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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 27 July 1999, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia)
(Vice-President)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued)

- (a) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (A/54/38 (Part I), A/54/123-E/1999/66, A/54/156-E/1999/102 and Add.1, E/1999/27, E/1999/54, E/1999/57, E/1999/105) (continued);
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- (h) HUMAN RIGHTS (E/1999/23 (Parts. I and II), E/1999/49 and Add.1, E/1999/96, E/1999/106, E/1999/107, E/1999/113, E/1999/L.19 and L.22, E/1999/NGO/7).

Ms. ROBINSON (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), submitting her report on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights (E/1999/96), said that efforts had been made at both international and national levels to promote implementation of those rights. The action taken by the international community was finding its expression in particular in the new mandates of the Commission on Human Rights, the clarification of the content of certain specific rights and measures designed to improve the realization of human rights in everyday life.

Yet despite the progress made, it remained painfully clear that the fundamental right to decent living conditions, which embraced all the rights laid down in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, was still non-existent in practice for the majority of the inhabitants of the planet; that fact was eloquently demonstrated by the figures contained in the Human Development Report and other publications. The Office of the High Commissioner therefore supported the work of the Council on the eradication of poverty; that work was consistent in every respect with her office's approach to of the right to development. Within that framework action to combat extreme poverty had priority, since the most destitute populations were in fact denied

almost all their rights. Effective action to combat poverty and to make the global system benefit everyone involved difficult decisions by Governments faced with many economic and social priorities. However, those decisions could not be avoided and must be placed clearly in the context of international human rights obligations.

Action to implement the Convention of the Rights of the Child must constitute another essential aspect of intervention by the international community jointly with UNICEF and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

On the basis of the elements contained in the report the Economic and Social Council might consider the possibility of reviewing the situation at national level in order to promote best practices, identify needs and strengthen cooperation between Governments and the different relevant actors.

The report also discussed means of improving the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and the assistance given to States to that end. The realization of economic, social and cultural rights remained a formidable challenge. Although the examples mentioned in the report bore witness to the progress made, much still remained to be done to ensure that respect for those rights became recognized as essential for the establishment of an economic and social order based on security, freedom and equality for all. No lasting progress could be made in that field without wider international cooperation to enable Governments to fulfil their obligations. The immediate task was to develop and support innovative approaches through which that cooperation could bring tangible results. That would require the commitment of all the active forces in society.

Mr. FERNANDEZ (Cuba) explained that with the draft decision published under symbol E/1999/L.33 the Cuban delegation was seeking to put an end to the political manipulations taking place within the Commission on Human Rights at the instigation of the United States. Its intention was not to challenge the mandate or the credibility of the Commission, and certainly not, as some persons had alleged, to place Cuba outside the competence of the Commission.

Cuba had sufficiently proved its willingness to cooperate with the mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights established on a non-discriminatory basis and with the bodies responsible for monitoring the implementation of the human rights instruments to which it was a party. In a desire to offer additional proof of goodwill the Cuban delegation stated that, in response to

requests it had received from the delegations of various European and third-world countries, it agreed to withdraw draft decision E/1999/L.33.

Mr. SCHALIN (Observer for Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union on item 14 (h) (Report of the Commission on Human Rights), stated that the European Union was following very closely the human rights situation in the countries under review by the Commission. However, it had not considered it appropriate to make substantive statements on those specific situations within the Council, but reserved the right to do so before other bodies, and in particular the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

That being said, the European Union thanked the Cuban delegation for having shown flexibility by withdrawing draft decision E/1999/L.33. He emphasized that consideration of human rights violations, wherever they occurred, fell within the terms of reference of the Commission under item 9 of its agenda. Those terms of reference were consistent with the autonomous nature of the technical commissions, which were expert bodies. If the draft decision submitted by Cuba had been adopted, the effect would have been to bring into question the status of the Commission on Human Rights and ipso facto those of all the technical commissions and other subsidiary bodies of the Council.

Turning to the question of the death penalty, raised in document E/1999/113, the European Union reaffirmed its commitment to the universal abolition of the death penalty. It called on countries which still had recourse to that punishment gradually to curtail its use and, in any case, to make its application subject to the safeguards laid down in international instruments. The European Union intended to campaign wherever appropriate for the adoption of moratoriums on the death penalty.

Ms. RUIZ DE ANGULO (Observer for Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Group of Central American States (GRUCA) on item 14 (g), stated that the Central American countries were in favour of the creation within the United Nations system of a permanent forum concerned with indigenous populations. They welcomed the reactivation of the open-ended inter-sessional ad hoc working group which had the task of preparing, in time for the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights, concrete proposals for the establishment of such a body.

At the regional level great efforts were being made to promote a better integration of the indigenous populations while ensuring respect for their rights and their cultural identities. A seminar recently organized in San José de Costa Rica in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human

Rights had highlighted the importance of higher education as a means of promoting indigenous knowledge and cultures.

The countries of Central America were playing an active part in the preparation of standards for the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples within the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Thanks to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, representatives of those populations from different regions of the world were taking part in the activities of the Working Group. The countries of Central America appealed to the generosity of the international community for the continuance of contributions to the Fund.

Turning to item 14 (a), she said that much progress had been made in the Central American subregion to guarantee for women the enjoyment of all their rights. Those countries were aware that the empowerment of women was a major factor making for development and had implemented training and awareness promotion programmes for women as well as broader programmes for the protection of mothers and children. At the subregional level women were playing an increased role in the national dialogue and concertation mechanisms; in addition, the numbers of women in positions of responsibility or exercising official functions were increasing.

The Council for Social Integration, the membership of which consisted of the ministers of social affairs in the subregion, had undertaken to consolidate those advances by developing education and health programmes for women, and also to establish a database on social indicators in the region in order to monitor the practical effect given to commitments entered into at world conferences.

The countries of Central America supported the adoption by the Commission on the Status of Women of the draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. They were concerned at the current situation of the International Research and Training Centre for the Promotion of Women and supported the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit to strengthen that institute without delay as well as the draft resolution submitted by the Group of 77 containing a similar recommendation. Finally, they welcomed with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General on the elimination of violence against women (A/54/69-E/1999/8) and laid stress on the concrete measures adopted at national level to deal with the problem of domestic violence within a context of the gradual establishment of a peace culture.

Ms. KING (United States of America) was ready to approve the draft resolutions and decisions submitted by the Commission on Human Rights to the Council for approval; they had been adopted by the Commission itself, usually by consensus, after careful consideration. The role of the Commission was becoming increasingly important with the increase in the numbers of violations of individual rights throughout the world, and the Council should encourage it in its task of seeking reform. The draft decision withdrawn by the Cuban delegation had been deliberately aimed at preventing the Commission from doing its job. That manoeuvre had failed thanks to the opposition of the overwhelming majority of the members of the Council and had not succeeded in diverting the attention of the international community from the human rights situation in Cuba. The protection of fundamental freedoms also depended to a considerable degree on the role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United States delegation urged all States to give effective support to that Office and its staff in the enormous task they were performing with meagre resources.

Mr. QIAO Zoghuai (China) approved the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to set up an intersessional working group to continue the analysis of the proposals for the rationalization of the work of the Commission; he hoped that the reforms undertaken would enable the Commission to approach economic, social and cultural rights on the one hand and civil and political rights on the other hand in a balanced fashion. He stressed the need to reach agreement as soon as possible on the tasks and programme of work of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related intolerance associated with the Commission and to make available all the human and material resources necessary for the preparation and holding of that Conference.

The Chinese delegation noted with satisfaction that the Commission had adopted a number of draft resolutions relating to economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development and had thus contributed to redressing the imbalance between the treatment of the two categories of rights. Some delegations still had a selective approach to human rights and were still exercising pressures on the developing countries. His delegation therefore invited the country which had once again put forward an anti-China resolution - which had been rejected by the Commission - to abandon its cold-war mentality and to cease impairing the work of the Commission. It was quite normal that countries should have different approaches and practices with regard to human rights. The cornerstone of the United Nations was the principle of

non-interference, and no country had the right on any pretext whatsoever to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and to impose its own value judgements and ideology on others. The international community should maintain vigilance and oppose such courses of action, which only threatened the stability of international relations. World peace and universal development were aspirations common to all peoples and constituted the necessary preconditions for the promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr. ZHILEVICH (Belarus) said that human rights were interdependent and indissociable and that democracy was one of the principal preconditions for their realization. However, he considered that democracy should be introduced progressively in parallel with the economic capacities, mentalities and traditions of each country. The fact that Belarus was one of the few ex-Soviet countries not to have experienced domestic disorders confirmed the accuracy of that assertion. The new parliament of Belarus, with the advice of the OSCE and the Council of Europe in particular, had adopted a number of extremely important legislative instruments concerning human rights. Belarus was cooperating with the United Nations bodies responsible for human rights. It had acceded to all the principale international human rights instruments and considered respect for its commitments in that field to be a major obligation.

However, Belarus considered inadmissible the practice of "double standards" and interference in the internal affairs of a country in order to pursue political interests under the guise of defending human rights or preventing international conflicts. The achievement of progress towards universal respect for human rights by attacking the underlying causes of violations of those rights required collective, constructive and balanced actions by the entire international community on a basis of solidarity and cooperation.

Mr. AMAT FORÉS (Cuba) said that the Commission on Human Rights, which should base its action on the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity, was being paralysed by attempts at political manipulation and polarization being made by a group of countries under the leadership of the United States which refused to admit that there could exist models of political, economic and social organization other than their own and were attempting to impose their own approach to human rights on the whole world. However, effective protection of human rights was based precisely on the recognition of peculiar features of a historical, cultural, religious and legal character encountered at national and regional levels. No country could claim to be the

supreme moral judge of the human rights situation in other countries, and least of all the United States, where there were 45 million poor people, the majority of them blacks, Hispanics and members of indigenous minorities; where half of the female population was subjected to violence; where foreign nationals were legally executed without having been able to obtain consular assistance; and whose aggressive and terrorist policy against Cuba over the last 40 years had made thousands of victims. Cuba was defending its integrity and its rights and was cooperating with the third world in the fields of health and education; it demanded an unconditional end to all action designed to overthrow its legitimate Government and to deprive its people of their right to self-determination and development. It demanded respect for the principles of international law and the lifting of the embargo which the United States, flouting justice and law, was maintaining against it.

Mr. MALGINOV (Russian Federation) observed that two contradictory tendencies had been apparent in international cooperation in the field of human rights for some time; that had been clearly visible during the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights. On the one hand, a consensus was emerging to treat human rights problems in a more general fashion, covering every field of activity of the UN - development, settlement of disputes, preventive diplomacy, etc. In that connection, the strengthening of the operational and analytical resources available to the Office of the

High Commissioner was to be welcomed, even though much still remained to be done in that field. At the same time, certain countries were still using human rights to bring pressure to bear on others and to justify their aggressive manoeuvres; that was extremely dangerous. For instance, NATO, flouting the fundamental principles of international law, had bombed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the pretext of defending human rights.

The Commission had made progress in the rationalization of its agenda, but needed to give greater importance to questions such as the protection of minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants and war victims, and also to violations of human rights by non-governmental entities. In the field of implementation of human rights standards, the Commission should examine the situation of human rights everywhere and in all its aspects. In reforming its mechanisms and procedures it should continue to take as a basis the principle of consensus, taking into account the interests of every group of States. It should also ensure that the World Conference on Racism explored all contemporary forms of racism, aggressive nationalism, xenophobia and intolerance and concluded with

specific recommendations. Finally, the Commission should continue consideration of the functioning of the treaty bodies and in particular correct the under-representation of the eastern European group of countries.

Ms. GEGA (Observer for Albania) expressed the gratitude of the Albanian Government and people to the member States of NATO and other countries, to the United Nations and to all the other organizations which had lent them support and encouragement during the enormous Kosovar migration, which had marked the climax of the gross and systematic violations of human rights by the obscurantist Milosevic regime. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights had reacted immediately and vigorously; it called the attention of world opinion to one of the most serious crimes against humanity ever committed, generously assisted the refugees, conducted investigations on the spot and regularly reported to the Commission, which had devoted a special meeting to the subject. Since the Serb capitulation the Kosovars had been endeavouring to heal the wounds - both physical and psychological - left by the crisis and had to overcome their desire for revenge. The leaders of the Kosovar people had repeatedly stated that they did not wish innocent Serbs to leave; that they opposed all acts of violence towards those Serbs; and that they would take the necessary steps to ensure respect for the rights of all the minorities in Kosovo. It was essential at the present time that all the decisions and all the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner and of the other international organizations present in Kosovo should be rooted in the principles of justice, impartiality and objectivity. That presupposed above all that every individual with responsibility for bloodshed should be brought before the International Penal Tribunal.

Mr. PALOUŠ (Czech Republic) welcomed the withdrawal of draft decision E/1999/L.33, particularly as his country had been one of the sponsors of the resolution on human rights in Cuba which the Commission had adopted at its fifty-fifth session. Following the statement by the representative of Cuba, he considered it desirable to present some clarifications. The resolution in question had been submitted, not by the United States, but by the Czech Republic and Poland; its intent was not to criticize Cuba but to offer it help in the promotion of human rights in a spirit of international solidarity. Both the Czech Republic and Poland had experienced totalitarian regimes and thus knew how important the assistance of democratic countries and the UN mechanisms was for the protection of human rights. It was therefore their moral duty to bring the same assistance to victims of violations on human rights in any other country.

It was clear that their action had not been motivated by political considerations; that was confirmed by the number of co-sponsors of the draft resolution and the outcome of the vote in the Commission. Draft decision E/1999/L.33 was totally unacceptable, and in adopting it the Council would have created a dangerous precedent for the functioning of the Commission on Human Rights just at a time when the international community was endeavouring to strengthen it.

Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), stated that Islam was a religion of peace which had enunciated the concept of human rights more than 14 centuries ago. The member countries of the OIC had observed with grave concern that Islam was currently being increasingly associated in certain circles with human rights violations, terrorism and intolerance. To combat those negative trends the member States of the OIC had sponsored the draft resolution entitled "Defamation of religions", which the Commission on Human Rights had adopted by consensus at its fifty-fifth session (resolution 1999/82). But it was now desirable to go further and to place the question of Islamophobia on the agenda of the forthcoming World Conference on Racism. It was also important that the Council should ensure that its subsidiary bodies, and particularly the Commission on Human Rights, were not used to attack the religious beliefs of Muslims.

The OIC was concerned about the activities of certain NGOs which were misusing their accreditation to the Commission on Human Rights to become standard-bearers for governments, organizations and individuals which were not interested in the promotion of human rights but in acts of propaganda and attacks against other countries. Such activities were not conducive to effective participation by NGOs in the work of the United Nations. In addition, for purchases of transparency it would be preferable for draft resolutions submitted to the Commission to be prepared with the participation of all. Drafts should also be examined to ensure that they meet the criteria of objectivity and non-selectivity laid down in the Vienna Declaration. Lastly, the OIC member States remained concerned about the gross violations of the human rights of the Palestinians and other Arabs living under Israeli occupation.

In conclusion, she reaffirmed the special interest of the OIC member States in the activities of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, and in particular the Commission on Human Rights. She hoped that her statement would

be distributed as an official document of the 1999 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council under agenda item 14 (h).

Mr. AHMAD (World Muslim Congress) stated that not only trade and markets, but also, and above all, human dignity and human rights were matters for globalization. Gross and continuing violations of the rights of a people were no longer a domestic concern of the State in which they were taking place but a problem to which the international community must have the political will to face up. The globalization of human rights must be matched by a globalization of responsibility. In that context prevention was essential; the atrocities committed in Kosovo had shown how important it was to act speedily to forestall the worsening of a crisis. It was equally important that the Commission on Human Rights should not remain inactive in face of the gross violations of human rights which were continually being reported to it.

Fifty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, most of the current irreducible conflicts were due to refusals to allow peoples the democratic right of self-determination; Kashmir was an example. In breach of the principle of non-selectivity, the United Nations was applying the right to self-determination in one way in the cases of East Timor and the Western Sahara and in another way in Kashmir. In conclusion, he expressed the view that the true enjoyment of human rights demanded an international community having "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person" and determined to put that conviction into practice notwithstanding ethnic, linguistic, religious or cultural divisions.

Mr. LITTLECHILD (International Organization of Indigenous Resource Development), speaking on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples Caucus, said that, of all the international decades proclaimed by the United Nations, that for indigenous peoples was not only the least known but also, and above all, the one with the smallest financial resources. He expressed disappointment that the Commission on Human Rights had declined to consider the mid-term review of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, which should have taken place, like those for all the other decades, with the involvement of those directly concerned, namely the indigenous peoples. In any case, the preliminary review of the first five years of the Decade revealed that little progress had been made in the improvement of the condition of the indigenous peoples.

In those circumstances, he proposed that the international community should appoint an indigenous person as an ambassador to promote the decade

worldwide; to associate indigenous experts with the work of the international bodies and the competent organs of the United Nations; to adopt a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; to create a permanent forum for indigenous peoples; to convene a world conference on indigenous issues; and, finally, to recognize the World Indigenous Nations Games scheduled for 2003 as an official International Decade activity. Finally, he invited the international community to give a real meaning to the theme of the decade ("partnership in action") so that the indigenous peoples could attain their rightful place at the dawn of the new millennium.

Mr. SANDOVAL BERNAL (Colombia) said that the interest in human rights education consistently shown by the different United Nations bodies was a major step forward in the promotion and protection of fundamental rights. In that connection the United Nations Decade of Human Rights Education was an essential instrument for the promotion of mutual understanding, tolerance and peace. Colombia had devoted considerable efforts to the campaign against illiteracy and was now seeking to improve the quality of its educational system by including subjects such as human rights promotion, participative democracy, the rule of law and the protection of the environment in its primary and secondary education curricula. The Government of Colombia was convinced that that civic education would contribute to the building of peace and the guaranteeing of sustained development.

An educational model had been designed for members of the police and the armed forces designed to integrate human rights into the training given to police officers so that they would respect humanitarian values in the performance of their duties. That model focussed on the incorporation of human rights in the institutional reform of the police force, the adaptation of teaching to the different levels of rank and the promotion of dialogue between civil society and the chiefs of the armed forces. The long-term aim was the creation of a new force responsible for the maintenance of public order and having its roots in a genuine human rights culture.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Human Rights on its fifty-fifth session (E/1999/23, Parts I and II)

Section A of chapter I

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft resolution entitled "Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" and the draft amendment contained in document E/1999/L.30.

The Council adopted the draft resolution entitled "Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" as amended by document E/1999/L.30.

Section B of chapter I

The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to take action on draft decision 1 entitled "Situation of human rights in Afghanistan", and on draft decision 2, entitled "Situation of human rights in Burundi".

Draft decisions 1 and 2 were adopted.

The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to take action on draft decision 3, entitled "Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran".

Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan) recalled the position her country had taken on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference when Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/13 was voted on. She regretted that that resolution served the political objectives of certain countries; did not take account of the political and social advances achieved in Iran in the field of human rights; and constituted an obstacle to cooperation with the Government of Iraq.

Mr. SCHALIN (Observer for Finland) reminded the meeting that Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/13 had formed the subject of protracted negotiations and that the Council was only invited to vote on the extension of the mandate of the Special Representative on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. He therefore hoped that draft decision 3 would be adopted without a vote.

Draft decision 3 was adopted.

The PRESIDENT stated that he had received a request for a roll-call vote on draft decision 4, entitled "Situation of human rights in Iraq".

Mr. MAHMOUD (Observer for Iraq) said that his country was the subject of a systematic campaign designed to conceal from international opinion the human rights violations caused by the embargo of which it was a victim and

by the aggression committed by the United States and the United Kingdom in contempt of international law and the United Nations Charter. He deplored the politicization of the work of the Commission on Human Rights and the lack of objectivity of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iraq. The latter was exaggerating the importance of certain insignificant details while ignoring the catastrophic effects of the sanctions and the bombardments on the living conditions of the Iraqi people, which had been reported on in detail by the specialized agencies of the United Nations. The Commission on Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur should have recommended that the embargo placed on Iraq should be lifted.

A roll-call vote was taken.

Honduras, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Algeria, Belarus, Cape Verde, China, Comoros, Cuba, Djibouti, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela, Viet Nam.

Draft decision 4 was adopted by 29 votes to none, with 17 abstentions.

Mr. AL-HUSSAMY (Syrian Arab Republic) had abstained because the draft decision included considerations of a racial character and could have adverse repercussions on the territorial integrity of Iraq. The presence of permanent observers was an interference in the internal affairs of a member country and contrary to the sovereignty of States and the United Nations Charter.

Mr. DEMBRI (Algeria) explained that he had abstained because the draft decision contained a provision deleterious to the territorial integrity of Iraq. In addition, account should be taken of the humanitarian situation in that country, which had been dragged down into a process of pauperization by an

embargo of unprecedented duration. The international community had to take into consideration the consequences of its decisions for Iraqi society and to lift the embargo imposed on Iraq, which needed to have access to all its resources to improve the food and health situation of its population.

Mr. MALGINOV (Russian Federation) was in favour of the strengthening of the mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and the introduction of cooperation with States. He considered that as a matter of objectivity the Special Rapporteur should pay particular attention to the repercussions of sanctions and bombardments on the economic and social rights of the Iraqi people.

The President invited the members of the Council to take action on draft decision 5, entitled "Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan", and on draft decision 6, entitled "Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar".
Draft decisions 5 and 6 were adopted.

The President invited the members of the Council to take action on draft decision 7, entitled "Situation of Human Rights in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina".

Mr. MALGINOV (Russian Federation) recalled that his delegation had voted against Commission on Human Rights draft resolution 1998/18 that supported the extension of the mandate of the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. He therefore did not request a vote.

Mr. KHARE (India) regretted that Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/18 failed to specify that Kosovo formed an integral part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
Draft decision 7 was adopted.

The President invited the members of the Council to take action on draft decisions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14,15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21,22 , 23, 24 and 25, entitled respectively: "Situation of Human Rights in Equatorial Guinea and Assistance in the Field of Human Rights", "Situation of Human Rights in Rwanda", "Question of the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and study of special problems which the developing countries face in their efforts to achieve these human rights", "Human rights and extreme poverty", "Question of

a draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment", "Right to freedom of opinion and expression", "Human rights of migrants", "Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration in accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 49/214 of 23 December 1994", "Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People", "A permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system", "Strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights", "Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo", "National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights", "Assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights", "Situation of human rights in Cambodia", "Situation of human rights in Haiti", "Rights of the child", and "Defamation of religions".

The Council adopted draft decisions 8 to 25.

The President announced that he had received a request for a roll-call vote on draft decision 26, entitled "Effects of structural adjustment policies on the full enjoyment of human rights".

Lesotho, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Algeria, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Belarus, Cape Verde, Russian Federation, Venezuela.

Draft decision 26 was adopted by 25 votes to 17, with 4 abstentions.

The President invited the members of the Council to take actions on draft decision 27, entitled "Systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during armed conflicts, including internal armed conflict"; draft decision 28, entitled "The concept and practice of affirmative action",

draft decision 29, entitled "Dates of the 56th session of the Commission on Human Rights", draft decision 30, entitled "Organization of the work of the 56th session of the Commission on Human Rights" and draft decision 31, entitled "Rationalization of the work of the Commission on Human Rights".

Draft decisions 27 to 31 were adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.