



# General Assembly

Seventy-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General  
16 January 2019

Original: English

---

## Third Committee

### Summary record of the 49th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 15 November 2018, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Saikal ..... (Afghanistan)

## Contents

Agenda item 74: Promotion and protection of human rights (*continued*)

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

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Management Section ([dms@un.org](mailto:dms@un.org)), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).

18-19483 (E)



Please recycle



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

**Agenda item 74: Promotion and protection of human rights** (*continued*)

**(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives** (*continued*)  
([A/C.3/73/L.40\\*](#), [A/C.3/73/L.42](#), [A/C.3/73/L.48](#),  
[A/C.3/73/L.50](#) and [A/C.3/73/L.64](#))

*Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.40](#) \*: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea* (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Thein** (Myanmar) said that his delegation had consistently opposed the tabling of country-specific resolutions in the Third Committee. It upheld the principles of non-politicization, non-selectivity and impartiality in addressing all human rights issues and believed that the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council was the most effective process for addressing the human rights situations of all Member States on an equal footing. There was no one-size-fits-all solution to human rights problems, and accordingly, the political independence, sovereignty, and historical and cultural characteristics of the country concerned must be taken into account. Instead of country-specific resolutions, genuine, non-politicized dialogue and cooperation were needed for the promotion of human rights.

2. **Mr. Xing** Jisheng (China) said that his Government had consistently advocated for disagreements to be resolved through constructive dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect. China opposed the politicization of human rights issues, the pressuring of countries on human rights issues and country-specific human rights resolutions. His delegation hoped that the actions of the international community would facilitate peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. For those reasons, the delegation of China would not join the consensus on the draft resolution.

3. **Ms. Cordova Soria** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that her delegation would vote against all country-specific draft resolutions tabled in the Third Committee, as it opposed the use of the Committee to promote the political interests of certain powerful States at the expense of others or to intervene in the domestic affairs of States. The Committee must not be used to impose the political agendas of some States and undermine the self-determination of peoples and relationships based on equality. All human rights violations must be investigated and the perpetrators held to account by the relevant courts. Impunity was unacceptable and ran counter to the work of

reconciliation. Bolivia underscored the fundamental role of the Human Rights Council when it came to promoting human rights throughout the world.

4. **Mr. Poveda Brito** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his delegation reiterated its principled position of rejecting politicized and selective approaches to human rights issues. The adoption of country-specific resolutions violated the principle of universality and non-selectivity with which human rights issues should be approached. Cooperation and dialogue were the appropriate means for promoting and protecting human rights.

5. Venezuela called for efforts to build on the progress made since the creation of the Human Rights Council, for cooperation on human rights matters to be based on the universal periodic review mechanism, and for the elimination of the selective adoption of country-specific resolutions. Venezuela disassociated itself from the draft resolution for those reasons.

6. **The Chair** drew attention to the draft amendment to [A/C.3/73/L.40\\*](#) contained in document [A/C.3/73/L.64](#) and noted that it contained no programme budget implications.

7. **Mr. Ahmed** (Sudan) said that his delegation categorically rejected the reference made in paragraph 12 of the draft resolution to the International Criminal Court. As drafted, paragraph 12 constituted a blatant attempt to extend the Court's mandate. By deleting that paragraph, the proposed amendment would facilitate consensus on the draft resolution. Sudan would continue to oppose all attempts to universalize the mandate of the International Criminal Court, which was merely a political tool used by certain parties to further their narrow political interests.

8. His delegation remained deeply concerned, in fact, about the ongoing misuse of General Assembly resolutions to promote the International Criminal Court, which, because of procedural delays and its adoption of inefficient practices, had utterly failed to promote international criminal justice. Nonetheless, certain developed countries had made calls to adhere to the Court as a central pillar of their foreign policies, and refused to provide humanitarian assistance to poor, developing nations unless they acceded to the Rome Statute. Moreover, by targeting only citizens of African countries, including African leaders, in a politicized and selective manner, the Court had lost all credibility as an impartial and objective tribunal. Instead, the Court posed a threat to social peace and the national unity of developing countries and undermined their efforts to promote reconciliation and justice. His delegation

strongly urged all Member States to vote in favour of the proposed amendment.

9. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Syrian Arab Republic had joined the sponsors of the proposed amendment.

10. **Mr. Kickert** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union in explanation of vote before the voting, said that the European Union deeply regretted that the Sudan had tabled an amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, which had been in the text for years. It reiterated its unwavering support for the International Criminal Court as an important tool of the international community for fighting impunity and contributing to peaceful societies. Gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law were a sharp reminder of the increasing relevance of the Court, whose role was to complement national judicial systems. The primary responsibility to investigate and prosecute crimes remained with individual States. A key element of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was its equal application. The Court gave victims new hope that justice would be served. For those reasons, the Member States of the European Union would vote against the proposed amendment.

11. **Mr. Sparber** (Liechtenstein), speaking on behalf of Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland in explanation of vote before the voting, said that those countries condemned the long-standing and ongoing systematic human rights violations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as documented by the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and reflected in the draft resolution. Paragraph 12, which had been consensus language for years, addressed the issue of accountability for acts that the commission of inquiry had found to be crimes against humanity. The Security Council should continue its consideration of the conclusions and recommendations of the commission of inquiry and take appropriate action to ensure accountability, including through possible referral of the situation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the International Criminal Court. The Court played a key role in ending impunity where national courts were unwilling or unable to exercise jurisdiction. The delegations of Australia, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland urged all States to vote against the proposed amendment.

12. *A recorded vote was taken on the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/73/L.64](#).*

*In favour:*

Bahrain, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Qatar, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Viet Nam, Zambia.

13. *The amendment contained in document [A/C.3/73/L.64](#) was rejected by 91 votes to 22, with 44 abstentions.*

14. **Mr. Bessho** (Japan) said that, as a sponsor of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.40](#)\*, his delegation had voted against the proposed amendment. For 14 years, the draft resolution had been tabled in the Third Committee and

had received broad support from the international community. Japan called on all Member States to support the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, as it had in the previous two years.

15. **Mr. Omer Mohamed** (Sudan) said that the unjustified imposition of the International Criminal Court jurisdiction sowed discord. It imported language that had not been agreed and attempted to foist on Member States the controversial authority of the Court. The Sudan had consistently opposed the jurisdiction of the Court and was grateful to see that position gaining momentum.

16. The Sudan, noting the growing recognition that the issue of the International Criminal Court threatened to divide Member States, would continue to raise awareness of the endemic pitfalls of the Court and its dangerous impact on the developing world. Institutions that had failed to fulfil their purposes should be discarded. The Sudan would therefore dissociate itself from the adoption of the draft resolution.

17. *Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.40](#)\* was adopted.*

18. **Mr. Cepero Aguilar** (Cuba) said that his delegation dissociated itself from consensus on the draft resolution in accordance with its opposition to the imposition of selective, politically motivated resolutions and mandates. Genuine international cooperation, based on the principles of objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity, was the only way to effectively promote and protect human rights. The universal periodic review mechanism should be given an opportunity to foster debate without politicization or confrontation and encourage respectful cooperation with the country concerned. The draft resolution continued to pursue sanctions and the dangerous, counterproductive involvement of the Security Council on matters beyond its mandate. Cuba could not be complicit in attempts to deny the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea their right to peace, self-determination and development. Its opposition to the selective and politicized mandate did not imply any value judgement concerning the pending issues referred to in the twentieth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, which called for a just and honourable solution with the agreement of all interested parties.

19. **Mr. Nguyen Son Duc** (Viet Nam) said that his country welcomed the recent positive developments in the Korean Peninsula and strongly supported efforts to foster peace and stability in the region, as such progress would create favourable conditions for the protection and promotion of human rights. Viet Nam reiterated its objection to country-specific resolutions on human

rights and believed that genuine dialogue and cooperation, including through the universal periodic review, was more a more effective means of addressing human rights situations in all countries. Viet Nam was concerned about abductions and extended its sympathy to the victims and their families. All parties must work together constructively in order to resolve that issue.

20. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was among the world's most egregious violators of human rights. The account by the commission of inquiry of the human rights abuses was harrowing, detailing systematic, widespread and gross violations including murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions, forcible transfer of populations, enforced disappearances and knowingly causing prolonged starvation. By adopting the draft resolution, the international community would again send a clear message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that human rights violations and abuses must stop.

*Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.42](#): Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*

21. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

22. **Mr. Arbeiter** (Canada), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, noted that, while some positive developments in the human rights record of the Islamic Republic of Iran had been acknowledged in the draft resolution, the country's already poor human rights situation had further deteriorated in many areas over the past year, and the draft resolution was therefore necessary. Canada had circulated the text to all Member States and engaged in open discussions with all interested delegations.

23. Throughout the process of drafting the text, the delegation of Canada had strived to be factual, open and balanced in its approach. In that vein, it wished to orally revise paragraph 17 of the draft resolution by replacing the word "Ahwaz" with "Ahwazi Arabs". "Ahwaz" was the name of a place, whereas "Ahwazi Arabs" referred to a particular group living in that place. In recent weeks, there had been credible reports documenting arbitrary arrests, detentions and extrajudicial executions of members of that community.

24. All countries, including Canada, faced challenges in meeting their international human rights obligations. However, the scale and seriousness of the human rights violations taking place in Iran compelled the international community to speak out. Moreover, Canada, as a country that had faced legitimate scrutiny from the international community regarding aspects of

its human rights record, understood the importance of international attention in encouraging meaningful action. Canada hoped that the resolution would encourage the Government of Iran to take effective measures to improve its human rights situation.

25. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Andorra, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Romania and San Marino had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

26. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the same destructive forces behind the draft resolution had done everything in their power to derail the struggle of Iranians for human rights and democracy. In 1953, those forces had orchestrated a military coup against a democratically elected Government and then had unconditionally supported a despotic ruler for two and a half decades. They supported a war of aggression against Iranians during the 1980s and had shot down an Iranian civilian aircraft, murdering all 290 of its passengers. They had waged an economic war against Iranians in defiance of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). Those same hypocrites victimized civilians at a scale tantamount to genocide, imposing unilateral sanctions that had killed more civilians than had ever been killed by weapons of mass destruction. Weaponizing food and medicine against civilians was a crime against humanity.

27. The case of a terrorist attack in the city of Ahvaz on 22 September 2018 was particularly instructive. Dozens of innocent people, including children, were killed in an attack directed by a separatist group residing outside Iran. The sponsors of the draft resolution reacted by adding the name of the city, Ahvaz, and, later, the name of the terrorist group itself to the resolution as a minority. The victims of that crime were evidently not worthy of the attention of the sponsors of the draft resolution, while the perpetrators of the attack were referred to as “human rights activists” or “ethnic minorities”.

28. The hypocrisy was also evident when it came to elections, which were either deemed flawed or genuine based on foreign policy considerations. While client states did not enjoy democracy, elections in enemy States were seen as rigged. Similarly, the voices of the few who had vandalized the streets of Iran and had attacked police stations evidently deserved to be heard, while the muzzling of dissidents in client States raised no eyebrows. The United States had long interfered in democratic processes in Iran in order to reinstall tyranny.

29. Civil society voices were welcomed only if they spoke against disfavoured Governments. The United

States regularly blocked consultative status with the United Nations for Iranian non-governmental organizations, and it only protected speech that furthered its interests and the interests of its clients. In August 2018, hundreds of Iranian social media accounts that had dared to expose Israel had been deactivated after United States Government pressure while thousands of fake anti-Iran accounts freely distributed hate and false news.

30. Democracy in Canada had been hijacked by the proponents of racism and apartheid. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences had reported in 2018 that violence against women in Canada remained a serious, pervasive and systematic problem. She also stated that indigenous women were overtly disadvantaged within their societies and in the larger national scheme, facing marginalization, exclusion and poverty because of institutional, systemic, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that had not been addressed adequately by the State. It was absurd that Canada had the audacity to preach to Iran about human rights, when it had forcibly sterilized indigenous women and persons with disabilities, provided a safe place for assets embezzled from Iran and exported arms to conflict zones around the world. Furthermore, Canada was an unconditional supporter at the United Nations of egregious Israeli violations of human rights.

31. The Islamic Republic of Iran viewed its people as the only guarantor of its security and development, and the State’s legitimacy derived from popular elections. It had survived and prospered despite four decades of active hostility from the world’s most powerful States. The country’s commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights was genuine and deeply rooted in its culture and history, and the Government understood that the promotion of human rights was necessary for the preservation of national security.

32. Year after year, the political charade of the draft resolution exposed the dishonesty of its sponsors and revealed how selective, irrelevant and subjective United Nations decisions could become. Every year, the main sponsors of the resolution waged a vigorous campaign of pressure and intimidation, threatening cuts to financial or development funds. Voting against the draft resolution would be a step towards protecting and promoting human rights.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

33. **Mr. Ja’afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) reiterated his country’s steadfast rejection of all attempts by certain powerful States and their allies to politicize human

rights issues and misuse United Nations mechanisms to target specific countries. It was ironic that, at a time when the overwhelming majority of Member States had rejected the withdrawal of the United States of America from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and its reimposition of unilateral sanctions on Iran, a step that had exacerbated tensions among States in the Middle East and undermined their security and stability, certain countries were sponsoring a blatantly politicized draft resolution that specifically targeted Iran. The international community could not hope to achieve the shared objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations by adopting hostile positions and by levelling baseless accusations against specific States. Indeed, it was only through patient diplomacy and dialogue and by upholding the principles of respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States that countries could settle their differences amicably and uphold the values enshrined in international law and human rights instruments.

34. The draft resolution against the Islamic Republic of Iran undermined constructive dialogue, sowed the seeds of discord among States and would weaken the credibility of international mechanisms to promote and protect human rights. Furthermore, by attempting to hijack United Nations mechanisms with a view to targeting other Member States, the sponsors of the draft resolution were undermining the aspirations of the founders of the United Nations, who had striven to preserve international peace and security and ensure that the language of diplomacy and dialogue took precedence over the language of aggression and hypocrisy in international relations. Syria would therefore vote against the draft resolution and called on all peace-loving States to do likewise.

35. **Mr. Kuzmin** (Russian Federation) said that it was counterproductive to adopt politicized country-specific draft resolutions that had nothing to do with protecting human rights. Instead of trying to isolate States, the international community should involve them in equal and mutually respectful dialogue on the full range of human rights issues. Human rights situations had never been improved by adopting a patronizing attitude to another Member State, while casting aspersions on them for political reasons discredited United Nations bodies which, under the Charter of the United Nations, were supposed to respect the sovereign equality of Member States. The Russian delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

36. **Mr. Ri Song Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his delegation consistently opposed country-specific resolutions, which were a manifestation of politicization, selectivity and double

standards in the consideration of human rights issues. Rather than promote or protect human rights, they led to confrontation and interference in the internal affairs of States, which hindered constructive dialogue and cooperation. By contrast, the universal periodic review process ensured that the human rights situations of all countries were considered on an equal basis. All countries had the sovereign right to develop their own systems, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. For those reasons, his delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

37. **Mr. Poveda Brito** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that, as a matter of principle, his delegation rejected politicized and selective approaches to human rights issues. The persistent practice of adopting country-specific resolutions, which were not part of the Committee's remit, violated the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity.

38. Venezuela called for efforts to build on the progress made since the creation of the Human Rights Council, for cooperation on human rights matters to be based on the universal periodic review mechanism, and for the elimination of the selective adoption of country-specific resolutions. Venezuela would therefore vote against the draft resolution.

39. **Mr. Ali** (Pakistan) said that promoting human rights was a shared responsibility and could only be achieved by eschewing politicization and selectivity in favour of a constructive and inclusive approach. Iran was cooperating with the universal periodic review and all treaty bodies to which it was a party, as well as with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which demonstrated its commitment to engage constructively and positively with international mechanisms. Furthermore, the free, fair and impartial presidential elections held the previous year reflected the country's commitment to the democratic process. There was a need to promote greater coherence between the work of the Third Committee and the Human Rights Council and avoid duplication. In that regard, the universal periodic review was the main intergovernmental cooperative mechanism for reviewing human rights at the national level.

40. **Mr. de Souza Monteiro** (Brazil) said that his delegation took note of the action taken by the Iranian Government to promote and protect human rights, such as its efforts to enhance the protection of the rights of children and youth. However, his delegation remained concerned by the allegations of human rights violations and expected the Islamic Republic of Iran to take concrete and urgent steps to make progress in key areas, on the basis of international human rights standards and

instruments. His delegation would abstain from the voting.

41. **Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia) said that the draft resolution elucidated Iranian human rights violations, including those mentioned in the 6 August 2018 report of the Secretary-General and the 27 September 2018 report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Saudi Arabia was particularly concerned by the ongoing violations by the Iranian theocratic regime of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, including the Ahwazi Arabs. Furthermore, although States enjoyed the sovereign right to apply the death penalty for serious crimes, in accordance with their domestic legislative frameworks, Saudi Arabia was shocked by the recent execution by Iran of 21 young Ahwazi Arab men, all of whom had been condemned to death in secret trials that had failed to meet fair trial standards. Saudi Arabia also condemned the Iranian authorities' ongoing campaign to confiscate agricultural land belonging to Ahwazi Arabs and its diversion of rivers away from Ahwazi regions.

42. The killings, torture and persecution of minorities did not stop at the Iranian borders, however, and Iran was fomenting ethnic conflict in numerous countries, including Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. The Iranian regime was also providing financial and logistical support to the Taliban, Al-Qaida, Hizbullah and other terrorist groups.

43. The representative of Iran would no doubt attempt to deflect attention away from his country's appalling human rights record and would reject the constructive recommendations made in the draft resolution. Nonetheless it was impossible to conceal or ignore the actions of the Iranian regime. Saudi Arabia was therefore compelled to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

44. **Ms. Velichko** (Belarus) said that her country had always opposed country-specific mandates, which undermined objectivity, increased confrontation and created artificial barriers to equitable and constructive dialogue. The universal periodic review had proved to be the most suitable instrument for analysing a country's human rights situation in a balanced way and encouraging its Government to resolve existing problems. Her delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

45. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiola** (Mexico) said that the human rights challenges in Iran were serious but there was evidence of a growing willingness on the part of the country to find solutions and cooperate with human rights mechanisms. The Government's efforts, such as

the amendment to the drug-trafficking law that would reduce the use of the death penalty for drug-related offences, should not be ignored. Dialogue and cooperation with human rights mechanisms were fundamental to strengthening institutional capacity to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

46. His delegation was nevertheless concerned about the human rights situation in Iran, especially the use of the death penalty, the lack of protection for the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, the ongoing use of arbitrary detention, the situation of persons deprived of their liberty, and gender equality. It was vital to guarantee freedom of expression and association; individuals must not be imprisoned for participating in peaceful protests. States must find better forms of cooperation that truly improved the situation on the ground, in particular technical assistance and capacity-building, which could have a greater impact than the draft resolution under consideration. Mexico urged Iran to cooperate more closely with OHCHR. For all those reasons, his delegation would abstain from the voting.

47. **Mr. Cepero Aguilar** (Cuba) said that his delegation would vote against the draft resolution. Cuba maintained a principled position against country-specific resolutions, which encouraged a punitive and confrontational approach to the issue of human rights. The continued inclusion in the agenda of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran was politically motivated and did not stem from genuine concern or interest in cooperating with that country. Any mandate imposed on the basis of politicization and double standards was destined to fail. His delegation objected to the manipulation of human rights to advance a political agenda, to discredit Governments and to attempt to justify strategies aimed at destabilizing some of those Governments. He called on States to promote respectful and constructive dialogue with that country based on collaboration and the exchange of good practices, which was the only way to successfully address the human rights challenges facing the international community.

48. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.42](#) as orally revised.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala,

Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu, Yemen.

*Against:*

Afghanistan, Armenia, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zambia.

49. *Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.42](#), as orally revised, was adopted by 85 votes to 30, with 68 abstentions.*

50. **Ms. Suzuki** (Japan) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution. Japan and Iran had been engaged in bilateral talks on improving the human rights situation in Iran and stepping up cooperation with the international community, and

Japan looked forward to continuing that constructive dialogue. Her delegation welcomed the approval of a bill on the protection of children and adolescents by the Judicial and Legal Committee of the Iranian Parliament and the introduction of a bill on ensuring the protection of women from violence in the Parliament. Japan hoped that those bills would be enacted, and that further progress would be seen on human rights through implementation of the recommendations made during the universal periodic review and the ratification and implementation of human rights treaties.

51. **Mr. Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that Saudi should have had the decency to keep quiet rather than lecture Iranians on human rights. Saudi was killing any chance of democracy in the Middle East, and in fact, human rights and democracy were the biggest enemies of its corrupt leaders. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) was an offshoot of Saudi extremism. The group took children hostage in Syria, while its mentor Saudi killed them in Yemen. Only ISIL and Saudi could call a bus full of students a legitimate target. Only ISIL and Saudi beheaded peaceful opponents; found their strength in stirring sectarianism; regarded everyone who thought differently to them as infidels; and wiped out what was left of other traditions and cultures and called them heretical. They were rooted in the same worldview. Saudi-born Wahhabism had nurtured Al-Qaida, the Taliban, ISIL and all other major terrorist groups in the world. Saudi was nothing more than a repressive bully, a primitive tribal mafia, a corrupt oligarchy that was committing genocide in Yemen and repressing hopes for human rights and democracy in the entire region. The previous year, he had welcomed Saudi to civilization because the country had finally allowed women to sit behind the wheel. Now, that congratulatory remark seemed premature, as the women who had called for that basic right were sitting behind bars. The primitive mafia that ruled Saudi was alien to civilization.

52. **Mr. Ajayi** (Nigeria) said that violations should be addressed whenever they occurred. However, the universal periodic review had been established as the sole mechanism that should examine human rights situations. It was illogical to submit human rights issues to the plenary of the Third Committee for consideration, since it tilted the balance in favour of politicization, selectivity and interference in the work of the body legally responsible for adjudicating such issues.

53. To that end, Nigeria abstained from voting on country-specific resolutions and would continue to do so, in accordance with the principles of fairness, objectivity, sound judgement and logical reasoning. However, its abstention should not be taken to mean that



it would not speak out in cases of flagrant violations of citizens' fundamental rights. To avoid selectivity, the universal periodic review had been mandated to deal with all country-specific human rights issues, and the international community must remain committed to that intergovernmental process.

*Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.48](#): Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine*

54. **The Chair** drew attention to the statement of programme budget implications contained in document [A/C.3/73/L.66](#).

55. **Mr. Kyslytsya** (Ukraine), introducing the draft resolution, said that the situation in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol had continued to deteriorate. Regrettably, the Russian Federation had practically ignored all resolutions and decisions passed by the international organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations, including two previous resolutions adopted by the Third Committee.

56. The second report prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) ([A/HRC/39/CRP.4](#)) analysed violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law documented in Crimea between September 2017 and June 2018. The report confirmed the continuing failure of the Russian Federation authorities, as the occupying Power, to adequately guarantee and protect a wide range of human rights in Crimea.

57. Murder, torture, harassment, illegal detention and enforced disappearances of journalists and human rights defenders were among the most widespread human rights violations in occupied Crimea. People lived in fear of being accused of being extremists, terrorists or spies and being thrown in jail. The transfer by Russia of parts of its own civilian population to Crimea was also very worrying. The occupying authorities not only persecuted individuals, but also suppressed the activities of the Mejlis, the legitimate organ of the Crimean Tatars. The draft resolution also mentioned three Crimean detainees – Oleh Sentsov, Volodymyr Balukh, and Emir-Usein Kuku – who had initiated a hunger strike in 2018. Their determination had become symbolic of the struggle for human rights to be respected and their cause must be supported.

58. Despite Russian occupation and the imposition of Russian law, the residents of Crimea were Ukrainian citizens, and the Government of Ukraine was therefore committed to protecting their fundamental human rights and freedoms. The draft resolution was a diplomatic,

political and legal mechanism through which Ukraine carried out that obligation. The language of the text was based on existing United Nations documents. His country would spare no effort to end the Russian occupation through peaceful, legal and diplomatic means and in full compliance with international law.

59. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Croatia, Italy, Japan, the Federated States of Micronesia, Montenegro and Romania had joined the sponsors.

60. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that draft resolution was politically motivated and had been tabled by certain States simply to discredit the Russian Federation. The continued reliance on country-specific resolutions violated the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity, which had all been agreed upon when the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had been replaced by the United Nations Human Rights Council. However, some countries pretended not to understand the reason for that replacement and persisted in tabling country-specific resolutions on human rights in the General Assembly. Human Rights issues must only be addressed in Geneva during the universal periodic review and not in the Third Committee. Syria would therefore vote against the draft resolution if a vote was requested.

61. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that the United States did not recognize the purported annexation of Crimea by Russia. Over the past four years of Russian occupation, the human rights situation in Crimea had continued to deteriorate. The United States strongly supported continued United Nations efforts to scrutinize the situation in Crimea, including through the draft resolution. Even without access to Crimea, OHCHR had documented dozens of cases of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and torture, as well as complete impunity for those abuses.

62. **Mr. Olsen** (Denmark) said that his country strongly supported the draft resolution. More than four years earlier, Russia had set aside fundamental principles of international co-existence by illegally annexing Crimea, an action that had laid the groundwork for systematic and continuing human rights violations. Regrettably, there had been no signs of improvement. Denmark was particularly concerned by the restrictions placed on fundamental freedoms, the lack of due process and fair trial, sexual violence, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention and torture. His delegation appreciated the increased emphasis placed in the draft resolution on the medical needs and rights of Ukrainian citizens, including political prisoners, who had been unlawfully detained

and judged in contravention of international law. They should be released, and in case of transfer or deportation to Russia, be allowed to return to Ukraine. Denmark called for full, free and unhindered access for human rights monitors to Ukraine, including Crimea. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and urged other delegations to do likewise.

63. **Mr. Imnadze** (Georgia) said that his delegation was deeply concerned by the alarming human rights situation in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol. The population continued to suffer discrimination and grave violations of their basic human rights. His delegation condemned the occupation and the international community should spare no effort to bring it to an end. It was the obligation of the occupying Power to guarantee the human rights of the population under its effective control. With the findings of OHCHR in mind, Georgia called on the Russian Federation to provide full and unhindered access to all human rights mechanisms and meet all its obligations under international law. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on other delegations to do the same in order to uphold human rights and the Charter of the United Nations.

64. **Mr. Kuzmin** (Russian Federation) said that the draft resolution was the latest attempt by the West to exploit Ukraine, a country torn apart by internal conflicts, to spread false accusations against Russia. Concern for human rights in Crimea was the last thing on the minds of the authors of the draft resolution or the current authorities in Kiev. The sponsors of the draft resolution were stubbornly trying to depict the situation in Crimea as an armed conflict, employing such terms as “annexation” and “occupation” and referring to General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX) on the definition of aggression. The use of such terminology demonstrated that Ukraine was waging an unrelenting war against Russia for the fourth year running, as long as the Second World War had lasted. Russia had thus far not engaged in that war and was unlikely to do so, as no one in Russia was prepared to fight against their blood relatives, the Ukrainian people.

65. The people of Crimea must not be punished for freely choosing to accede to Russia. Crimeans had maintained, in strict accordance with international law, their right to live without the new Ukrainian idols Bandera, Shukhevych and other Nazi henchmen; their right not to be burned alive to the sound of applause on the main Ukrainian television channels, as they had been in Odessa on 2 May 2014; their right to receive education and to speak freely in their native languages: Russian, Ukrainian or Crimean Tatar. The Republic of

Crimea and the city of Sevastopol were Russian regions that were thriving and where the people led peaceful and productive lives. There was no need to interfere in them.

66. The Russian Federation guaranteed respect for and the protection of human rights and freedoms in all its territories, including Crimea, and ensured the unity and integrity of its territory. Delegations that supported the draft resolution were creating a fantasy, the essence of which was summed up in the name of the resolution: situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine. The Russian Federation would welcome cooperation and constructive dialogue with those who were not inclined to indulge in fantasies and who genuinely wished to objectively examine the human rights situation in the Russian peninsula. He hoped that delegations would be able to consider the document objectively, despite the pressure they were under from sponsors of the draft resolution, and vote against the draft resolution.

67. **Mr. Mikayilli** (Azerbaijan) said that his country condemned in the strongest terms extremism, radicalism and separatism in all their forms and manifestations and firmly opposed the acquisition of territories through the use of force. Azerbaijan reaffirmed its full support for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognized borders. All conflicts between Member States should be settled through a political dialogue in accordance with the principles of international law.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

68. **Mr. Ri Song Chol** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) said that country-specific resolutions were a manifestation of the politicization of human rights, selectivity and double standards in the consideration of human rights issues. They served only to encourage confrontation, rather than creating an atmosphere favourable to considering and solving human rights issues. The universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council was the appropriate mechanism for considering the human rights situations of all countries on an equal and impartial basis. His delegation rejected and would vote against the draft resolution.

69. **Mr. Poveda Brito** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that, as a matter of principle, his delegation rejected politicized and selective approaches to human rights issues, which violated the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Country-specific resolutions, which were not part of the Committee’s remit, contravened the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity. Cooperation and dialogue were the appropriate means for promoting and

protecting human rights and Venezuela supported the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the matter.

70. Venezuela called for efforts to build on the progress made since the creation of the Human Rights Council, for cooperation on human rights matters to be based on the universal periodic review mechanism, and for the elimination of the selective adoption of country-specific resolutions. On that basis, Venezuela would vote against the draft resolution.

71. **Ms. Velichko** (Belarus) said that her country maintained its principled position that it was unacceptable to politicize the human rights agenda. Belarus had always opposed country-specific mandates, which increased confrontation and created artificial barriers to equitable and constructive dialogue. There was no use in adopting country-specific resolutions, as they did not contribute to progress. Problems should be addressed through dialogue and cooperation only, without external pressure and threats. Her delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

72. **Mr. Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the recriminations and naming-and-shaming approach regularly seen in such country-specific resolutions destroyed the atmosphere of dialogue, understanding, mutual respect and cooperation. The persistent adoption of country-specific resolutions and the exploitation of the Committee for political ends contravened the principles of universality, non-selectivity and objectivity in addressing human rights issues. For those reasons, his delegation would vote against the draft resolution

73. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.48](#).*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu, Yemen.

*Against:*

Armenia, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia.

74. *Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.48](#) was adopted by 67 votes to 26, with 82 abstentions.*

75. **Mr. Sor** (Singapore) said that Singapore had voted in line with its consistent and principled position against country-specific resolutions, which were highly selective and driven by political rather than human rights considerations. Nevertheless, its vote should not be interpreted as taking a position on the substance of the human rights issues raised in the various draft resolutions, nor did it imply any derogation from or altered position on General Assembly resolution [68/262](#) on the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

76. **Ms. Eugenio** (Argentina) said that her delegation shared OHCHR concerns regarding the human rights situation in Crimea and Sevastopol, in particular the alleged violations committed against the Tatar minority, including violations of fundamental freedoms, and a lack of access for and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms. Argentina called for the human rights of all the inhabitants of Crimea to be upheld and protected, in accordance with international

human rights law and international humanitarian law; for the violations and abuses identified by OHCHR to be investigated; and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

77. **Ms. Wagner** (Switzerland) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, as Switzerland shared the concerns expressed by the sponsors with regard to the human rights situation in Crimea. Her delegation also supported the call made in the relevant OHCHR report for more robust international monitoring of the human rights situation in Crimea. Nevertheless, the Committee should give impartial and thorough consideration to the responsibilities of all parties involved in human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. Those responsible must fulfil their obligations under international law and implement the recommendations made by OHCHR in order to ensure that the human rights of all individuals in Crimea were respected.

78. In addition, Third Committee draft resolutions should focus foremost on social, humanitarian and human rights issues affecting people around the world, in accordance with its mandate; the draft resolution in question went beyond that purview. Switzerland would continue to support the proper consideration of country-specific situations by the Committee as well as by the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

79. **Ms. Kaszás** (Hungary) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, as it supported the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Ukraine, but it had been unable to join the sponsors since the draft resolution failed to adequately address Ukraine's commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of minorities in all its territories in accordance with its obligations under the relevant multilateral and bilateral agreements. Hungary remained concerned about the education law which significantly limited the rights of students in secondary and higher education who belonged to national minorities to receive education in their mother tongue. It was also concerned about a new law on State language policy which would restrict the use of minority languages to the private sphere, in violation of the Ukrainian Constitution and its international commitments. Ukraine must respect the fundamental rights of members of minority groups living under its jurisdiction.

80. **Ms. Ndayishimiye** (Burundi) said that her delegation had voted against the draft resolution, as it was against all country-specific resolutions. Burundi condemned politicization and double standards in the consideration of human rights issues and was concerned

by the exploitation of the Third Committee and the General Assembly for political aims.

81. **Mr. Kyslytsya** (Ukraine) said that, contrary to the statement made by the representative of the Russian Federation, the Second World War had not lasted for four years, but had begun in 1939, after the Soviet Union had signed a pact with Nazi Germany, and had lasted for more than seven years.

*Draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.50](#): Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic*

82. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) read out a statement, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, on the programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.50](#). In order to implement the requests contained in paragraph 32, the Secretary-General would seek voluntary contributions for the funding of 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 for the year 2019 and would include the funding necessary for the Mechanism in the regular budget for 2020. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, no additional requirements would arise under the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.

83. **Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia) introducing the draft resolution, said that the ongoing suffering of Syrians continued to touch the consciences and hearts of people around the world. It was imperative to adopt the draft resolution under consideration because all the circumstances condemned in previous resolutions on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic remained as before; there were still some 13 million Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons, and Syrian forces and their allies, including Iran and the terrorist group Hizbullah, continued to terrorise and subjugate Syrian civilians. The draft resolution condemned all human rights violations regardless of who had perpetrated them. It also reflected the findings of United Nations reports that had concluded that the Syrian authorities bore primary responsibility for human rights violations in that country. The draft resolution emphasized the importance of finding a political solution to the crisis, in accordance with the Geneva communiqué and Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) and the need to establish a constitutional committee that would draw up a new Constitution guaranteeing freedom and justice for all Syrian citizens. It also called on the Syrian regime to adhere fully to its international obligations, including the requirement that

it declare in full its chemical weapons programme and to desist immediately from its widespread and systematic gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including by the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare.

84. Saudi Arabia was sponsoring the draft resolution on behalf of Syria – a noble country that had been destroyed by a regime that took pride in its crimes against its citizens, and on behalf of all Syrian children who had been killed by chemical weapons, all elderly Syrians forced to leave their homes, all Syrian women raped by gangs affiliated with the Syrian regime and its allies, and all Syrians who had been tortured, kidnapped or forcibly disappeared.

85. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had joined the sponsors: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Yemen.

86. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his Government remained committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Syrians, in accordance with the Syrian Constitution, the Charter of the United Nations and international legal instruments. A founding member of the Human Rights Council, Syria rejected the double standards of certain States in the area of human rights and all attempts by those States to use human rights mechanisms and the reports of United Nations special rapporteurs and representatives to target specific countries and advance their narrow political interests. The Syrian delegation therefore categorically rejected the draft resolution, whose main sponsor, Saudi Arabia, harboured a visceral hatred towards Syria and its people. Indeed, it was deeply ironic that the Saudi delegation was tabling a draft resolution on human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic. Saudi Arabia, a country with an appalling human rights record, was, in fact, the very last country that should be allowed to lecture the United Nations on how to protect and promote human rights. Moreover, the abhorrent behaviour of Saudi Arabia, a country that refused to accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, that refused to

respect the most fundamental human rights of its own citizens, including their right to freedom of expression and opinion, that refused to respect the rights of women and that killed its critics in Saudi consulates abroad, also posed a serious threat to international peace and security; Saudi Arabia continued to inspire and support a wide range of terrorist organisations, including organizations operating in Syria, and made every effort to disseminate its extremist Wahhabist ideology of hatred and negation of the other, thereby destroying the reputation of Arabs and Muslims around the world. Meanwhile, in Yemen, the war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated by Saudi Arabia had killed thousands of innocent women and children and had utterly destroyed that country's infrastructure.

87. It was important to understand that the draft resolution had not been tabled in order to strengthen respect for human rights in Syria, but rather to undermine Syrian institutions and impede all efforts to reach a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political solution to the crisis. It also aimed to bolster the morale of terrorist organizations and their paymasters in the light of the successful efforts by the Syrian Government and its allies to combat terrorist groups and deprive them of the financial and logistical support they received from Saudi Arabia, Israel, Qatar and other co-sponsors of the draft resolution. The draft resolution embodied the blatant hypocrisy of a number of its co-sponsors, which claimed to care about human rights, democracy, the rule of law and the need to combat terrorism, but remained silent about, and therefore complicit in, Saudi Arabia's sponsorship of terrorism around the world and its grave violations of human rights both within the country and abroad. Furthermore, many of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution, including, in particular, the member countries of the so-called international coalition, were themselves perpetrating serious human rights violations in Syria, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. Those countries were responsible for thousands of deaths, had destroyed Syria's infrastructure and continued to recruit, train and finance terrorists to fight in Syria against its legitimate Government. Meanwhile, the illegal unilateral coercive measures that had been imposed on Syria by a number of Member States had had a disastrous impact on Syrian civilians and prevented them from obtaining essential medicines, food and other basic necessities. Syria had paid a very high price indeed for daring to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity and its right to decide its own destiny.

88. As if that were not enough, the co-sponsors had incorporated matters that fell outside the mandate of the Third Committee into the text of the draft resolution. For

example, the Committee did not enjoy competency to adopt paragraphs 9 and 31, which referred to the mandates of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the so-called 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, while the adoption of paragraph 32 would pave the way for the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations from 2020, thereby increasing the financial burden on Member States. That was utterly unacceptable. In closing he called on Member States to vote against the draft resolution, or at least to abstain in the vote, and underscored that to vote in support of the draft resolution would further undermine sincere efforts to achieve a political solution to the crisis in Syria and to rebuild the country. Syria requested that a recorded vote be taken on the draft resolution.

89. **Mr. Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation, notwithstanding its objection to the draft resolution in its entirety, wished to draw attention to paragraph 31, in which a new mandate was granted to the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism. The resolution in which the Mechanism had been established had been considered by the General Assembly without reference to a main committee under the agenda item “Prevention of armed conflict”. It was not within the purview of the Third Committee to grant the Mechanism a new mandate or authority that had not been included in the founding resolution. Recalling rule 97 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and paragraph 29 of resolution [72/313](#) on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, in which the Assembly recalled the need to enhance synergies and coherence and reduce overlap in the agendas of the General Assembly, especially of its Second and Third Committees, his delegation noted that paragraph 31 of the draft resolution contained language that had no basis in any previous resolutions and created overlap between an agenda item related to the maintenance of international peace and security and one related to human rights. The Third Committee did not have the competence to make a decision under an agenda item that fell outside its purview. His delegation therefore requested, in accordance with rule 121 of the rules of procedure, a recorded vote on the competence of the Committee to take action on paragraph 31 of the draft resolution.

90. **Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia) said the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Iran had delivered statements merely to sow doubt and create

confusion among Member States. Paragraph 31 of the draft resolution compelled no United Nations body to perform duties that fell outside its mandate or overlapped with duties performed by any other body. A vote on that paragraph was therefore unnecessary. Furthermore, the budgetary implications of paragraph 32 had been explained very clearly by the Secretary of the Committee in his earlier statement.

91. **Mr. Sparber** (Liechtenstein) said that paragraph 31 of the draft resolution did not refer the agenda item “Prevention of armed conflict” to the Third Committee, nor did the Committee introduce a new agenda item.

92. **Mr. Ja’afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that while, as explained by the Secretary of the Committee, paragraph 32 entailed no immediate budgetary implications, that paragraph would entail annual budgetary implications of approximately \$20 million as of 2020, which would need to be paid by Member States; States should seriously consider whether they truly wished to make such a commitment. Dozens of highly politicized United Nations mechanisms had already been established by certain powerful States; those mechanisms had utterly failed to promote justice and merely wasted the financial resources of the Organization and Member States as well as the time and efforts of their staff.

93. **Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia) said that it was untrue that the adoption of paragraph 32 would entail budgetary implications of \$20 million. That claim had been made merely to confuse Member States and prevent the Committee from voting on the draft resolution.

94. **Mr. Ja’afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that in a letter addressed to Member States, the Secretary-General had stated that, as of 2019, \$19.6 million would be required to cover the costs associated with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism. Neither he nor the Secretary-General had invented that figure. Syria therefore supported the request made by the representative of Iran for a vote to be taken on paragraph 31 of the draft resolution, the adoption of which would require the Third Committee to exceed its mandate, and urged all Member States to uphold the Charter of the United Nations by voting against that paragraph.

95. **Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia) said that the aforementioned sum of \$20 million had been required to establish the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism. Paragraph 31 of the draft resolution merely requested the head of the Mechanism to prepare reports

for presentation to the General Assembly. The drafting of those reports would certainly not cost \$20 million.

96. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) explained, in response to the representative of the United States of America, that a vote in favour would mean that the Committee did have the competence to take action on paragraph 31, while a vote against would mean that the Committee did not have the competence to do so.

97. *A recorded vote was taken on the motion proposed by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for a decision on the competence of the Third Committee to take action on paragraph 31 of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.50](#).*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen.

*Against:*

Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

*Abstaining:*

Angola, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Chad, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique,

Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tuvalu, Uganda, Viet Nam.

98. *The motion was adopted by 88 votes to 13, with 48 abstentions.*

99. **Mr. Kuzmin** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was not convinced that the Committee had the competence to take action on paragraph 31 of the draft resolution.

100. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution as part of its effort to keep the Committee from being used to rubber-stamp country-specific resolutions for the sole purpose of exerting political pressure on an individual Member State. The draft resolution was a case in point. It had turned into a poisonous concoction of all the ideas and initiatives that the opponents of Damascus had failed to push through in other forums. The document was traditionally based on unsubstantiated accusations against the Syrian Government.

101. In the draft resolution, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, and the established working methods of the General Assembly were sacrificed at the expense of the political ambitions of certain States, as clearly demonstrated by the many references to the so-called mechanism for the investigation of crimes in Syria, the establishment and operation of which was clearly illegal in the eyes of all right-minded delegations. The authors of the draft resolution were not only putting pressure the Third Committee to consider issues that had absolutely nothing to do with human rights but also trying to interfere in the administration of that mechanism, thereby overstepping the terms of reference defined by the General Assembly in the allocation of agenda items. The issue of the non-proliferation of chemical weapons and the establishment of responsibility for their storage also had absolutely nothing to do with the mandate of the Third Committee.

102. Rather than help to stabilize the situation in Syria, the adoption of the draft resolution would undermine international efforts to settle the conflict there. States that genuinely wished the situation in Syria to improve should vote against the draft resolution.

103. *The Chair* said that, owing to the late hour and the lack of interpretation services, the formal consideration of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.50](#) would continue at the next meeting.

*The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.*