



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Human Rights Committee 131st session

Summary record of the second part (public)* of the 3778th meeting

Held via videoconference on Friday, 26 March 2021, at 4 p.m. Central European Time

Chair: Ms. Pazartzis

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* The summary record of the first part (closed) of the meeting appears as document CCPR/C/SR.3778.

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The public part of the meeting was called to order at 5.25 p.m.

Adoption of the annual report to the General Assembly

Draft report of the Human Rights Committee on its 129th, 130th and 131st sessions (CCPR/C/131/R.1)

1. **Mr. Muhumuza** (Rapporteur), introducing the draft report of the Human Rights Committee on its 129th, 130th and 131st sessions (CCPR/C/131/R.1), said that the draft report outlined the Committee's activities at its 129th, 130th and 131st sessions, all three of which had been held online on account of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Section I of the draft report included information on the recent election of the new Bureau and on the appointment of the Committee's special rapporteurs and rapporteur on reprisals, as well as information on the activities of the country report task forces and the Working Group on Communications, derogations pursuant to article 4 of the Covenant, concluding observations and follow-up to concluding observations, communications and follow-up to Views, and the adoption of general comment No. 37 (2020). The continued need for additional staff and resources, including an increase in the staffing capacity of the Petitions Unit of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, was also mentioned. Section II of the report, which dealt with the Committee's methods of work and its cooperation with other human rights bodies, highlighted the Committee's recent decision to resume its constructive dialogue with States parties, stressing that the decision to proceed with online reviews was an exceptional measure taken in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and that in-person sessions should be resumed as soon as possible. Information was provided on the Committee's online meeting with judges from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, held in October 2020, and it was noted that the Committee had appointed focal points from among its members to enhance its cooperation with other treaty bodies and regional human rights mechanisms. Section III of the draft report contained information on the submission of reports by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant. A list of former and current members of the Committee during the 129th, 130th and 131st sessions was presented in the annex.
2. **The Chair** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft report, subject to the necessary amendments.
3. *The draft report of the Human Rights Committee on its 129th, 130th and 131st sessions was adopted on that understanding.*

Closure of the session

4. **The Chair** said that the 131st session had been a challenging but productive one. Despite numerous technical difficulties related to the online platform and the challenge of working across various time zones, the Committee had been able to resume its constructive dialogue with States parties. She wished to stress, however, that the Committee considered the conduct of online sessions to be exceptional and temporary; while certain aspects of the Committee's work could be conducted online, there was no substitute for in-person sessions, especially in terms of engagement with States parties and stakeholders during the reporting process.
5. During the session, the Committee had reviewed and adopted concluding observations on the periodic reports of two States parties, namely, Finland and Kenya. The Committee had held a debriefing on the online review process and had identified areas where improvements could be made in preparation for any virtual reviews to be held at its 132nd session.
6. Lists of issues prior to reporting had been adopted in relation to nine States parties – the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Granada, Iceland, Malawi, Nepal, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania. The adoption of the list of issues prior to reporting in relation to Burundi had been postponed until the 132nd session. The Committee had also adopted progress reports on follow-up to concluding observations and follow-up to Views.
7. The Committee had considered 47 individual communications during the session. Of those 47 cases, 24 had been decided on the merits, 7 had been declared inadmissible and 16

had been discontinued. The Committee had found that there had been violations of the Covenant in 20 of the 24 cases decided on the merits. It had decided to postpone the consideration of three communications until its 132nd session.

8. She took it that the Committee wished to adopt the minutes of the four Bureau meetings, which had been circulated to members.

9. *It was so decided.*

10. After the customary exchange of courtesies, **the Chair** declared the 131st session of the Human Rights Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.