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Chair: Mr. Gunnarsson (Iceland)
later: Ms. Al-Temimi (Vice-Chair) (Qatar)

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

Agenda item 72: Promotion and protection of human rights (*continued*) (A/72/40 and A/C.3/72/9)

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (*continued*) (A/72/127, A/72/128,

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(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives (*continued*)

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1. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the member States called for a better understanding of migration patterns across and within regions and subregions. International migration played an important role in development, and synergies between the two should be strengthened. States of origin, transit and destination needed to work together to maximize the benefits of migration and address the challenges it presented.

2. CELAC reaffirmed that all human beings were born free and equal in dignity and rights and expressed concern about the increasingly xenophobic and racist responses to refugees and migrants. CELAC member States called for countries of transit and destination to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of children and to take a humanitarian approach to irregular migration. Any action taken should always be in the best interests of the child, in accordance with the provisions of instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3. The international community, especially countries of origin, transit and destination, must guarantee full

respect for the human rights of all migrants and ensure adequate detention and return procedures, with a particular focus on women, adolescents and unaccompanied or separated children. CELAC member States were committed to promoting development policies with a view to safeguarding fundamental rights and improving living conditions, thereby discouraging unsafe and irregular migration. The Community welcomed the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the ongoing preparations for the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

4. CELAC was committed to strengthening cooperation to address human rights violations and abuses affecting migrants, such as illicit smuggling and human trafficking. Its approach to migration was comprehensive and human-rights-based: it rejected the criminalization of irregular migration and any form of racism, xenophobia or discrimination against migrants; it saw them as rights holders on an equal footing with the nationals of the host country, irrespective of their migration status; it promoted their integration into society; and it fostered the reintegration of those returning home.

5. CELAC urged States to end selective policies based on country of origin and to implement gender-sensitive programmes and policies that would address the specific needs of women migrant workers. Migrants made positive and profound contributions to economic and social development in their host countries and to global wealth creation, and migration benefited the development of countries of origin. The commitments made under the New York Declaration should be recognized and strengthened in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In recognition of the importance of the right to a safe voluntary return, countries of origin should implement policies that discouraged unsafe migration.

6. Migration needed a comprehensive approach and, given the challenges facing migrants globally, the United Nations was the best forum in which to address all aspects of the phenomenon.

7. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the LGBTI Core Group, said that protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals from violence and discrimination did not require the creation of new rights, as the legal obligation of States to uphold the human rights of all people without distinction was well established in international human rights law. Nevertheless, those individuals continued to be victims of serious human rights violations and abuses in all parts of the world.

Discriminatory treatment was widely reported, including in access to health care, education, employment and housing.

8. The Group commended the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for its efforts to raise global awareness of those human rights challenges and to mobilize support for measures addressing violence and discrimination. Human Rights Council resolution 32/2 had established the mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, which was an important achievement, and the Group looked forward to his first report. Additionally, more than 100 countries had voluntarily committed to undertake measures to end violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, following recommendations from the Human Rights Council during the universal periodic review process.

9. The Group recognized the work of human rights defenders for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community, which was carried out at considerable personal risk; their work played a critical role in reporting human rights violations, providing support to victims and raising awareness within Governments and societies. Continued dialogue between and within countries was essential to determining how best to protect the human rights of those individuals. The Group would therefore continue to seek common ground and engage in a spirit of open, respectful and constructive dialogue and cooperation with United Nations Member States and other stakeholders.

10. **Mr. Mminele** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends of Older Persons, said that the population of older persons was projected to reach 1.4 billion by 2030. Greater attention must therefore be paid to the specific challenges affecting them, including in the field of human rights. In an enabling environment and with adequate guarantees in place, older persons could make significant contributions to the social and economic development of societies. The Group expressed concern about the multiple forms of discrimination that could affect older persons, particularly those in vulnerable groups. Policies, programmes and legal frameworks must be designed and implemented to effectively and specifically promote the full enjoyment of their human rights in order to ensure their dignity, empowerment and active participation in society.

11. Through its resolution [65/182](#), the General Assembly had called for stronger protection for the

human rights of older persons by identifying gaps in the existing international framework and possible solutions. The Group felt that the existing legal framework and human rights treaty body system and mechanisms were not sufficient to effectively and comprehensively protect and promote the rights and dignity of older persons. Furthermore, a specific, universal and legally binding document would address the current regulatory dispersion, foster national policies to better define the responsibilities of States and strengthen monitoring mechanisms. The Group stood ready to engage in open and frank discussions to determine the best way to fill the gaps and develop further instruments and measures to enhance and strengthen the protection of the human rights of older persons and called upon all Member States to do the same.

12. **Ms. Morton** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada, Costa Rica, Fiji, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand and Norway, said that dialogue was essential to the protection and promotion of human rights. The United Nations must therefore embrace multi-stakeholder engagement, including with national human rights institutions, civil society, human rights defenders and experts. National human rights institutions were uniquely positioned to drive change by monitoring the human rights situations on the ground, advising Governments, assisting victims in seeking redress, delivering human rights education programmes, and engaging with the international community to raise pressing issues and advocate for recommendations. In order to ensure their independence and accountability, those institutions were subject to an accreditation system established under the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles). At the international and regional levels, they were organized through the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and its four regional networks.

13. In 2015, the Third Committee had adopted a resolution which called on the United Nations to enhance the participation of national human rights institutions in relevant meetings and processes, recognizing the important role that those institutions could play. Progress had been made towards formalizing their participation across the United Nations, and they had directly contributed to the discussions of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and to the development of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. In 2016, the Human Rights Council had called for human rights treaty bodies to adopt a common approach to engaging with those institutions, as they provided a crucial domestic perspective.

14. National human rights institutions had demonstrated their commitment to addressing human rights concerns through the United Nations by contributing to discussions, submitting papers and hosting events. States should therefore continue working towards formalizing their engagement, and that of the Global Alliance, in all relevant bodies and processes of the United Nations.

15. **Mr. Van Den Akker** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania and Montenegro, said that the European Union rejected the politicization of human rights and made every effort to avoid any perception of double standards. The 2017 report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights highlighted difficulties in Roma integration, support for migrant and refugee children, and the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes and incitement to hatred. The European Union also applied its principles to its partners and regularly and publicly denounced the use of the death penalty in the United States and Japan. Multilateralism was the key to solving global challenges. Participants in the human rights system should use the platforms at the United Nations for constructive criticism and debate on human rights abuses and violations; he called on all Member States to extend a standing invitation to all United Nations special procedures. Human rights violations often engendered further violations, contributed to refugee flows and made post-conflict reconciliation harder to achieve. The use of torture did not make a country more stable or prevent terrorism. The European Union therefore called on States to address the challenges posed by terrorists, extremists and armed groups in full respect of international human rights standards and fundamental freedoms.

16. The European Union condemned the illegal nuclear and ballistic programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Nevertheless, the international community must remain focused on achieving accountability for the grave and systematic human rights violations, as well as the full implementation of recommendations adopted by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. He urged the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage fully with the United Nations system and called on China to abstain from forcibly repatriating people who had fled the country, in accordance with its obligations under the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

17. The reports of serious human rights violations taking place in Rakhine State in Myanmar gave cause for concern. The Government should allow full and

unconditional humanitarian access to the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) without delay in order to enable the safe, dignified and voluntary return of those who had fled. It should also fully and swiftly implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and cooperate fully with the Human Rights Council fact-finding mission.

18. The international community must never accept impunity for human rights violations. The European Union therefore continued to call on the Security Council to refer the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to the International Criminal Court. The International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 must be made fully operational as soon as possible and cooperate closely with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. Furthermore, all parties, in particular the Syrian regime, must immediately lift all sieges and provide unhindered countrywide access for humanitarian aid. The deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructures must cease, and perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks must be held accountable. The European Union reiterated its full support for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism.

19. The Government of Burundi must fight impunity and end all further human rights violations, in particular those committed by State actors. Authorities should fully cooperate with the Human Rights Council, the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Burundi and the observer mission of the African Union. The European Union stood ready to support a meaningful and inclusive crisis exit plan mediated and facilitated by the East African Community.

20. The European Union called for the cessation of human rights violations and abuses and discrimination against persons based on their nationality or religion in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, illegally annexed by the Russian Federation. The human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine should be given unrestricted access to the entire territory of Ukraine, and all parties to the conflict must respect international human rights and humanitarian law. The European Union called for respect for diversity and took note of the fact that the new education legislation in Ukraine had been submitted to the European Commission for Democracy through Law in

order to address concerns about the potential adverse impact on the rights of minorities.

21. The response to the July 2016 attempted coup in Turkey should be lawful and measured. The European Union expressed concern about the detention of and criminal cases brought against journalists, academics, writers, human rights defenders and members of Parliament based on the selective and arbitrary application of national security and anti-terrorism provisions. It also reiterated its concern over legislation restricting the activities of civil society organizations in the Russian Federation, including the arbitrary designation of organizations and individuals as extremists. The Russian Federation should ensure respect for the freedom of assembly, religion, association and expression and thoroughly investigate reported cases of abductions, torture and killings of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in Chechnya. While recognizing the challenges posed by the terrorist threat to stability and security in Egypt, the European Union encouraged the Government to improve the situation concerning civil and political rights, including freedom of association, assembly and expression. It was concerned about the consequences of the new NGO law and reiterated its readiness to assist Egypt in addressing the challenges it faced.

22. **Ms. Kirianoff Crimmins** (Switzerland) said that her country had launched a foreign-policy action plan for the universal abolition of the death penalty in order to support the global trend, but expressed concern that some States planned to reintroduce it and others were carrying out executions after years of moratoriums. Civil society space was shrinking in many countries, where increasingly serious violations of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, expression and association were being committed under the pretext of security, national sovereignty and the fight against terrorism. Representatives of civil society, including human rights defenders, independent journalists and political actors, were too often arrested or arbitrarily detained. Switzerland called on all States to guarantee a safe environment for civil society and to ensure that violations were punished.

23. Respect for international law, in particular human rights and international humanitarian law, was paramount in combating terrorism. The impact of national anti-terrorism measures on humanitarian and medical assistance gave cause for concern. Procedural safeguards must be respected, including Security Council sanctions against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaida. In that connection, Switzerland hoped that a new mediator would be appointed without delay. Given the growing number of

criminal proceedings against children suspected of belonging to terrorist groups, particular attention must be paid to ensure respect for their rights. Switzerland considered prevention to be the most effective way of addressing violent extremism, which meant promoting the values of respect, dialogue and inclusion and upholding human rights and the rule of law.

24. Financial and political support for the Human Rights Council was essential to its success and effectiveness. Strengthening United Nations capacities in prevention, especially early warning and early intervention, was a priority. Switzerland was committed to placing human rights at the heart of conflict prevention and strengthening the exchange of information between the Human Rights Council and the Security Council. There must be stronger connections between human rights, development and peace and security, especially in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

25. **Mr. Saito** (Japan) said that the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was still a matter of grave concern. Despite successive Security Council resolutions, the Government had continued to engage in acts of provocation, made possible by diverting resources from the welfare of its people to nuclear and missile development. Japan demanded the immediate return of the Japanese citizens who had been abducted, one of the most serious human rights violations committed; it should be addressed as soon as possible, given the advanced age of the abductees and their family members.

26. Japan was deeply concerned about the alleged killings of civilians in Rakhine State and the displacement of nearly 600,000 people to Bangladesh. The Government of Myanmar should allow humanitarian access, facilitate the safe and voluntary return of displaced persons and restore security in a manner consistent with the rule of law and respect for human rights. The international community should encourage and support Government efforts to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. Japan commended the efforts of the Bangladeshi Government to respond to the humanitarian needs and to resolve the issue through dialogue with Myanmar.

27. Despite some progress in reducing violence in de-escalation zones, atrocities committed against civilians had continued in and around combat areas in Syria. Japan urged the parties to the conflict to fully observe international human rights and humanitarian law. The Japanese Government welcomed the de-escalation

mechanism and hoped that it would improve humanitarian access and advance the political process.

28. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that, when committed as part of a systematic or widespread attack against the civilian population, human rights violations constituted crimes against humanity, which fell within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. While the Court was the centrepiece of the international fight against impunity, billions of people still did not enjoy its protection. With its current power structure, the Security Council would be unwilling to consistently refer situations to the Court. Moreover, such referrals were only desirable if they were driven by a genuine political will to ensure accountability and adopt enforcement measures. The international community must therefore explore alternatives to criminal proceedings before the Court. The Rome Statute gave clear primacy to national proceedings under the principle of complementarity. The United Nations, regional organizations and individual States could provide technical assistance and capacity-building to a State that was willing to investigate and prosecute but unable to do so. One such example was the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala. In addition, hybrid courts could be tailored to the specific needs of the situation, as was the case in Cambodia and the Central African Republic.

29. When the State itself was the perpetrator, or crimes were committed on its behalf, the State was often unwilling to investigate or to allow the Court to exercise jurisdiction. Inaction and impunity had usually been the result. However, with the creation of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, under General Assembly resolution [71/248](#), the United Nations could play a role in accountability without interfering with the sovereignty of the country, as it fully recognized the primacy of Syrian courts to investigate and prosecute. The Mechanism could also serve as an example for other accountability projects undertaken by the General Assembly.

30. **Mr. Moussa** (Egypt) said that, despite the adoption of numerous international human rights instruments, much work remained to be done to translate that global framework into tangible improvements in the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in many parts of the world. Indeed, violence, extremism and terrorism were on the rise, and millions continued to live in extreme poverty, in conflict zones or under foreign occupation. Certain States that claimed to be staunch defenders of human rights and fundamental freedoms were seeking to promote their narrow political interests by using those rights and freedoms as a pretext

for interference in other States' internal affairs, which undermined the human rights system and eroded its credibility.

31. His delegation believed that implementation of the international human rights agenda must take place on the basis of an intergovernmental dialogue and in accordance with the principles of impartiality, universality, non-politicization and non-selectivity. Human rights must never be used in a selective manner with a view to interfering in Member States' domestic affairs. It was, moreover, important to adopt a comprehensive approach to human rights issues that addressed civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; and the right to development. Furthermore, the international community must help States to build capacity in technology.

32. **Mr. Tenya Hasegawa** (Peru) said that political dialogue and civil society participation were essential to an inclusive society in which all citizens were equal before the law. Peru had a strong institutional structure that maintained and improved its independent justice system, due process and the fight against discrimination, especially against vulnerable groups. The Government was preparing to submit its report under the universal periodic review. It maintained constant cooperation with human rights treaty bodies and had extended a standing invitation to all special procedures and working groups in 2002. The High Commissioner for Human Rights had recently conducted a visit, and Peru had been elected to the Human Rights Council for the period 2018–2020.

33. Given that extreme poverty weakened democracy and impeded the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, Peru had been implementing social policies and had seen concrete improvements in education, health, child nutrition and basic services, which contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Peru was launching a social revolution to provide high-impact, quality public services to the population, with an emphasis on access to drinking water and sanitation.

34. **Mr. Marani** (Argentina) said that his country had strengthened cooperation with all special procedures and human rights treaty bodies and had recently hosted the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences; the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. States must step up efforts to combat violence and discrimination in all its forms, especially against vulnerable groups. Argentina expressed concern about the situation of older persons and felt that a binding, universal international instrument was the only means of ensuring the full

respect, protection and enjoyment of their rights. Furthermore, the international community must strengthen protection for journalists and combat impunity. In that connection, Argentina had jointly initiated a resolution to strengthen existing mechanisms and provide guidelines for Member States. Argentina called on States to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and welcomed the recent ratification by the Czech Republic, Malawi, Seychelles and Switzerland.

35. **Mr. de Souza Monteiro** (Brazil) said that the promotion and protection of human rights was enshrined in the Constitution, and his country had extended a standing invitation to United Nations special procedures mandate holders. Brazil had been elected to the Human Rights Council for the period 2017–2019 and had participated in the third cycle of the universal periodic review in May 2017, which had highlighted its progress in eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities, as well as combating contemporary forms of slavery, trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation and violence against women. Given that many of the measures had been inspired by human rights procedures and recommendations received at the regional and international levels, Brazil felt that it had benefited from maintaining open channels of dialogue and active participation.

36. The international community must strengthen efforts to implement the programme of action for the International Decade for People of African Descent, which would contribute to the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and raise awareness of prejudice, racism and other forms of intolerance. Brazil expressed concern about how the right to privacy was negatively impacted by surveillance and the interception of digital communications, including extraterritorial and mass surveillance. The international community must also ensure that all people could live with dignity and in conformity with their convictions, as too many people experienced discrimination on the basis of faith, race, social and economic status, sexual orientation or gender identity.

37. The law governing immigration, which had recently been updated, promoted regular pathways for admission; provided access to public health, education and social services; and did not criminalize migration. In 2016, new legislation had been enacted to prevent and reduce domestic and international human trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, and to provide care for victims.

38. **Ms. Cohen** (Australia) said that Australia looked forward to serving on the Human Rights Council for the first time for the period 2018–2020. The advancement of women and gender equality were vital to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Universal access to sexual and reproductive health services was critical to achieving stable and inclusive economic growth and development and had a profound impact on the health, education and participation of women and girls. Special attention must be paid to the challenges facing women and girls with disabilities to guarantee respect for their physical and mental integrity.

39. Australia reiterated the critical importance of multi-stakeholder engagement on the promotion and protection of human rights. Dialogue at all levels was enriched by the participation of national human rights institutions, civil society, human rights defenders, experts and other stakeholders. The continued reports of attacks on civil society and human rights defenders, including online, gave cause for concern. Their work must be respected, and their safety must be ensured. Australia expressed particular support for human rights defenders combating violence and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. All people were entitled to respect, dignity and legal protection, and there should be no place for reprisals or impunity in any country at any time. Australia was committed to working with all partners in addressing human rights issues worldwide.

40. **Mr. Kalitheerthan** (India) said that his country had submitted its report under the universal periodic review in 2017. In order for special procedures mandate holders to be effective, they needed to maintain independence and impartiality. They should aim to strengthen national capacities, promote genuine dialogue and make recommendations relevant to the national context which were not ideologically driven or confrontational. Attempts to politicize situations, make generalizations based on isolated events or undertake activities beyond the scope of the mandate were invariably counterproductive, as was the case with the recent report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights (A/72/155). India welcomed the recent initiative to enhance transparency in funding, under which mandate holders were required to disclose support received from other sources. However, details on the use of those additional funds remained unavailable. The international community must also avoid the proliferation of mandates and the duplication of their work.

41. There must be a zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism; however, narrow geopolitical interests continued to impede the development of a global

response. Despite inconsistent treatment by United Nations human rights mechanisms, the right to development remained supremely important. A fair and equitable international environment for the protection of human rights was only possible if developing countries could participate in global economic decision-making and norm-setting on an equal footing with developed countries.

42. As the world's largest democracy, India had a secular polity and independent judiciary, a free press, a vibrant civil society and a range of national and local commissions to monitor compliance with human rights. It had also implemented a number of measures to support vulnerable groups that had long suffered discrimination.

43. **Ms. Shlychkova** (Russian Federation) that politicization and dual standards impeded constructive dialogue and cooperation and led to serious thematic and geographical imbalances in United Nations human rights bodies. As a result, real human rights issues such as protecting national minorities and children and combating statelessness were being relegated to the background. The United States had no right to lecture or mentor others, given its impunity for acts of torture and abductions in other countries, racial discrimination, disproportionate use of force by the police, child labour and illegitimate punishment for minors. The right to vote was denied to 4.1 million people. Furthermore, the use of force by the United States in connection with the wars in Iraq, Libya and Syria had caused thousands of deaths and led to unprecedented xenophobia. There were 917 radical and neo-Nazi groups operating in the country, and freedom of opinion and expression was deteriorating.

44. In the European Union, monuments to the Second World War were being torn down by vandals, and the police used excessive force. There were double standards with regard to freedom of expression, as the works of some authors and scientists were being banned. Unfortunately, other States were beginning to imitate the West. There was a clear use of torture in Ukraine, and the Baltic countries were reducing educational opportunities for minorities in their own languages.

45. The international community must end the growing politicization of United Nations human rights mechanisms. There were a number of effective instruments that could be used to cooperate constructively with States in order to address human rights issues. With regard to Sevastopol, people were being brought to justice for the crimes that had been committed, and legal recourse was available for all citizens of the Russian Federation, which fulfilled its

obligations under its national legislation and that of the European Union.

46. **Ms. Al-Temimi** (Qatar) said that human rights were at the core of her country's policies. The Constitution and national legislation conformed with international human rights instruments, and a number of human rights institutions had been established, including the Qatari National Human Rights Committee and the Doha Centre for Media Freedom. The International Trade Union Confederation had welcomed the measures taken by Qatar to align national legislation for the protection of the rights of workers to international standards and International Labour Organization conventions.

47. Qatar had served three consecutive terms on the Human Rights Council and would continue to foster human rights during its fourth term. The illegal unilateral measures imposed against Qatar were a violation of human rights. The Qatari National Human Rights Committee and Amnesty International had documented thousands of complaints by citizens and foreign nationals who had been adversely affected with regard to education, health care, the right to property, freedom of movement and freedom of opinion. In addition, families had been separated. The international community should guarantee adherence to international law and not allow policies with narrow goals to be imposed on States, heedless of human rights. Those policies compromised international efforts to foster human rights, development and peace and security. Qatar would spare no effort in fulfilling its human rights obligations and would continue to extend support to United Nations human rights mechanisms to assist in achieving their goals.

48. **Mr. Hattrem** (Norway) said that the growing gap between the commitments made by States and the reality on the ground was unacceptable. The international community must make full use of multilateral forums and strengthen international human rights institutions. With the Sustainable Development Goals as a road map, States must address inequality and social injustice, safeguard the rule of law and empower both women and men. Given that political crises and human rights violations were often interlinked, the protection of human rights must be incorporated into international efforts to address conflict and crisis. Sustainable peace required accountability for human rights violations and an end to impunity. The international response to violent extremism must safeguard the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to prevent the misuse of power.

49. His delegation expressed concern about the financial situation of OHCHR and called on States to strengthen its financial capacity to respond to increasing demands. Norway welcomed the United Nations Human Rights Appeal 2017, which underlined the importance of human rights for effective early warning systems, the prevention of violent extremism and peaceful coexistence.

50. Norway was once again presenting a draft resolution on the situation of human rights defenders, with a focus on implementation in view of the forthcoming twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. He invited all States to take part in the informal consultations and to work together to support the role of human rights defenders.

51. *Ms. Al-Temimi (Qatar), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

52. **Mr. Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that Saudi Arabia killed more children in the world than any terrorist organization. The blockade imposed on Yemen had put at least 1 million children at risk of death by famine or cholera. At the national level, the Government of Saudi Arabia continued to behead peaceful political opponents, silence voices of discontent, expel Shia minorities and destroy their homes. At the regional level, it was actively engaged in undermining democracy and human rights in the entire Persian Gulf region. At the international level, it had spent billions of dollars over the past three decades exporting State-sponsored Wahhabism, which had facilitated recruitment for Al-Qaida, ISIL and other terrorist groups. The flow of Saudi petrodollars to extremist groups in Syria and other parts of the world continued to endanger the human rights of millions.

53. The serious human rights violations committed by the United States, both domestically and abroad, continued unabated. Human rights abuses were prevalent, including racial profiling, ethnic or racial bias in the criminal justice system, excessive use of force by the police, espionage, disappearances, assassinations, drone strikes, covert operations, hate speech by high-ranking politicians, the improper use of solitary confinement, the denial of civil rights, and the torture and ill-treatment of detainees held without charges at Guantánamo Bay.

54. In Europe, discrimination was one of the most serious and pervasive human rights challenges. There was an increase in hate speech and hate crimes, which often targeted vulnerable groups, in particular Muslims and migrants. In Canada, the human rights of indigenous

people were violated by the systematic disadvantages that they experienced in access to education, employment and basic services. Israeli policies of intimidation, aggression and occupation continued to be a major source of instability. The illegal settlements and inhumane blockade persisted, and the millions of people held hostage by Israel continued to experience racism. His delegation was appalled that those types of human rights violations could occur in the twenty-first century.

55. **Ms. Currie** (United States of America) said that her Government condemned the widespread human rights violations committed by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including summary executions, enslavement, torture, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances. In Syria, it strongly condemned the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Assad regime and its allies, as well as ISIL, including attacks on civilian facilities, arbitrary detentions and torture, forced displacement, the use of chemical weapons and the removal of medical supplies from aid convoys.

56. The United States remained deeply concerned by the arbitrary detentions, excessive sentencing, abuse, torture and harsh prison conditions in Iran, especially for human rights defenders and minorities. It was also troubled by the ongoing harassment of civil society and the media in the Russian Federation, as well as the growing number of political prisoners as the 2018 elections approached, and called upon that country to hold accountable those responsible for extrajudicial detentions, torture and killings of gay men in Chechnya. Her Government categorically rejected the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. The United States called on the civilian and military authorities of Myanmar to provide immediate humanitarian and media access, cease the violence and displacement of civilians and ensure accountability for human rights violations in Rakhine State.

57. In China, human rights defenders and lawyers were being arbitrarily detained, tortured, stripped of their legal licenses and forced to confess publicly. Conditions akin to martial law had been imposed in Xinjiang and some areas of Tibet. Her Government condemned the continued steps towards authoritarianism by the regime in Venezuela and called on it to dissolve the illegitimate Constituent Assembly, provide humanitarian assistance to its people, release political prisoners and hold free, fair and credible elections.

58. The United States urged the Cuban Government to release political prisoners and cease the harassment of civil society and called on the Government of the

Democratic Republic of the Congo not to impede the investigation into the murders of United Nations officials. Her Government expressed concern about the ongoing human rights abuses and possible crimes against humanity in Burundi; the use of scorched-earth tactics by military forces in South Sudan; government attacks on civil society and the democratic opposition in Cambodia, and the sectarian tensions, increasing violence against civilians and attacks on humanitarian aid workers in the Central African Republic. It called on all parties to the conflict in Yemen to protect civilians and allow unimpeded humanitarian access. Her Government was deeply troubled by the crackdown on peacefully dissenting voices and the severe restrictions placed on freedoms of assembly, association and expression for individuals and civil society in places such as Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Egypt and Turkey.

59. **Mr. Ja Song Nam** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that certain countries abused the United Nations system to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States, which was the greatest obstacle to protecting and promoting human rights. One such example was the human rights campaign against his country, waged by the United States and its followers, which threatened the rights to survival and development. In September 2017, the Security Council had adopted sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which fully obstructed economic development and the improvement of livelihoods. The Government completely rejected politicization, selectivity and double standards in human rights issues. In fact, the United Nations should investigate the criminal practices of the United States and its allies, which had given rise to the worst refugee crisis in history and gross human rights violations. The United States and other Western countries invoked the Charter of the United Nations and human rights treaties only when it suited them. All people in his country were fully enjoying their rights, and the Government was making good economic progress, in line with its policy to strengthen the national economy and build nuclear forces simultaneously.

60. The Government rejected any politically-motivated discussion based on the false testimony of defectors, but was willing to cooperate with the international community and engage in dialogue for the genuine protection and promotion of human rights, as was evidenced by the visit in May 2017 of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities and the consideration given to the reports of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would continue

to strengthen its human rights protection system, improve the livelihood of its people and promote genuine cooperation and dialogue in the field of human rights.

61. **Ms. Intarasuwan** (Thailand) said that her country had long placed people-centred development at the heart of its national economic and social development plans. The Constitution, promulgated in 2017, reaffirmed the principles of non-discrimination, equal rights and protection under the law, and freedom of religious belief. Laws and policies were constantly revised to further strengthen human rights in the country. A law had been passed to strengthen the National Human Rights Commission and align it with the Paris Principles, and the draft fourth national human rights plan 2019–2023 expanded the target groups to include human rights defenders and members of the media. In 2017, strategies had been implemented to focus on women's development, child protection and the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

62. Thailand attached importance to access to justice and its timely delivery. It continued to advocate for the implementation of the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders and had recently initiated a pilot project to implement the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The business sector could also play an important role in sustainable development and human rights. The Government had adopted a declaration to promote the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in May 2017 and was currently conducting a baseline study in preparation of drafting a national action plan.

63. Thailand had presented its sixth and seventh reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2017. It had continued to implement the accepted recommendations and voluntary pledges of the universal periodic review and planned to conduct a midterm review in 2018. Training and capacity-building activities had been arranged for government officials from a number of agencies in order to translate international human rights obligations into concrete actions. Thailand supported global partnerships and multi-stakeholder cooperation and would be organizing the regional consultation meeting for the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in November 2017.

64. **Mr. Jelinski** (Canada) said that no country's human rights record was flawless. Canada was undergoing the critical process of reconciliation, righting historical wrongs by closing the unacceptable

socioeconomic gap between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. Laws, policies and practices were being updated to recognize the rights to self-determination and self-government. Diversity and inclusion were powerful tools for building peace and prosperity. Human rights crises around the world were fuelled by discrimination, exclusion, bigotry, intolerance, homophobia, transphobia, sexism and racism. In Venezuela, the opposition was unlawfully detained. In Myanmar, human rights abuses and violations against the Rohingya and other ethnic minorities continued to escalate. In Chechnya, people had suffered brutal violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In Iran, women and minorities were prevented from fully enjoying their human rights. In order to achieve respect for diversity and inclusion, all forms of discrimination must be rejected. Laws, policies and programmes must focus on eliminating discrimination, in theory and in practice, both online and offline. The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls was the most effective approach to building a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world. A vibrant civil society was also important. States should welcome civil society's contributions in multilateral forums, including at the United Nations, as they were fundamental to finding solutions.

65. **Mr. Benarbia** (Algeria) said that his delegation supported the special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council and the representatives of human rights treaty bodies, with the exception of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Respect for the human rights of all persons, without discrimination of any kind, was a cornerstone of Algerian society. As a founding member of the Human Rights Council, Algeria fulfilled all of its human rights obligations, regularly submitted reports to the human rights treaty bodies and cooperated fully with special procedures mandate holders. The Government had extended an invitation to seven mandate holders in 2010. In May 2016, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health had visited the country and noted the achievements in the right to health.

66. The human rights pillar of the United Nations should be strengthened to address the persistent gaps in implementation. Algeria once again called for an increase in the portion of the United Nations regular budget allocated to human rights. OHCHR must have the resources to respond adequately to the complex challenges in the field. Algeria strongly urged the Office

to prioritize achieving an equitable geographical balance among its staff.

67. Development should remain at the heart of the globalization process, and the right to development should reflect the principles of justice, equality and international solidarity. The international community therefore had a duty to support the development of the most disadvantaged people. While the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the right to development represented an important step forward, the right to development should be mainstreamed in all United Nations policies and operations, as well as relevant institutions at the national, regional and international levels.

68. **Ms. Rodríguez Abascal** (Cuba) said that the principles of mutual respect, truth, justice, universality, impartiality and non-selectivity were paramount to the promotion and protection of human rights. Higher priority should be given to extreme poverty, illiteracy and the lack of access to health care, education and food, which were characteristic of the unjust international economic order.

69. The statement delivered by the representative of the United States of America was an example of that country's arrogant and confrontational attitude, which in no way contributed to the protection and promotion of human rights. The Cuban Government denied any false statement made against Cuba. The United States lacked the moral authority to be giving lessons in human rights, given its pattern of systemic human rights violations, including torture, arbitrary detention, the murder of African-Americans by the police, the death of innocent civilians at the hands of troops, xenophobia, the crackdown on immigrants and its lack of adherence to international human rights instruments.

70. Cuba had always opposed selective initiatives against developing countries, especially those that were politically motivated or based on the hegemonic interests of certain powers, and felt that the universal periodic review was the appropriate instrument to address the human rights situation in all countries, without distinction or politicization. Cuba also opposed unilateral lists of countries alleged to have committed human rights violations. Such practices were contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations and only sought to justify acts of aggression and unilateral coercive measures against developing countries. Cuba strongly condemned aggressions of any kind, including the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States Government against Cuba for more than 50 years. Cuba reaffirmed its commitment to continue to promote international

cooperation on the issue of human rights and reiterated that respect for human rights, self-determination, and different cultures, religions, beliefs and political, economic and social systems should form the cornerstone of the international community's efforts.

71. **Mr. Ibragimov** (Uzbekistan) said that the Government had been undertaking reforms to promote democracy and human rights. In 2017, it had adopted a five-year development strategy and engaged in dialogue with citizens to determine how government bodies could best serve them.

72. Uzbekistan prioritized the protection of the rights of youth. A national law on youth policy had been enacted, which defined the legal framework and guidelines for implementing youth policies and strengthened the role of the public, especially NGOs, local authorities and the media. Research showed that a majority of crimes connected to extremism were committed by people under the age of 30 years. It was therefore important to provide opportunities for self-realization and encourage multilateral cooperation with a view to providing social support and protecting their rights and interests. In that regard, the President of Uzbekistan had proposed the development of a United Nations convention on the rights of youth, and his delegation hoped that Member States would support the initiative and work together to draft the convention.

73. **Mr. Douiti** (Togo) said that the Government had taken measures to improve the national institutional and legal framework for human rights. In addition to the provisions in the Constitution, the Government had promulgated several laws, including codes governing the family, military justice and communication, as well as statutes on magistrates, police personnel and refugees. The new criminal code no longer contained a statute of limitations on crimes of torture, in keeping with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In addition, a national health care institute had been created for public workers. With regard to the right to work, more than 100,000 young people had received support for training, employment, financing or creating a business, which had significantly decreased the youth unemployment rate. Under a programme to modernize the justice system, a law on legal aid had been adopted and a legal guide had been developed to facilitate access to justice for all citizens.

74. Togo adhered to a number of international instruments for the protection and promotion of human rights, including the Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Convention on Enforced Disappearance. As a member of the Human Rights

Council, Togo remained strongly committed to improving human rights and called for dynamic partnership at the regional and international levels in order to guarantee human rights around the world.

75. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that his country was a party to all major human rights instruments and a member of various United Nations human rights bodies. The international community must address intolerance, stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and hate speech, especially based on ethnicity, religion or belief. The Rohingya in Myanmar had suffered human rights violations for generations and were currently homeless, stateless, struggling to preserve their identity and fleeing into Bangladesh in the hundreds of thousands. Bangladesh deeply valued the work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and felt that her recommendations and those of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State could serve as a road map for a peaceful, just and viable solution to the ongoing crisis. Relevant United Nations institutions should follow up on the issue, and the Human Rights Council should urgently convene a special session to assess the situation and make suggestions to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights for the Rohingya. The fact-finding mission to Myanmar had recently concluded its visit to Bangladesh and was deeply disturbed by the accounts of killings, torture, rape, arson and aerial attacks against the Rohingya community in Myanmar. The mission should be granted immediate access, and the international community must take that opportunity to stop failing the Rohingya people.

76. The international community must also act on other human rights situations, including that of the occupied State of Palestine. Bangladesh urged all Member States to resolve differences and work together in a spirit of collaboration, compassion and solidarity in order to develop alternative approaches to address human rights situations in various parts of the world, as the Sustainable Development Goals could only be achieved through respect for human rights and humanitarian law.

77. **Ms. Grigoryan** (Armenia) said that the amendments to the Constitution, approved by a referendum in 2015, had been critical to the legal and judicial reforms under which Armenia had moved to a full parliamentary system of government. The new Constitution also provided stronger and more comprehensive human rights protection and strengthened the prohibition of discrimination on any grounds. A new electoral code had been adopted to improve voter identification, enhance the regulatory powers of the Central Electoral Commission, strengthen

the participation of women as candidates, systematize campaign rules and provide up to four reserved seats for national and ethnic minorities. At the request of the Government, the United Nations had assisted the Commission in installing special equipment with biometric identification. As a result of the National Assembly elections, held in April 2017, four political parties had secured seats in the Parliament, including representatives of Yazidi, Russian, Assyrian and Kurdish minorities.

78. In May 2017, the Government had approved a national action plan for human rights protection, which had been developed with the active participation of human rights defenders and civil society organizations. Armenia had been continuously improving its code of criminal procedure and criminal code. National legislation criminalizing torture had been brought in line with international standards and obligations, and the definition of torture had been changed to conform to article 1 of the Convention against Torture. A draft law on the prevention of domestic violence and the protection of victims had been developed by a working group and was currently undergoing broad consultations. The draft law aligned with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

79. **Ms. Ben Ategh** (Libya) said that, despite numerous regional and international instruments, the international community faced significant challenges, especially in areas of armed conflict. In order to address them, the promotion of human rights was important, especially with regard to eradicating poverty and hunger, providing equal access to health and education and addressing the gender pay gap. Libya welcomed the recent visit of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and hoped that it had provided a complete picture of the human rights challenges Libya faced as it attempted to build a democratic civil State based on the rule of law and human rights principles. Political insecurity had caused breaches of human rights, such as the abduction, killing, arbitrary detention and torture of defenceless civilians at the hands of rogue armed gangs.

80. A number of laws had been adopted to strengthen human rights, focusing on cultural heritage, victims of sexual violence, criminalization of torture, forced disappearance and discrimination. A national council for public freedoms and human rights had also been established. The Presidential Council was committed to fulfilling its obligations to achieve socioeconomic development for all members of society and had integrated human rights issues in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Given that development programmes

required sufficient funding, her delegation called upon States to assist the Government in tracking and recovering Libyan assets and funds from illicit sources.

81. As a transit country, Libya faced significant flows of illegal migration, which increased burdens on health, humanitarian aid and security. The Libyan Coast Guard had saved more than 1,600 people since mid-2017, and the Government was doing its best to guarantee the rights of migrant workers and combat smuggling in order to reduce the dangers they faced at the hands of criminal gangs. It was essential to focus on the root of the problem rather than its symptoms.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

82. **Mr. Ri Song Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his delegation categorically rejected the politicized, groundless accusations made by the United States, the European Union and Japan, which were the worst violators of human rights in the world. The United States had divided the Korean peninsula and imposed myriad sanctions and pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in order to suppress its rights to sovereignty, survival and development. In the United States, appalling human rights violations of all kinds were being committed, including torture, murder, racial discrimination and human trafficking. That country had slaughtered innocent people, including women and children, in many parts of the world under the pretext of the war on terror. In the European Union, serious human rights violations had been committed, including Islamophobia, discrimination against Muslims, ill-treatment of foreigners and minorities, racial discrimination, sexual assault and human trafficking. The United States and the European Union should admit and address their deplorable human rights violations rather than argue about the situations in other countries.

83. His delegation totally rejected the unreasonable and provocative remarks made by the representative of Japan with a view to defaming the character of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. His country continued to fulfil its commitments under the 2002 Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration. Japan should officially apologize and make reparations for the heinous crimes against humanity that it had committed in the past against the Korean people and others, which included forcing 200,000 Korean women into sexual slavery for the Japanese army.

84. **Mr. Chu Guang** (China) said that his delegation strongly objected to the unfounded and politically motivated accusations concerning the human rights situation in China made by the representatives of the

United States and the European Union. The United States had long politicized human rights issues and criticized the human rights situations of other countries, but remained silent on its own human rights problems and those of its allies. Those problems included widespread gun violence, the second-highest rate of incarceration in the world, abuse of power by law enforcement, the killing of African-Americans by police, income inequality, discrimination against ethnic minorities and migrants, child marriage and a lack of protection for children's rights. Some of the countries in the European Union suffered from serious human rights problems as well, such as forced repatriation and discrimination based on race, religion or migration status. China hoped that those countries would address their own human rights problems instead of criticizing others.

85. The human rights achievements of China were apparent. Its citizens enjoyed unprecedented levels of rights and freedoms, and living standards had been improved in ethnic minority areas. People of all ethnic groups and regions enjoyed freedom of religion and expression under the law. China promoted the rule of law and continued to improve judicial safeguards for human rights. Anyone who violated the law must be held accountable, including lawyers. The national judicial authority had the right to handle criminal cases in conformity with its laws, as dictated by the country's judicial sovereignty. An administration law had been established to regulate the activities of foreign NGOs in order to protect their legitimate rights and interests and enable them to better contribute to the economic and social development of China. As long as those foreign NGOs abided by national laws and regulations, China would provide an enabling environment for them to carry out their activities.

86. **Mr. Zulqarnain** (Pakistan), responding to the European Union, said that human rights were the bedrock of democracy. The Government was determined to ensure equality, freedom and dignity for every Pakistani citizen and to fully protect their fundamental human rights, without discrimination. In recognition of its efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms across the world, Pakistan had recently been elected to the Human Rights Council. Nevertheless, as in many places, there was room for improvement. The Government had established a holistic policy framework that included measures related to women's empowerment, minorities and other vulnerable groups. Pakistan looked forward to engaging constructively with the international community to promote human rights.

87. **Mr. Poveda Brito** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the United States delegation had once again displayed its ignorance of the reality of human rights and democracy in Venezuela. The United States Government, which was internationally recognized as a flagrant human rights violator, presumed to lecture others in the Third Committee, especially on human rights. It had committed illegal invasions and economic blockades, promoted racist and discriminatory policies in its own country, and was responsible for the deaths of millions of people in the many wars that it had caused throughout the world. The United States had no moral authority to defend human rights and democracy. Venezuela categorically rejected selectivity in the treatment of human rights issues and the use of human rights for political ends, which violated the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

88. Venezuela was facing ongoing aggression from a major Power, which had imposed unilateral coercive measures that threatened the human rights of all Venezuelans, had led a multidimensional attack on the country's economy and political stability, and had even threatened military intervention. That systematic campaign of political and ideological intolerance had lasted years, but had been unsuccessful in all of its forms. Despite the immense challenges stemming from external aggression, Venezuela would uphold its political and ethical commitments and continue to invest in the social development of its people. In terms of political rights, the popular and participatory democracy was the cornerstone of people's power. The Constituent Assembly had laid the foundation for national peace despite interests that sought to end the progress made in all areas.

89. **Mr. Moussa** (Egypt) said that his delegation was once again required to reply to the petty and baseless allegations made by the European Union. It was startling that the European Union persisted in making false claims, which had been rebuffed on multiple occasions. Those comments reflected, at best, a complete ignorance of the political landscape in Egypt and, at worst, a malfeasant attempt to interfere in its internal affairs for political gain or to appease domestic constituencies at the expense of objectivity. The real motive behind those allegations was to selectively target Egypt under the pretext of human rights. In fact, the Egyptian Government had recently established an independent committee to review the status of young people in detention, which had led to pardons for 800 individuals. Furthermore, the Government had agreed to study proposals submitted by young people with a view to amending the draft law on demonstration.

90. It was hypocritical of States to take the moral high ground and criticize others when they themselves had a record of racial discrimination, xenophobia and a lack of respect for minorities and migrants and violated human rights with total impunity. In Germany, right wing extremism, xenophobia and Islamophobia were rampant. Hate crimes against Muslims were also on the rise in the United Kingdom. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had expressed concern about the divisive, anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric employed during the Brexit campaign and the hate crimes that had followed and called on public officials to formally reject hate speech. Egypt urged all States not to politicize the human rights agenda in order to avoid divisions and to work towards a more favourable and enabling environment.

91. **Mr. Furumoto** (Japan) said that the allegations and figures cited by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were groundless and based on erroneous information. In the May 2014 Stockholm Agreement, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had undertaken to carry out comprehensive investigations concerning all Japanese persons, including abductees. Japan urged that Government to return all abductees as quickly as possible, pursuant to the agreement. Since the end of the Second World War, Japan had been addressing its past with respect for democracy and human rights and had consistently contributed to peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world.

92. **Mr. Ri Song Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his delegation wished to recall the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression ([A/HRC/35/22/Add.1](#)), which called on the Japanese Government to refrain from interfering in the interpretation of historical events, including the issue of "comfort women". It was universally accepted that Japan had forced hundreds of thousands of women from Korea and other countries to serve as sex slaves for the army. Nevertheless, Japan was still insisting on making unreasonable corrections to the Special Rapporteur's fair report. A recent report of the Committee Against Torture (CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5) called on Japan and the Republic of Korea to reconsider their agreement on the issue of sexual slavery. Clearly, Japan was a backward country with regard to human rights. The United Nations should therefore continue to address those human rights violations and hold Japan accountable until it honestly admitted to and apologized for its past crimes against humanity and provided compensation.

93. **Mr. Furumoto** (Japan) said that his country took pride in making positive contributions to international

peace and security as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, serving for the eleventh time. The nuclear tests and missile launches conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in recent years posed a serious and imminent threat to international peace and security. His delegation urged that country to take concrete steps to resolve its human rights and humanitarian problems, including the abductions.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.