (Observer for Uganda), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that it consisted largely of text from previously adopted resolutions, with some new language reflecting developments in the field of human rights. First, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was requested to strengthen its work to promote the right to development at the regional level, and the Secretary-General was requested to enhance the Office's dedicated capacity at the regional level; second, OHCHR was requested to consider implementing the recommendations concerning the Office made by the Working Group on the Right to Development in its most recent report; and, third, the High Commissioner was requested to take concrete measures in fulfilment of his mandated responsibility, including through advocacy, research, regional technical support, capacity-building at the regional level and strengthening partnerships.

3. The new language reflected the need to make the right to development a reality for everyone. His delegation wished to underscore the importance of capacity-building, technical support and advocacy on the right to development at the regional level with a view to supporting countries in their quest to realize that right. The language requesting OHCHR to consider implementing the recommendations of the Working Group on the Right to Development was in keeping with the role of member States in relation to the execution of the High Commissioner's mandate. The draft resolution reflected the significance of the right to development in embodying a comprehensive approach to human rights and emphasized that the right to development could be enjoyed only if an inclusive and collaborative approach was taken at the international, regional and national levels. His delegation therefore invited the Council to adopt the draft resolution, as it had adopted similar resolutions at previous sessions.

4. **The President** announced that one State had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

*General statements made before the voting*

5. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) said that the draft resolution constituted a further step towards operationalizing the right to development through the work of the various existing mechanisms. It introduced a new element, namely a request to OHCHR to strengthen the implementation of that right at the regional level. The actions called for in the draft resolution would provide greater opportunities for exchange on the technical, legal and political issues associated with the right to development, including its dual nature as a collective and individual right. Cuba reiterated its commitment to the negotiation and adoption of the proposed international covenant on the right to development, which would make a decisive contribution to the crystallization of that right in international law. For those reasons, his delegation invited all States members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

6. **Ms. Micael** (Eritrea) said that the right to development should be universally embraced, yet it came up against a plethora of politically motivated barriers. The resistance to the right to development had become more entrenched, but the arguments justifying that resistance were increasingly untenable in view of the pressing challenges that the world was currently facing, which required more cooperation, not less. The Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted nearly four decades earlier, remained a landmark in the global human rights framework. However, at each Council session, developing countries had to struggle

just to secure the most basic acknowledgement of that right, which should be non-negotiable. Integrity, vision and courage, not political posturing, should characterize the work of the Council. It was imperative that the right to development should be fully recognized, upheld and enforced as a fundamental human right. Her delegation urged all Council members to support the draft resolution.

7. **Mr. Nkosi** (South Africa) said that South Africa reaffirmed its commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights without discrimination, in line with the principles of non-discrimination and equality enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action reaffirmed that all human rights, including the right to development, were universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. One year after the commemoration of the anniversaries of those foundational human rights instruments and the reaffirmation of commitment to their contents, still more needed to be done with regard to the right to development. The draft resolution emphasized the urgent need for greater acceptance, operationalization and realization of the right to development for all. Thirty-eight years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development, members of the Council could not continue to pursue a selective and hierarchical approach to the promotion and protection of human rights. His delegation therefore called on them to support the draft resolution.

8. **Mr. Eisa** (Sudan) said that the right to development was an inalienable human right and covered a wide range of rights. Everyone had a right to live in dignity, free from hunger and poverty, and to have access to education, health, housing and employment. The draft resolution affirmed the link between human rights and development and the need to ensure that development was centred on the human person. His delegation called on members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

9. **Ms. Arias Moncada** (Honduras) said that her delegation wished to reiterate its support for the draft resolution and to reaffirm the universal nature of the right to development as part of the enjoyment of all human rights. The right to development, as reaffirmed in the Declaration on the Right to Development, encompassed economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects and was key to promoting equitable and sustainable progress throughout the world. Her delegation welcomed the draft resolution's references to international cooperation; in an interdependent world, States must work together to facilitate the exercise of that right and to promote sustainable development processes that were critical to addressing global challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality. Of particular relevance was the request to OHCHR to strengthen its work on the right to development at the regional level, together with the request to the Secretary-General to enhance the Office's dedicated capacity to that end. The draft resolution set out a specific framework for action involving all sectors and levels of government to reaffirm the right to development as an individual and collective right. Her delegation therefore called upon all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus or to vote in favour of it if a vote was requested.

10. **Mr. Dan** (Benin) said that the right to development was a fundamental right that deserved the Council's continued attention. The General Assembly, in the Pact for the Future adopted by its resolution 79/1, reaffirmed that sustainable development must remain a central objective of multilateralism. The Council must therefore continue to play its full part by continuing to work on the recognition of the right to development within the various relevant mechanisms. His delegation fully supported the draft resolution while at the same time recognizing the primary responsibility of each State to be the principal agent of its own development. Accordingly, since 2016 his Government, under the impetus of President Talon, had resolutely embarked on a path of structural transformation and sustainable development, taking its destiny into its own hands and initiating major reforms and large-scale projects in all policy areas. For those reasons, his delegation called on all the members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

11. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that commitment to development lay at the very core of the foreign policy of the United States, which had provided more foreign assistance than any other country on Earth – over \$3.8 trillion since the end of the

Second World War – and remained the world’s largest bilateral development donor. The United States was also committed to the work on development being led by the United Nations, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. From its development assistance and support for the United Nations to its open markets, safeguarding of sea lanes and defence of fair trade, the United States had been a catalyst for development around the world for generations.

12. However, although all States agreed on the importance of development, their views diverged significantly in terms of how it was conceived and how it related to human rights. The draft resolution perpetuated a detrimental narrative that would elevate the process of development above human rights and undermine the human rights system, shifting the Council’s approach from one that respected the central importance of human rights for development towards one that prioritized development over human rights. Indeed, the “right to development” referred to in the text seemed to protect States instead of individuals. Yet States did not have human rights; they guaranteed such rights to individual human beings. The narrative advanced in the draft resolution enabled States that did not respect human rights to claim that human rights obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights were at odds with or an obstacle to development.

13. The “right to development” was not recognized in any United Nations human rights convention; it did not have an agreed international meaning and was not recognized as a universal right held and enjoyed by individuals. She was therefore concerned to note that, under the draft resolution, even more scarce OHCHR resources would be channelled towards the promotion of that purported right. For those reasons, she requested a vote on the draft resolution and urged fellow members of the Council to join her delegation in voting against it.

14. **The President** said that Chile had withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution.

15. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that her country’s commitment to human rights was cross-cutting, as reflected in its support for the Declaration on the Right to Development, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Nevertheless, her delegation continued to be concerned about the direction taken by the debates in the Council on the right to development. The current draft resolution, like the similar one put forward in 2023, referred to the adoption of a legally binding instrument on the right to development. However, to date, there was no broad consensus on the need for such an instrument, nor had the content and scope of the right to development been clearly defined. Her delegation was also concerned that the draft resolution would place an excessive burden on OHCHR and other bodies, against the backdrop of the financial restrictions faced by the Office, which could cause it to give primacy to the right to development over other rights, a position that Chile did not accept. It would therefore abstain from voting on the draft resolution.

16. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that the right to development was a fundamental and inalienable human right. The current imbalance in development among countries was increasing, and poverty and inequality were more pronounced. Development should be placed at the centre of the international agenda; it was only through development that human rights could be safeguarded. The mainstreaming of the right to development in the United Nations system should be promoted. China would continue to support the work of the Working Group on the Right to Development, the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development and the Special Rapporteur on the right to development. She hoped that members of the Council would use the draft resolution as an opportunity to reaffirm the importance they attached to the right to development. There was a need to listen to the voices of developing countries, eliminate inequalities and promote inclusive and equitable development. Her delegation deeply regretted the call for a vote on the draft resolution, would vote in favour of it and called on the members of the Council to do the same.

17. **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 promoted a human rights-based approach to inclusive and sustainable development. The realization of the right to development must be rooted in the universal, indivisible, interrelated and

interdependent nature of all human rights. While States had the primary responsibility and obligations for the full realization of all human rights, individual persons must always be recognized as rights holders. Through official development assistance, the European Union strived to support its partner countries in meeting their human rights obligations, including by providing capacity-building for legislative and judicial reform, institution-building and awareness-raising.

18. He was grateful to the sponsors for the open and inclusive informal consultations held on the draft resolution. The European Union had made constructive proposals aimed at ensuring that the text reflected the principle of universality of human rights, with individuals as rights holders and States as duty bearers. It had raised serious concerns about language in the draft that amounted to undue interference with the independence of OHCHR. It was aware of diverging views on the right to development, particularly on the draft legally binding document referred to in the draft resolution. While it noted with appreciation that some of its suggestions were partly reflected in the current version, it nevertheless regretted that many more were not. For those reasons, the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote against the draft resolution.

19. **Mr. Foradori** (Argentina) said that Argentina reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of individual rights for all human beings without distinction, in accordance with the obligations expressly undertaken pursuant to the treaties to which it was a party. He wished to recall that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which his Government had committed in good faith, set out non-legally binding aspirations that States, in exercise of their sovereignty, were free to interpret and implement as they saw fit.

20. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that the draft resolution contained certain elements that his delegation could not accept, including a reference to the outcome document of the Nineteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which stressed the need to prioritize the implementation of the right to development, including through the drafting of a legally binding instrument. The Council should not speak of prioritizing one human right over another, as such an approach was at variance with the principles of interdependence and indivisibility, under which all human rights should be prioritized without distinction. His delegation also considered that it was premature to decide on the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on the right to development. In 2023 his delegation had already expressed its opposition to that process, in view of the controversial aspects of the right to development, including the tendency to use it as a pretext to justify non-compliance with international human rights obligations.

21. Although the draft resolution reflected economic, social and cultural rights, it lacked a strong focus on civil and political rights such as freedom of expression, assembly and association, which were essential for achieving meaningful development and holding Governments accountable for their development policies. The draft resolution placed a strong emphasis on the responsibilities of States in the realization of the right to development but did not include any mention of mechanisms for ensuring accountability when States failed to meet their human rights obligations. Lastly, while the draft resolution mentioned the need for community participation, it contained weak language on inclusive participation. For those reasons, his delegation would abstain from voting on the text.

22. *At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, 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, Chile, Costa Rica, Paraguay.

23. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.19 was adopted by 29 votes to 14, with 4 abstentions.*

**Agenda item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention**  
([A/HRC/57/L.4](#), [A/HRC/57/L.11](#) and [A/HRC/57/L.12](#))

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.4: Situation of human rights in the Russian Federation*

24. **Mr. Bichler** (Luxembourg), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the members of the European Union, said that, in the 12 months since the first renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, in October 2023, that situation had continued to deteriorate. The authorities had continued to consolidate their arbitrary hold on power, in particular by increasingly cracking down on any form of dissent. Lawyers who sought to defend human rights defenders were themselves prosecuted, and the erosion of the independence of the judiciary had continued. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment had continued. Indigenous Peoples had been subjected to repression and legal harassment, notably with the addition of 55 organizations to the list of so-called extremist organizations. The LGBTQI+ community and organizations defending their human rights had been stigmatized and subjected to various forms of persecution. Women and girls, in particular, suffered sexual and gender-based violence. Especially serious cases had been documented in the North Caucasus, where forced marriages, female genital mutilation and honour killings had been reported to the Special Rapporteur. Lastly, the historic opposition leader Alexei Navalny, once the bearer of hope for a generation that had dared to dream of a democratic future for Russia, had died in prison in circumstances that remained unclear. The draft resolution took account of the worsening situation and the main points of the Special Rapporteur's report ([A/HRC/57/59](#)).

25. Requests for comments addressed to the authorities of the country concerned had gone unanswered. The Special Rapporteur herself had not received any response to her repeated attempts to work in cooperation with the authorities of the Russian Federation. However, the European Union remained hopeful that such cooperation would continue to be possible. Members of civil society and the population as a whole in Russia deserved to have their human rights protected and fulfilled.

26. **The President** announced that two States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

*General statements made before the voting*

27. **Mr. Sterk** (Bulgaria) said that Bulgaria wished to underscore the importance of country-specific resolutions and special procedure mandate holders, including the crucial work done by the Special Rapporteur during the first year of her mandate, in the course of which she had shed light on the steadily deteriorating human rights situation in the Russian Federation despite the lack of cooperation from the country concerned. Prime examples of violations of human rights included widespread violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, forced marriage, honour killings and cases of female genital mutilation. Furthermore, nearly 20,000 Ukrainian children had been forcibly transferred to the Russian-occupied Crimea or deported to the Russian Federation and children reported being subjected to sexual violence during their time in Russian institutions. Such violations of the rights of the child must be immediately addressed and the perpetrators held accountable. Bulgaria reaffirmed its strong support for the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and called on the Council to urge the Russian authorities to allow her unhindered access to the country. His delegation therefore urged all members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

28. **Ms. Milačić** (Montenegro) said that her delegation had studied with interest and concern the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, which pointed to the continued deterioration of the human rights situation with the unabated systemic crackdown on civic space, political opposition and critical voices inside and outside Russia. The authorities had continued to restrict

fundamental freedoms, silence critics and prohibit other peaceful activities, thus creating a chilling effect on human rights work in general. Her delegation regretted that the Special Rapporteur's attempts to communicate and cooperate with the country concerned had not been reciprocated. It strongly encouraged the Russian authorities to engage openly and constructively with her and with all other relevant special procedures and treaty bodies. While some delegations alleged that country-specific resolutions were selective and politicized, they were in fact an important tool for discharging the Council's mandate, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251, to address situations of violations of human rights. Her delegation would therefore welcome the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus. If a vote was requested, it would vote in favour and called on the members of the Council to do the same.

29. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that the human rights situation in Russia continued to deteriorate as the Kremlin escalated its repression against civil society and independent voices who dared to challenge its false narratives with regard to the Putin regime's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Kremlin had recently labelled numerous Indigenous rights organizations as "extremist groups", a clear attempt to silence Indigenous voices throughout the country. Meanwhile, there were credible reports that non-ethnic Russians, including Indigenous men, were mobilized for wartime service at disproportionately high rates. The Kremlin used censorship and fear to prevent Russians from speaking out and to deny them access to independent information sources. People were being detained simply for reading anti-war poems or sharing social media content. In the Kremlin's search for enemies, marginalized communities, including minority groups, women and girls, and LGBTQI+ persons, were heavily targeted. Russians had been jailed for displaying rainbows as symbols of what the Kremlin deemed an extremist movement. Women and girls had continued to experience high rates of gender-based violence across Russia, including rape and sexual violence, and domestic violence.

30. All the while, Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilian detainees had been forcibly taken into Russia, where widespread reporting detailed how they had experienced horrific acts of torture and conflict-related sexual violence. The role of the Special Rapporteur was thus now more important than ever. The Special Rapporteur was one of the few trusted independent people able to provide a voice for human rights defenders, journalists and other courageous people in Russia who merely wished to speak their minds. Despite her sincere efforts to initiate dialogue with Kremlin authorities, they continued to demonize her rather than engage with her as they sought to hide the truth. Yet she had managed to do her mandate justice with thorough and valuable reporting on the myriad of human rights violations in the Russian Federation. The delegation of the United States urged the Russian authorities to engage with the Special Rapporteur and allow her access to the country.

31. Some delegations had called the draft resolution an example of the politicization of the Council. However, it reflected the need to ensure that human rights were universally respected and that no country was above scrutiny. If there was politicization, it was reflected in the lengths to which the Kremlin would go to undermine the work of the Council. The purpose of the Council was to scrutinize egregious human rights violators such as the Russian Federation. The delegation of the United States therefore called on all members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

32. **Ms. Schroderus-Fox** (Finland) said that the human rights situation in the Russian Federation had declined steadily over many years, becoming what the Special Rapporteur had described as a structural State-sponsored system of human rights violations legalized by new or revised legislation. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and special procedure mandate holders had also expressed concern about the effective closure of civic space. On the basis of laws on foreign agents, undesirable organizations and extremism, thousands of Russians had been charged with administrative and criminal offences and arbitrarily detained. Human rights defenders and members of minorities such as Indigenous Peoples, the LGBTQI+ community and religious minorities, as well as anyone voicing dissent, faced violations of their rights. The authorities were unwilling to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment in detention.

33. As Finland shared a border over 1,300 km long with the Russian Federation, it had a long-standing interest in the human rights situation in that country. It was to be regretted that

the Russian Government had not engaged with the Council on the negotiation of the draft resolution or with the Special Rapporteur, who, as other routes for engagement were closed, provided a critical bridge linking Russian civil society and victims of human rights violations with the international community. The Special Rapporteur had been able to engage with persons living in Russia, despite not being granted access to the country. The Council had a mandate to provide tools for the promotion and protection of human rights in any country, and the Special Rapporteur's mandate was one such tool. Her delegation called on all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus or, in the case of a vote, to vote in favour of it.

34. **Ms. Gillhoff** (Germany) said that first-hand accounts of the personal experiences of former political prisoners and Russian human rights defenders illustrated the systematic crackdown on political opposition and civil society taking place in Russia, which had been turned into a prison for its own people. Thousands were being criminally prosecuted for political reasons, often just for speaking out against the Government's illegal and unjustifiable war against Ukraine. They nevertheless continued to stand up for their rights and their country and for the rights of Ukrainians and Ukraine, but needed support to be able to continue their important work. The Special Rapporteur and her reports were one of the last avenues providing a voice for what remained of civil society in Russia. Her delegation therefore urged all members of the Council to support the extension of the mandate for another year.

35. **Mr. Ishii** (Japan) said that universal values such as human rights, freedom, democracy and the rule of law should be respected in every country; the protection of human rights was a basic responsibility of all countries. His Government remained concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in the Russian Federation and reiterated its call on the Russian authorities to comply with all of their obligations under international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and to respect those rights. His delegation remained committed to supporting the implementation of the Special Rapporteur's mandate and would continue to cooperate to that end with the international community, including OHCHR.

36. **Mr. Staniulis** (Lithuania) said that a country that respected the rights of its own people did not threaten other States. In the case of Russia, internal repression and disrespect for the human rights of its own people were closely interlinked with its external aggression. The ongoing terror and atrocity crimes committed by Russia against the sovereign State of Ukraine went hand in hand with the terror unleashed on its own population. Its war of aggression against Ukraine and blatant disregard for international law and human rights, fuelled by a sense of impunity, had fostered repression and a climate of fear inside the country, with a continued crackdown on civil society and misuse of the judicial system to conduct mass arbitrary arrests and silence anti-war dissent of any kind. State-led abuses against Indigenous Peoples and persons belonging to ethnic, religious and other minorities – the groups most affected by forced mobilization – continued to intensify, while racism against migrants from Central Asia and African countries had worsened, with a growing number of migrants being subjected to beatings, vandalism and other ill-treatment, usually by law enforcement officials. The human rights situation in Russia was a crisis created by the Russian authorities, but State-generated propaganda continued to blame other countries. The denial of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people had created the conditions for the blatant disregard of international law and the war of aggression against Ukraine. The situation in Russia posed a huge security risk to neighbouring countries and the entire world. His delegation thus called on all members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

37. **Mr. Bonnafont** (France) said it was a sad reality that the democratic federation with which the Russian people and authorities had attempted to replace the Soviet Union had slowly collapsed over a number of years, leading to the current situation of strangled freedoms and a slide towards terror. As the Special Rapporteur had shown, civic space and freedom had been destroyed by the increased numbers of arbitrary detentions, as well as measures aimed at stopping all free expression. France held the Russian authorities responsible for the death of Alexei Navalny in prison on 16 February 2024. Nearly eight months later, it was still calling on the Russian authorities to shed light on the circumstances



surrounding his death. At a side event during the current session of the Council, testimonies had been presented by former political prisoners Vladimir Kara-Murza, Andrey Pivovarov, Alexandra Skochilenko and 17-year-old Kevin Lick, all of whom had been recently released.

38. In the face of State lies, disinformation and attempted justification of actions by claims that they were to fight neo-Nazism, the Council must continue, objectively and independently, to record violations of human rights; those responsible must be brought to account. The Special Rapporteur's mandate must be renewed. His delegation called on all members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

39. **Mr. Tummers** (Kingdom of the Netherlands) said that the testimonies that Council members had heard from the recently released political prisoners, describing the daily punishments, violence and cruelty inflicted on them, had been striking. They had also spoken of the 1,300 other political prisoners, including Alexey Gorinov, Igor Baryshnikov and Maria Ponomarenko, who remained incarcerated in Russia. The world must not forget them. The Special Rapporteur, through her mandate, made sure they would not be forgotten, documented the harsh conditions in which they were held, which amounted to torture, and called for their unconditional and immediate release. The draft resolution was based on the simple idea that all States had the obligation to promote, protect and fulfil human rights. His delegation called on other members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

40. **The President** said that the State concerned by the draft resolution had declined to make a statement.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

41. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) said that his delegation reiterated its position of principle against selective and politicized exercises in the field of human rights that did not enjoy the consent of the State concerned and sought purely to single out nations for clear geostrategic purposes. Such resolutions did nothing to promote the cooperation, constructive dialogue or respectful exchanges that should prevail in the consideration of human rights. Rather, they stirred up confrontation, polarization and radicalization of positions, and wasted the scant resources available to the United Nations; it was clear to everyone that the Special Rapporteur's mandate had no impact whatsoever. The draft resolution was a blatant example of the selectivity, political manipulation and double standards that had forced their way into the work of the Human Rights Council, echoing the previous harmful practices of the defunct Commission on Human Rights. Those delegations that had anticipated such references to politicization and double standards were fully aware of the truth of his claims; his delegation would never stop calling out such practices.

42. If there had been genuine interest in improving the human rights situation in a country subjected to unilateral coercive measures, the draft resolution would have contained a clear message rejecting the imposition of such sanctions. The undeniable impact of such biased and selective mechanisms on the enjoyment of human rights in those countries must not be ignored; their establishment and continuation constituted an act of interference in the internal affairs of the States concerned, a practice which Cuba unequivocally repudiated. The huge amount of resources taken up by the mandate should instead be used for development projects on the ground. His delegation therefore requested a recorded vote on the draft resolution and urged other members of the Council to vote against it.

43. **Mr. Ghirmai** (Eritrea) said that his delegation firmly opposed the selective and politicized campaign within the Council that unfairly targeted specific countries. His Government rejected any initiative that disregarded the principles of sovereignty and lacked the consent of the country concerned. The draft resolution was yet another deliberate attempt by certain countries to manipulate multilateral institutions, including the Council, to advance their own geopolitical agendas. The misuse of human rights issues by a select group of nations as a tool for interference, the imposition of illegal unilateral coercive measures and the exertion of pressure on certain sovereign States could not be tolerated. The Special Rapporteur's mandate had been established with the sole intent of promoting a biased narrative aimed at destabilizing the country. That unfair approach was of deep concern, and the Special Rapporteur's mandate and actions were in direct violation of the core principles

of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, as well as the values of genuine dialogue and cooperation.

44. His delegation resolutely opposed the use of human rights as a weapon to pursue narrow geopolitical objectives; it was a divisive approach that would only exacerbate the polarization within the Council and continue to undermine its integrity and credibility. He therefore joined the Cuban delegation in calling for a vote on the draft resolution; his delegation would vote against it and encouraged other members of the Council to do the same.

45. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that the Council had been established to promote and protect human rights through dialogue and cooperation and should uphold the principles of universality, objectivity, impartiality, non-selectivity and non-politicization in its work. Regrettably, recent years had seen increasing politicization and confrontation in the Council, frequent interference in countries' internal affairs on the pretext of human rights and the use of blatant double standards, all of which seriously undermined international dialogue and cooperation on human rights and impeded the global progress of human rights.

46. China systematically opposed the politicization and instrumentalization of human rights issues and the establishment of any country-specific mechanism without the consent of the country concerned. The sponsors had disregarded the objections of the country concerned and had forced through the draft resolution to serve their own political ends, creating division and confrontation, which would seriously undermine the Council's reputation. She agreed with the Cuban delegation that large amounts of United Nations resources were being squandered. Her delegation therefore joined the call for a vote on the draft resolution and urged all other members of the Council to vote against it.

47. *At the request of the representatives of China, Cuba and Eritrea, a recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

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

*Against:*

Burundi, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, Viet Nam.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Qatar, Somalia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates.

48. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.4 was adopted by 20 votes to 8, with 19 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.11: Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic*

49. **Mr. Manley** (Observer for the United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely France, Germany, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Qatar, Türkiye, the United States of America and his own delegation, recalled that, during the Council's interactive dialogue with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic at the current session, the Chair of the Commission had described the situation in that country as a "quagmire of misery and despair". The Commission's report (A/HRC/57/86) had once again documented violence against civilians, arbitrary arrests, and detentions in horrific conditions, where torture and sexual and gender-based violence were rife and families struggled to obtain information about the fate and whereabouts of their detained loved ones.

50. The draft resolution highlighted the violations and abuses committed against a generation of children in Syria, who had known nothing but a world where violence, fear, hunger and loss were a daily reality, where at least 2.4 million children were out of school, where those as young as 11 years old had endured sexual and gender-based violence in State-run detention facilities and where children were innocent victims of indiscriminate

attacks on schools, hospitals and civilian areas. In the run-up to the International Day of the Girl Child, it was important to note the particular vulnerability of girls in Syria: throughout the long conflict, they had been targeted based on their gender, had been subjected to forced marriage, had taken on increased caregiving responsibilities and were out of education in disproportionate numbers.

51. By adopting the draft resolution, the Council would condemn such violations and abuses, call for an end to attacks on schools and on healthcare and medical facilities and call on all parties to maintain unhindered, safe and sustainable humanitarian access to those in need. It would acknowledge that the country's future depended on the ability of future generations to engage meaningfully in a political solution to the conflict. He urged the members of the Council to support the draft resolution and, if a vote was requested, to vote in favour of it.

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

*General statements made before the voting*

53. **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 supported the draft resolution, particularly its emphasis on accountability and justice and its focus on the rights of children and the goal of a complete, immediate and nationwide ceasefire throughout the country. The European Union fully supported the Syrian-led political process with the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women, in line with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). A political solution remained absolutely essential if the human rights situation was to be substantially improved. The European Union supported the draft resolution and encouraged all members of the Council to do the same.

54. **Mr. Ishii** (Japan) said that his delegation commended the efforts of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and its continued commitment to ensuring accountability for all parties involved in the Syrian conflict, despite the ongoing lack of access to the country. Thirteen years had passed since the outbreak of armed conflict and the human rights situation was further deteriorating. The findings of the Commission and of OHCHR indicated that escalating violence and hostilities had led to serious violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law, including killings of civilians and instances of sexual and gender-based violence in detention centres. Japan was committed to resolving the crisis through engagement and dialogue with key stakeholders; it again called for a nationwide ceasefire and urged all parties to work towards a political solution in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). Welcoming the draft resolution's focus on the rights of the child, including access to education for girls, who had been uniquely affected by the conflict, and existing gender inequalities, he said that his delegation would support the text and urged all other Council members to do the same.

55. **Mr. Bonnafont** (France) said that, by examining the situation of a country subjected to a reign of terror, the Council was demonstrating not that it was politicized but that it was willing to discharge its responsibility. Preventing the Syrian authorities from accessing technologies and resources enabling them to remain in power was not violating the rights of the Syrian people, but giving them hope. The Council could not be silent on the situation in Syria: there had been massive and systematic human rights violations and a devastating human toll, with a latent civil war, a widespread humanitarian crisis, more than 500,000 dead, millions injured and traumatized, more than 150,000 people disappeared and arbitrarily detained and tens of thousands of Syrian families without news of their loved ones. The refugee situation was alarming, as nearly 7 million Syrians had fled their country since the beginning of the conflict and were living in precarious conditions. France supported the host countries and continued to work with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and its partners in the region to enable the voluntary, safe and dignified return of Syrian refugees and to ensure that the Syrian regime provided the necessary guarantees.

56. The human rights situation in the country must remain a priority for the international community. The draft resolution focused on education and the rights of the child, noting that a devastatingly high number of children continued to be subjected to grave violations of

human rights and international humanitarian law, the scale and recurrent nature of which would affect generations to come. The draft resolution included language condemning the deadly violence, demanding the unhindered delivery of essential humanitarian assistance and calling for additional support for those seeking to know the fate of their loved ones. Only a political solution based on Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) would make it possible to restore just and lasting peace in the country. His delegation called on all members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

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

58. **Mr. Ahmad** (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that the draft resolution only confirmed that the primary objective of its sponsors and their supporters in the Council was to justify their illegal policies against other countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic, without any care for the principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity that were supposed to guide the members' work towards a more efficient and credible Council. The Syrian Government had never supported such resolutions and would never do so, as their only goal was to promote a misleading unilateral narrative, created by that same group of States, about the situation in Syria, its causes and its consequences.

59. The sponsors could not claim that the draft resolution was objective and balanced when some of them were occupying Syrian territory and committing acts of direct aggression against the country's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. The concerns raised in the text could never be considered credible, as the sponsors continued to fight the Syrian people in their daily lives through their coercive measures, their plundering of the country's natural resources and their continued involvement with groups listed as terrorist entities by the United Nations, as they practised killing, persecution and terrorism against the people. Such States were certainly not qualified to discuss the concerns, needs and dreams of the children of Syria, having made those children victims of the terrorism that some of them supported and victims of coercive measures that undermined their basic needs, well-being and growth, while subjecting them to blatant exploitation of humanitarian issues, bargaining over their lives and future and violating their basic rights, including the rights to life, to health, to food and to education.

60. The Syrian Arab Republic called on all member States that still believed in human rights to reject the draft resolution, which constituted a violation of the Council's inherent mandate and promoted false interpretations of international law, with hypocrisy and deception reflected in each of its paragraphs.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

61. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba) said that Cuba rejected any attempt to undermine the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and supported the quest for a peaceful, just, negotiated solution to the current situation, respecting the right of the Syrian people to self-determination. After more than a decade of conflict sparked by the geopolitical aspirations of the major Western Powers, the Syrian people deserved to live in peace and work on rebuilding the country, without the exploitation of human rights issues for political ends. The country merited greater solidarity, greater cooperation and fewer punitive mechanisms, which were biased, contradicted the spirit of cooperation that should prevail in the Council and represented interference in the internal affairs of the States concerned. The double standards, punitive approaches and politicization around human rights issues must be banished, as such practices, which were used only against developing countries, did nothing to promote and protect human rights. The unilateral coercive measures imposed on Syria hindered national efforts towards reconstruction and development.

62. Cuba condemned the recent violations of Syrian sovereignty as part of the aggressive policy of the State of Israel, supported militarily, logistically and politically by the United States Government, which had caused a dangerous escalation that further jeopardized stability and security in the Middle East. One year after the start of the savage genocide against the Palestinian people, the Israeli Government, instead of seeking a negotiated solution to bring about a ceasefire, had demonstrated its absolute disdain for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations by intensifying its irresponsible aggression, including against Syria.

63. The draft resolution was discriminatory and did not reflect the factors behind the current plight of the Syrian people, who were victims of a conflict created by the imperialist Powers. His delegation requested a vote on the draft resolution and urged other members of the Council to vote against it.

64. **Mr. Yebio** (Eritrea) said that his Government's long-standing position on country-specific mandates was clear. His delegation thus echoed the request by the representative of Cuba for a vote on the draft resolution, which it would vote against, and urged other members of the Council to do likewise.

65. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that, although convinced that the situation of people living in Syria should remain under the supervision of the Council, her delegation nevertheless noted that, even though the human rights situation in Syria was deteriorating, there were other similar or even worse situations in the world that were the subject of resolutions adopted once or twice a year. She therefore urged the main sponsors of the draft resolution to move towards annualizing the adoption of such texts to help make the work of the Council more efficient.

66. Furthermore, her Government believed that all crimes, violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law should be unequivocally condemned, regardless of the perpetrators. However, the draft resolution focused almost exclusively on the grave violations committed by the Syrian authorities, without mentioning the abuses committed by other armed groups referred to in the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry. The Council must give equal attention to all violations, without distinction. Convinced that the best way to achieve cross-cutting support for the draft resolution was to continue to monitor the events in Syria while focusing on the protection of victims, her delegation invited the main sponsors to take the points she had raised into account in future texts.

67. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that China had always advocated the promotion and protection of human rights through constructive dialogue and cooperation and opposed the politicization of human rights issues and interference in the internal affairs of States using human rights as a pretext. The draft resolution followed previous versions that sought to put unilateral pressure on the Syrian Government without mentioning the harm done to the human rights of the Syrian people as a result of illegal foreign military interventions and unilateral sanctions. Its content was neither impartial nor objective and would not contribute to a political solution or to promoting and protecting the human rights of the Syrian people. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution and called on other members of the Council to do the same.

68. **Mr. Da Silva Nunes** (Brazil) said that his delegation was deeply concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Syria and the violence on multiple fronts, including deaths of civilians, as well as the increasing need for humanitarian assistance. It also noted with concern the increase in terrorist attacks inside the country and the impact of regional conflicts. It strongly condemned the violations and abuses of international human rights and international humanitarian law that continued to be perpetrated by different actors in the country. It fully supported the work of the Commission of Inquiry and welcomed the start of the work of the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

69. While appreciating the main sponsors' decision to reduce the number of resolutions on Syria from three to two per year, his delegation considered the current practice as still unbalanced compared to the approach taken to other country situations. Furthermore, the text remained deeply unbalanced, selective and partial, as multiple actors bore responsibility for the human rights violations committed in Syria, notwithstanding the primary responsibility of the Syrian Government to protect the population. His delegation continued to support the Council's engagement in fostering a political and human rights-based solution to the conflict and hoped that future draft resolutions on the issue would move towards a balanced and non-selective approach. His delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution.

70. *At the request of the representatives of Cuba and Eritrea, a recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Paraguay, Qatar, Romania, United States of America.

*Against:*

Burundi, China, Cuba, Eritrea.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

71. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.11 was adopted by 26 votes to 4, with 17 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.12: Situation of human rights in Burundi*

72. **Mr. Turbék** (Observer for Hungary), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the European Union, said that, earlier in the session, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi had informed the Council about the worrying situation of human rights in Burundi, where violations and abuses continued to take place. In particular, he had reported a growing number of enforced disappearances, abusive restrictions on fundamental freedoms and arbitrary arrests. Although Burundi had recently participated in the universal periodic review process, the country persisted in refusing to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur or the International Criminal Court, which remained competent for the period before Burundi had withdrawn from the Rome Statute. In the draft resolution, the Government of Burundi was thus encouraged to grant the Special Rapporteur access to the country and to cooperate fully with OHCHR. Given the circumstances, the only option was to call on the Council to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for another year, which would ensure continued monitoring of the human rights situation in Burundi, where legislative and local elections were scheduled to take place in 2025. The European Union was always open to constructive dialogue with the Government of Burundi in order to find a consensual way forward. For those reasons, it called upon all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

73. **The President** said that six States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution. He invited the State concerned by the draft resolution to make a statement.

74. **Ms. Nkerabirori** (Burundi) said that the draft resolution currently under consideration was very similar to the previous resolutions that had kept her country on the Council's agenda for the past decade. In fact, only two paragraphs had been added, although they were quite significant, as they addressed the fight against discrimination and the upcoming elections. The two issues were closely linked and corroborated what her delegation had continuously stressed during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, namely that the mandate was politically oriented and in no way supported the promotion and protection of human rights in Burundi. For the past 10 years, the mechanism had been used to discredit the country's republican and democratic institutions, brand a whole generation of young people as militia members and, most seriously of all, pit communities against each other, categorizing them in the same way as in the colonial period. However, the Burundian people stood united and would resist any attempts to undermine their unity, including by the Special Rapporteur. Burundi had chosen a model of political governance based on universal suffrage, in the belief that only the people had the power to choose who should govern them. As Burundi was opposed to the renewal of the country-specific mandate, her delegation trusted that a vote would be requested on the draft resolution and would vote against it.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

75. **Mr. Yebio** (Eritrea) said that his Government commended Burundi for its commitment to promoting peace, stability, reconciliation and human rights despite the significant challenges it faced. His delegation was of the view that any country-specific mechanisms that did not enjoy the consent of the State concerned were counterproductive and a waste of the Council's resources. The termination of the nine-year country-specific

mandate on Burundi was long overdue. At the fifty-sixth session, his delegation had called on the Council to rectify that injustice and acknowledge the sovereign right and responsibility of Burundi to enhance the human rights of its citizens without external interference. Only through genuine dialogue and constructive engagement could the Council play an effective role in assisting States with their human rights responsibilities. For those reasons, his delegation called for the draft resolution to be put to a vote, would vote against it and urged all Council members to do the same.

76. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that his Government commended the Government of Burundi for its positive efforts to maintain national stability and facilitate domestic reconciliation as well as for its progress in the promotion and protection of human rights. The current peace and stability in Burundi were the result of arduous efforts. The international community should continue to respect the sovereignty and independence of Burundi in its efforts to address domestic issues and should play a positive role in supporting its stability and sustainable development. Regrettably, some countries not only failed to play a constructive role but also ignored the repeated requests by the Government to discontinue the country-specific mandate. Their insistence on extending the mandate of the Special Rapporteur impeded stability and development in Burundi and also squandered the limited resources of the Council. China had always advocated constructive dialogue and cooperation as the appropriate means of addressing human rights issues and opposed politicization, selectivity and confrontation. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution and called on other members of the Council to do the same.

77. *At the request of the representative of Eritrea, a recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

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

*Against:*

Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, Viet Nam.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Qatar, South Africa, United Arab Emirates.

78. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.12 was adopted by 22 votes to 10, with 15 abstentions.*

#### **Agenda item 8: Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (A/HRC/57/L.16 as orally revised)**

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.16, as orally revised: National human rights institutions*

79. **Ms. Bessa** (Observer for Timor-Leste), introducing the draft resolution, said that national human rights institutions were key actors in the promotion and protection of human rights at the national level. Through their independent mandates, they empowered individuals to understand and exercise their human rights and played a vital role in monitoring and reporting, advising Governments and other stakeholders in relation to the promotion and protection of human rights, and contributing to the prevention of violations and abuses of human rights.

80. Despite the progress made in recent years, persons with disabilities continued to face barriers to their participation as equal members of society and experienced violations and abuses of their human rights around the world. Therefore, with the twentieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities approaching, it was timely to reflect on the specific contributions of national human rights institutions in promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. Accordingly, the draft resolution focused on the vital role played by such institutions in that regard.

81. **Ms. Roper** (Observer for Australia), continuing the introduction of the draft resolution, said that the text once again recognized the important work of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, as well as the support provided by OHCHR. The existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) was one of the indicators of Sustainable Development Goal 16. In their recent joint report on global progress on Sustainable Development Goal 16 indicators, OHCHR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) had reported that only 43 per cent of national human rights institutions were in compliance with the Paris Principles. Although the Global Alliance had four working languages – English, French, Spanish and Arabic – the accreditation process currently took place in English only. It was therefore not surprising that the number of national human rights institutions seeking accreditation in non-anglophone regions was lower than the world average. While the biennial resolution on national human rights institutions did not usually have programme budget implications, in the case at hand, paragraph 15 contained a request to provide strengthened support to OHCHR in its capacity as secretariat of the Global Alliance’s accreditation process, including for translation and interpretation. The main sponsors were conscious of the ongoing budgetary and liquidity crisis facing the United Nations, but considered the draft resolution’s programme budget implications to be necessary to increase the number of independent and accredited national human rights institutions across all regions, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 16. They hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

82. **The President** said that 17 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

83. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, said that the Paris Principles recognized the important role of national institutions in the protection and promotion of human rights and in raising public awareness and also acknowledged the different approaches taken at the national level. The Chinese Government was unwavering in its efforts to promote and protect human rights. Although China did not have a national human rights institution, there were departments that assumed similar responsibilities and took a people-centred approach to promote individuals’ free and comprehensive development. His delegation welcomed the focus on persons with disabilities and would join the consensus on the draft resolution.

84. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.16, as orally revised, was adopted.*

**Agenda item 9: Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/HRC/57/L.25 and A/HRC/57/L.36/Rev.1)**

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.25: Education as a tool to prevent racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance*

85. **Mr. Da Silva Nunes** (Brazil), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Colombia, Portugal, South Africa and his own delegation, said that the first Council resolution on the topic had been adopted in 2013. The text under consideration offered a comprehensive and timely update on the role of quality education in preventing and combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Education remained one of the most powerful tools to dismantle the root causes of discrimination and intolerance. It shaped minds, transformed attitudes and fostered a culture of mutual respect and inclusion. One of the pillars of the draft resolution was the recognition of the enduring significance of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, which continued to provide a strong foundation for global efforts to combat racism and discrimination. The draft resolution included language reaffirming the importance of implementing the relevant commitments made under the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and encouraging States to strengthen their educational frameworks accordingly. It also addressed the important role of relevant special procedures of the Council in fostering collaboration and coherence in global efforts to combat racism and related intolerance. The draft resolution highlighted the synergies between those mechanisms and the critical efforts of OHCHR and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The text



also underscored the importance of ensuring equitable access to digital technologies, while highlighting the risk of their misuse as tools for discrimination, disinformation and hate speech. The draft resolution not only reflected the gravity of the issues at hand but also offered concrete steps towards creating a world in which education was a beacon of hope in the fight against racism and intolerance.

86. **The President** said that 19 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

*General statements made before the decision*

87. **Ms. Tsheole** (South Africa) said that education was the key to achieving collective goals such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Education was an essential tool to right the wrongs of the past and heal the indelible scars of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance that permeated society. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action affirmed that education was a determining factor in the promotion, dissemination and protection of the democratic values of justice and equity, which were essential to prevent and combat the spread of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The draft resolution underlined the importance of the full and effective implementation of the paragraphs of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action concerning the role of education in preventing and eliminating racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia and related intolerance. By adopting the draft, the Council would urge States to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and awareness-raising and would highlight the need to address misinformation and the spread of disinformation that could be designed to incite discrimination, hostility and violence and spread hatred and contemporary forms of racism and racial discrimination. On behalf of the main sponsors, the delegation of South Africa called on the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

88. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that the United States was proud to sponsor the draft resolution, which highlighted the critical role of education in combating racism, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance. Education was one of the areas in which the United States, like other countries, continued to confront challenges resulting from the lingering legacy of the enslavement of Africans and their descendants. However, education was also part of the solution. Education provided the opportunity to improve the livelihoods of all Americans, including those from marginalized racial, ethnic and Indigenous communities. As highlighted in the draft resolution, education was also a crucial vehicle to nurture cultural diversity, foster mutual understanding and promote the democratic values of justice and equity.

89. Some countries, including the United States, did not have a centralized national system of education. As educational matters in the country were primarily determined at the state and local levels, the United States understood that when States were called on to implement education laws, policies or programmes or take action with respect to other aspects of education, those steps were to be taken in a manner consistent with the respective federal, state, tribal and local systems. The United States was committed to continuing its efforts to help ensure that education advanced racial equity both at home and around the world.

90. **Ms. Arrous** (Algeria) said that the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all other forms of intolerance went beyond a mere legal obligation and was a moral imperative for all States. Her delegation shared the concerns raised by the High Commissioner in his oral update about the surge in xenophobic discourse in recent years, particularly against migrants, refugees and religious minorities, especially in electoral contexts. It was necessary to strengthen international cooperation to identify a holistic and inclusive approach to combating racism and racial discrimination in all their forms and manifestations. Algeria reaffirmed its commitment to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and called on all States to redouble their efforts to implement its provisions. The draft resolution was balanced and comprehensive and addressed the many facets of racism and racial discrimination and the factors that had exacerbated them. Her delegation welcomed the inclusion in the text of several references related to equitable access to new and emerging digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, and the need to reduce the digital divide. While new digital technologies had the potential to promote effective educational tools and awareness-raising solutions, they could also promote racism,

xenophobia and intolerance and give rise to various forms of violence. Her delegation called on all States to support the draft resolution, which it hoped would be adopted by consensus.

91. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that her delegation was pleased that the scope of the resolution on the topic had been expanded to cover the needs of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, and that it emphasized the need to address discrimination in all areas both online and offline. Education, including human rights education, was crucial for the prevention and eradication of all forms of intolerance and discrimination and the promotion of understanding, inclusion and respect for diversity in order to build more egalitarian, respectful and cohesive societies. As stated in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, education, development and the faithful implementation of all international human rights norms and obligations, including enactment of laws and political, social and economic policies, were crucial to combat all forms of discrimination. Her delegation encouraged the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

92. **Mr. Gaal** (Somalia) said that his delegation welcomed the draft resolution on education as a vital tool to prevent racism, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Education was not just the main means of acquiring knowledge; it was a powerful instrument for fostering understanding, tolerance and mutual respect and for challenging stereotypes and combating prejudice. Somalia was committed to incorporating human rights education into the school curriculum to raise awareness about the importance of equality and non-discrimination and to advancing policies that promoted equal access to a quality education for all, regardless of race, ethnicity or background.

93. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.25 was adopted.*

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.36/Rev.1: From rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance*

94. **Mr. Kah** (Gambia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the objective was to encourage and intensify efforts for global action on the previous commitments made for the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The draft resolution included a call on the international community to move beyond rhetoric and to take tangible steps to dismantle systemic racism and discrimination. The importance of promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against the excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers through transformative change for racial justice and equality could not be overstated. While progress had been made, racism and racial discrimination persisted in many forms, including social and economic inequalities, marginalization and hate speech, in many parts of the world.

95. Given the observable gaps in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action during the first International Decade for People of African Descent, the Council would, by adopting the draft resolution, encourage the General Assembly to proclaim a second International Decade commencing in 2025, based on the full reaffirmation and implementation of the programme of activities of the first Decade, and focusing on consolidating past gains, expanding the reach and scope of contemporary opportunities for development, inclusion and peace, and anticipating emerging risks and threats. As States had acknowledged in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, slavery and the slave trade were – and always should have been – crimes against humanity and were among the major sources and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. In that regard, Africans and people of African descent must receive the necessary recognition, justice and development, in line with the commitment made to them upon adoption of the programme of activities for the Decade. The draft resolution once again included a request for the United Nations system to strengthen its awareness-raising campaigns to increase the visibility of the message of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, its follow-up mechanisms and the work of the United Nations in the fight against racism.

96. Ahead of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, in 2026, the African Union had selected “Justice for Africans and people of African descent through reparations” as the theme for 2025, thus reflecting the

aspirations of people of African descent and reinforcing the collective commitment to achieving justice and equity for African communities, both on the continent and in the diaspora. The Group of African States firmly believed that reparations were a necessary step towards achieving restorative justice. Reparations encompassed more than financial compensation: they represented a broader commitment to healing historical wounds, making necessary reforms to ensure social inclusion and reversing the lasting legacies of slavery, colonialism and other forms of racial oppression. The international community could not afford to be complacent in the face of ongoing racism, police violence and systemic inequality. True justice would be achieved when all forms of racism were completely dismantled and reparative measures were implemented to safeguard the rights of people of African descent. In conclusion, he called on the members of the Council to vote in favour of the draft resolution if a vote was requested.

97. **The President** said that three States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

*General statements made before the voting*

98. **Mr. Verdún Bitar** (Paraguay) said that Paraguay was convinced that the promotion and protection of the rights of people belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contributed to the political and social stability of States. As a multicultural and multilingual country, Paraguay had made significant progress in establishing public policies for the population of African descent, mainly through the adoption, since 2022, of laws for the protection and promotion of their rights. Paraguay rejected all discriminatory language or references targeting particular populations that decontextualized the fight against racism, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, such as the references contained in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

99. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that his Government had always advocated dialogue among different races and cultures, and opposed any discrimination on grounds of race, colour or language. States needed to show zero tolerance towards racism, to prohibit incitement to racial hatred and to address systemic racism and racial discrimination. China supported the positive role played by the Group of African States in combating racism and stood ready to cooperate with all parties to promote and implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, which was the flagship of international efforts to eliminate racism and create an equal world. His delegation supported the draft resolution and, if a vote was requested, would vote in favour of it.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

100. **Ms. Taylor** (United States of America) said that her Government was deeply committed to combating racism, racial discrimination and related forms of intolerance. It supported United Nations mechanisms for racial equity and justice, including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent and the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement. However, while many parts of the draft resolution were unimpeachable, the text continued to prompt the same concerns that had caused her delegation to vote against it year after year. Notably, she regretted the invocation of the Durban process with no acknowledgement of the antisemitism that had existed in and around the lead-up to the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. For many Jewish and non-Jewish persons alike, that reality was still painfully relevant and inextricably associated with everything that had come out of the process. She also wished to reiterate her delegation's concern about the unjust and unacceptable singling out of one particular region and the endorsement of overly broad restrictions on freedom of expression, which ran counter to the United States commitment to free speech.

101. The United States was committed to further dialogue and collaboration to advance the Council's shared commitment to combating racism and promoting racial equity and justice. It would continue to work diligently with all stakeholders to find common ground, particularly regarding its long-standing concerns about antisemitism. However, at a time when so many forms of hate were on the rise across the globe, when the world was experiencing the largest increase in antisemitism in a generation, it was not possible to

address one form of hate at the expense of another. For those reasons, her delegation requested a vote on the draft resolution.

102. **Ms. Gillhoff** (Germany) said that she wished to underscore her country's strong commitment to global efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination, religious intolerance and antisemitism. Persons of colour, especially people of African descent, faced structural discrimination and racist hate and violence in societies all over the world, including in Germany. That state of affairs was unacceptable. Germany had therefore implemented a host of measures against racism, in line with the International Decade for People of African Descent. The Government had increased its support for victims of racism and for anti-racist initiatives emanating from civil society. It was also examining negative stereotypes and stigmatization affecting people of African descent, investing more in prevention and civic education and mainstreaming diversity in the public service in order to fight structural discrimination.

103. Given its history, Germany was especially concerned about the rise of antisemitic hate speech and violence, particularly in Germany itself, but also in Europe and around the world. The recent anniversary of the 7 October 2023 attacks in Israel was a stark reminder of the destructive power of antisemitism. Germany remained committed to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and fully supported efforts to address all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and antisemitism. However, since the Durban process had in the past been sorely misused by a few as a platform for antisemitic views, she regretted that, especially in the current context, her delegation would have to vote against the draft resolution. In addition, she objected to the inclusion of non-consensual language on making amends for colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade.

104. **Mr. Tummers** (Kingdom of the Netherlands) said that his delegation recognized the significance that the Group of African States attached to the text. He regretted, however, that no consensus had been reached on language regarding the history and consequences of the international slave trade. For that reason, his delegation would have to vote against the draft resolution. For its part, the Kingdom of the Netherlands remained firmly committed to the fight against racism and had taken several measures to that end in recent years, including the creation of the post of national coordinator against discrimination and racism. In December 2022, the Prime Minister had formally apologized for the past actions of the Dutch State and expressed regret to enslaved people of the past who had suffered as a consequence of those actions everywhere in the world, and to their descendants up to the current time. In 2023, His Majesty the King had done the same, asking forgiveness "for the clear failure to act" in the face of a "crime against humanity". The Kingdom of the Netherlands remained firmly committed to the fight against discrimination, racism and antisemitism and would continue to work to that end alongside other States, international organizations and civil society.

105. *At the request of the representative of the United States of America, 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, Morocco, Qatar, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

*Against:*

Albania, France, Germany, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Dominican Republic, Finland, Georgia, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Paraguay, Romania.

106. *Draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.36/Rev.1](#) was adopted by 30 votes to 5, with 12 abstentions.*

107. **The President** invited delegations to make statements in explanation of vote or position or general statements on either of the draft resolutions considered under agenda item 9.

108. **Mr. Kah** (Gambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that he wished to thank all members of the Council for their support and engagement on draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.36/Rev.1](#), which constituted a collective step forward in addressing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. He appreciated the constructive dialogue and perspectives shared by all members and the commitment shown by the Council to uphold justice and equality for all.

**Agenda item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building** ([A/HRC/57/L.14](#) and [A/HRC/57/L.15](#))

*Draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.14](#): Technical assistance and capacity-building to address the human rights implications of the nuclear legacy in the Marshall Islands*

109. **Mr. Antas** (Observer for Vanuatu), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Samoa and his own delegation, said that the nuclear legacy in the Marshall Islands was well known to the Council, which, earlier in the session, had engaged in an enhanced interactive dialogue on the subject and had heard from the country's President, Ms. Hilda Heine. The Council had also considered the OHCHR report on addressing the challenges and barriers to the full realization and enjoyment of the human rights of the people of the Marshall Islands, stemming from the State's nuclear legacy ([A/HRC/57/77](#)).

110. The statements heard and the facts reported should help the Council understand the importance of the draft resolution, not just for the Marshall Islands but also for other areas in the Pacific Ocean that had been chosen as sites for nuclear weapons testing in the 1940s and 1950s. At that time, the Marshall Islands had been under United Nations trusteeship but, in breach of that trust, human rights had been unimaginably violated and the environment contaminated. The technical assistance being sought was intended to help the Marshall Islands provide its people with a future anchored in human rights and free of the nuclear legacy. The focus on transitional justice would enable the country to heal, move forward and achieve meaningful reconciliation with all involved. The text of the draft resolution reflected the efforts of the main sponsors to find common ground, and he hoped that the Council would adopt it by consensus.

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

*General statements made before the decision*

112. **Mr. Alimbayev** (Kazakhstan) said that, over four decades, more than 460 nuclear tests had been conducted in Kazakhstan, releasing enormous amounts of radioactive material. Some 1.5 million people had been exposed to the devastating impact of radioactivity in the air, water and soil, and generations had suffered disease and untold hardship. Kazakhstan thus shared the pain and aspirations of the sponsors of the draft resolution and welcomed the willingness of the Marshall Islands to seek the Council's assistance in addressing the human rights implications of nuclear testing.

113. With over 60 nuclear test sites around the world, the global legacy of nuclear tests continued to pose health risks. In 2023, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 78/240 on addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons, in which it noted that States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons required the technical capacities and resources to effectively assist victims and called for further international cooperation in that regard. Kazakhstan, as one of the strongest advocates of nuclear justice and disarmament, strongly supported the draft resolution, which was aimed not only at providing technical assistance but also at raising awareness of the impact of the nuclear legacy on the enjoyment of human rights. He called on all members of the Council to adopt it by consensus.

114. **Ms. Singh** (India) said that the nuclear tests that had taken place in the Marshall Islands had had dire consequences for the enjoyment of human rights, and the legacy of those tests continued to raise complex and grave issues. Her delegation therefore appreciated the

initiative to request technical assistance and capacity-building to support efforts to address those issues without politicizing them. However, she did not believe that OHCHR possessed the requisite expertise to address all the matters raised in the draft resolution such as, for example, the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building to the National Nuclear Commission of the Marshall Islands in order “to pursue transitional justice in its efforts to address the nuclear legacy”. Those concerns notwithstanding, in the light of the gravity of the matter, her delegation would support the consensus on the draft resolution.

115. **Ms. Gillhoff** (Germany) said that the people of the Marshall Islands were not only victims of the nuclear legacy but also champions of efforts to address it. The Council should stand with them and with others in the same situation to ensure that they received the support they required. The OHCHR report on the human rights challenges stemming from the nuclear legacy of the Marshall Islands, as well as the moving accounts of ongoing trauma and pain that the Council had heard during the enhanced interactive dialogue, had underlined the continued relevance of the topic and shown that it fell clearly within the remit of the Human Rights Council. The draft resolution was aimed at providing the technical assistance and capacity-building which the Marshall Islands still lacked, and the Council should not deny that modest request. She therefore urged all delegations to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

116. **Mr. Nkosi** (South Africa) said that he wished to salute the memory of Tony deBrum, a great son of the Marshall Islands who as a boy had witnessed the nuclear tests and their devastating legacy, and who had later taken the fight against nuclear weapons to the International Court of Justice. Seventy-eight years later, that legacy remained ever present, an ongoing tragedy that resonated with South Africa and underpinned its belief in the urgent need to establish a world free of nuclear weapons. As the only country in the world to have voluntarily destroyed its nuclear arsenal, South Africa had always sought to spotlight the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and their adverse impact on human rights and fundamental freedoms. Such consequences transcended national borders and posed a grave threat to the environment, socioeconomic development, food security and health of current and future generations, disproportionately affecting women and girls.

117. South Africans knew only too well the damage caused by the nuclear tests conducted on their continent, while the spectre of the apartheid regime’s nuclear weapons programme had loomed large in the lives of the country and its neighbours. Accordingly, South Africa, together with other States and civil society organizations, had always been at the forefront of efforts to expose the catastrophic impact of the nuclear legacy. Those efforts had culminated in the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which also addressed matters such as assistance for victims and environmental remediation. The Treaty was an important contribution towards guaranteeing that nuclear weapons were never again produced, tested or used under any circumstances. The world needed to save future generations from the suffering that victims of the nuclear legacy and their families still endured.

118. **Ms. Widyaningsih** (Indonesia) said that her Government was a strong advocate of technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives, which played a critical role in helping States to advance the human rights of their peoples. Such initiatives had always to be guided by the needs, priorities and circumstances of the requesting States. The experience of the Marshall Islands reminded the world of the catastrophic consequences that the use and testing of nuclear weapons inflicted upon humanity and the environment, wreaking devastation and infringing fundamental human rights, including the right to life.

119. The threat posed by nuclear weapons endangered not only current and future generations but even the very survival of humanity. As a State party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Indonesia reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. The only viable path to that end was the total, irreversible and complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control. Her delegation reiterated its full support for countries in their pursuit of nuclear justice and human rights, and looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

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

121. **Ms. deBrum** (Observer for the Marshall Islands) said that when, in 2022, her Government had first requested technical assistance, it had been difficult to convince others that the nuclear legacy was at its heart a human rights challenge. Arguments had been made to the effect that the Council was not the appropriate forum or that OHCHR lacked the relevant expertise. That situation had changed. OHCHR had demonstrated that it was more than capable of providing technical assistance, and the compelling report it had produced had, hopefully, convinced all Council members that the nuclear legacy was not just a chapter in history but a continuing reality that had very real human rights implications.

122. Thus, it was current and not only past injustices that needed to be addressed; otherwise, the people of the Marshall Islands would continue to suffer the human consequences of the nuclear legacy. She herself had lost a number of relatives to cancer, and her family's experience of pain and loss was all too common among her fellow citizens. The parties responsible needed to be more honest and fair, the United Nations needed to show its concern and the Council needed to help her country move forward from a nuclear legacy that had been inflicted upon it. She wished to express her sincere gratitude to all the States that had supported the draft resolution and called upon the Council to adopt it by consensus.

123. **Mr. Kill** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, said that the United States was grateful to the people of the Marshall Islands for their enduring friendship. The American people well remembered the history of nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands. While acknowledging the hardships experienced by the people of the Marshall Islands, his delegation nonetheless noted that aspects of the draft resolution concerned matters that had been settled bilaterally through binding international agreements. Moreover, given that the Council did not have the requisite technical expertise, his delegation's view was that neither the Council nor OHCHR was the appropriate entity to provide it.

124. The United States had accepted and acted on its responsibility to the people of the Marshall Islands concerning nuclear testing. Upon the entry into force, in 1986, of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Marshall Islands and related agreements, all past, current and future claims relating to the nuclear legacy had been settled. Under the Compact, the Marshall Islands had expressly taken responsibility for controlling the use of areas in the Marshall Islands affected by the nuclear programme and providing healthcare to its people.

125. Therefore, the references to justice were inappropriate and his delegation accordingly dissociated itself from the consensus on paragraph 3 and the ninth and eleventh preambular paragraphs. Moreover, given that the obligation to protect the rights referred to in the text rested with the Marshall Islands, his delegation wished to register its concern with respect to paragraph 1. The draft resolution contained certain factual and legal assertions that were inaccurate or unsubstantiated, including statements about environmental and health outcomes, and the United States disagreed with the assertions and conclusions of previous Special Rapporteurs as described in the seventh and eighth preambular paragraphs. In the light of his Government's profound concerns about the recent OHCHR report and the significant cost implications of the OHCHR report requested in the draft resolution, his delegation also dissociated itself from the consensus on paragraphs 4 and 5. In addition, in line with its previously expressed positions, the United States dissociated itself from the consensus on the twelfth preambular paragraph and registered its concern vis-à-vis the fifth, sixth and tenth preambular paragraphs. A more detailed explanation of his delegation's position would be published at a later date.

126. *Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.14 was adopted.*

*Draft resolution A/HRC/57/L.15: Assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights*

127. **Mr. Manley** (Observer for the United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution, said that its purpose was to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia. He welcomed the fact that the text enjoyed the support of Somalia and commended that country for its willingness to work with the Independent Expert and with other international mechanisms, including the Council. In particular, he wished to commend the Government for having set up an interministerial working group on human

rights and for passing a disability rights bill. Somalia continued to face challenges on many fronts, and he encouraged it to continue its action to protect human rights, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

128. Technical assistance and capacity-building was not a linear process. It needed to be flexible and based on the needs of the country concerned. Somalia had signalled its wish to take the next step towards meeting its human rights obligations by engaging with a range of stakeholders, including OHCHR, the United Nations and the wider international community. The text addressed that wish and began a process of transition towards such engagement. He hoped that members of the Council would support the draft resolution.

129. **The President** said that 14 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

*General statements made before the decision*

130. **Ms. Dualeh** (Somalia) said that her country was witnessing an important transition in its human rights journey, away from country-specific procedures and towards more active engagement with United Nations human rights mechanisms, particularly the OHCHR office in Somalia. The Government was committed to accomplishing that transition within 12 months, thanks to diligent adherence to a realistic and context-sensitive road map, founded on the Mutual Accountability Framework. That Framework served to guide efforts to bolster the legal system and human rights protection mechanisms and to enhance the capacity, transparency and legitimacy of national institutions, which were crucial in the fight against impunity.

131. Somalia had made significant advances in the realm of human rights. Robust national security institutions had been established that prioritized the rule of law, reconciliation and justice while also protecting the rights of women and children. Legislative and policy breakthroughs had been achieved in the form of the national disability rights bill and the launch of a five-year strategy by the National Disability Agency. In addition, Cabinet approval had been given for the juvenile justice bill and for a national mechanism for a reporting and follow-up policy. The authorities were also acting to strengthen national human rights institutions and were seeking to foster dialogue with marginalized groups, including women. In fact, inclusive political participation was vital for achieving lasting peace and stability. However, while considerable progress had been made, it was important to remain aware of persistent challenges. Reports of human rights violations, particularly against women and children, and instances of excessive force were areas of grave concern.

132. Somalia was on the path towards greater self-reliance in human rights and was focused on consolidating the gains achieved and ensuring that its national institutions were equipped to prioritize and safeguard human rights. She therefore anticipated that the mandate of the Independent Expert would conclude within the coming 12 months. Somalia remained steadfast in its pledge to advance human rights and uphold the rule of law and was grateful for the support of the international community as a whole as it continued to strengthen its national institutions.

133. **Ms. Billingsley** (United States of America) said that her delegation strongly supported the draft resolution. In particular, she welcomed the references in the text to civil society, human rights defenders and women in Somalia.

134. *Draft resolution [A/HRC/57/L.15](#) was adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.*