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## Third Committee

### Summary record of the 9th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 16 November 2020, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Bogyay ..... (Hungary)

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(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 28: Advancement of women (continued)** ([A/C.3/75/L.15](#), [A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1](#), [A/C.3/75/L.59](#), [A/C.3/75/L.60](#), [A/C.3/75/L.61](#), [A/C.3/75/L.62](#), [A/C.3/75/L.63](#), [A/C.3/75/L.64](#), [A/C.3/75/L.65](#), [A/C.3/75/L.69](#), [A/C.3/75/L.70](#), [A/C.3/75/L.71](#) and [A/C.3/75/L.74](#))

*Draft resolution [A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1](#): Intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls*

1. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. **Mr. Brans** (Netherlands), introducing the draft resolution also on behalf of France, said that the dramatic increase in violence against women and girls in the context of the measures adopted to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had made it impossible to propose a draft resolution that was simply a technical rollover of General Assembly resolution [73/148](#). The purpose of the draft resolution was to maintain the momentum created by the 146 States and observers that had supported the call of the Secretary-General, in April 2020, for an end to violence everywhere. The draft resolution set forth specific measures and actions to strengthen collective efforts to that end, in particular ensuring access to justice.

3. After 20 hours of negotiations and multiple readings, a compromise text had been reached. Where relevant and possible, efforts had been made to use agreed language from previous resolutions, including when addressing so-called sensitive issues. Given the nature of negotiations within the Committee, no delegation had achieved all its aims, and compromises had been made by all delegations. Nevertheless, transparent and inclusive processes were the right way to reach agreements. The Committee should not only reaffirm its commitment to the common priority of the draft resolution, but also defend its working methods and the compromises necessary for multilateralism, and therefore reject any hostile amendments.

4. **Mr. Mahmassani** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chad, Chile, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Mali, Palau, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Serbia, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

5. He then noted that the following delegations also wished to become sponsors: Botswana, Colombia, Gabon, Kiribati, New Zealand, Nigeria, Ukraine and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

6. **The Chair** drew attention to the proposed amendments contained in documents [A/C.3/75/L.59](#) to [A/C.3/75/L.65](#) and noted that they had no programme budget implications.

7. **Ms. Khusanova** (Russian Federation) said that the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.59](#) would broaden the scope of the sixteenth preambular paragraph by eliminating details about the subcategories of domestic violence and its debatable consequences. Her delegation had voiced its concerns about the paragraph when it had been included four years earlier and had been surprised when a passage that had never been discussed during the negotiations had appeared in the current text.

8. The purpose of the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.60](#) was to improve the final preambular paragraph, which contained wording that was inconsistent with the common efforts to eliminate child labour and with United Nations data on the increase in the number of cases of all forms of violence against women and children during the pandemic. For that very reason the Russian Federation had dissociated itself from the consensus on the same paragraph in General Assembly resolution [74/306](#), a paragraph that had been indiscriminately copied into the draft resolution.

9. Given that minors required assistance from their parents or legal guardians, including in obtaining access to justice, her delegation proposed, in the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.61](#), an important addition to paragraph 6 (b) based on article 5 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

10. The term “femicide”, which was not widely accepted, was used in some regions of the world to mean “killings of women and girls on the basis of their sex”. In that regard, her delegation proposed the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.62](#) on the basis of previously agreed language from the twenty-third preambular paragraph of General Assembly resolution [71/170](#).

11. The amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.63](#) consisted of deleting paragraph 11, given that the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), of the International Labour Organization had not been supported by many States owing to its controversial content. It was therefore remarkable that the passage had appeared in the text at a late stage of the

negotiations. Furthermore, her delegation had dissociated itself from the same paragraph in one of the previous resolutions.

12. In paragraph 13, the wording regarding violence against women and girls in the context of the pandemic was inaccurate and narrow in scope. The Secretary-General had called for all forms of violence to be addressed. Measures to combat violence against women and girls should enhance and be carried out in tandem with existing COVID-19 response plans. The aim of the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.64](#) was to address those issues. It was for those very reasons that the Russian Federation had been forced to dissociate itself from the consensus on the same paragraph in General Assembly resolution [74/306](#).

13. The amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.65](#) consisted of replacing text in paragraph 17 with the wording used in the Beijing Platform for Action and the relevant agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women.

14. The adoption of those amendments would enable her delegation to join the consensus on the draft resolution, as they would improve the text by making it balanced and providing recommendations that were more universally applicable.

15. **The Chair** drew attention to the proposed amendments contained in documents [A/C.3/75/L.69](#) to [A/C.3/75/L.71](#) and noted that they had no programme budget implications.

16. **Mr. Mack** (United States of America) said that, given the controversial nature of several concepts referred to in paragraph 15, the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.70](#) consisted of deleting that paragraph in its entirety. The amendments contained in documents [A/C.3/75/L.69](#) to [A/C.3/75/L.71](#) reflected language that had been submitted by his delegation to the Chair and reaffirmed the preference of the United States for the alternative language that his delegation had consistently proposed throughout the negotiations.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

17. **Ms. Craib** (United Kingdom) said that her delegation welcomed the draft resolution, in particular its recognition of the worrying surge in sexual and gender-based violence since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the heightened importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all women and girls during the crisis.

18. The proposal of multiple amendments was deeply disappointing and undermined the principles of multilateralism. Her delegation rejected the

amendments that sought to weaken or delete agreed language relating to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The proposed amendments to the sixteenth preambular paragraph and paragraph 6 (b) disregarded the prevalence of intimate partner violence and attempted to limit the access of women and girls to justice systems. The proposed amendments to the sixteenth and final preambular paragraphs and paragraphs 6 (i), 13 and 15 were part of a concerted effort to modify previously agreed language, including from previous resolutions on the topic and from General Assembly resolution [74/306](#), the recently adopted omnibus resolution on COVID-19. At a moment of increased challenges for women and girls, her delegation could not accept the removal from the final preambular paragraph of the reference to essential health services, which were vital and often life-saving.

19. The United Kingdom was committed to supporting comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond, and was concerned about the attempts to push back against those rights. For those reasons, her delegation would vote against the amendments.

20. **Ms. Makwabe** (South Africa), speaking also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay, said that it was regrettable that multiple amendments had been proposed to paragraphs that had been discussed at length in relation to a number of draft resolutions. Such an approach was contrary to the working methods of the Committee and the principles of multilateralism.

21. The proposal to remove any reference to "health services" was regrettable, given that it was long-standing agreed language, including from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, that struck a fine balance to accommodate the different views of delegations on the scope of health needs. The term "health services" went beyond the provision of medical care for immediate health needs to include medical tests,

counselling and the provision of health-related information and education.

22. Terminology such as “sexual and reproductive health” had been used since the mid-1990s to encompass a wide range of perspectives. In the 2030 Agenda, Member States had committed themselves to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services. The attempt to upset the consensus on those issues and undermine the normative framework underpinning the Committee’s work was deeply unfortunate and must not be accepted.

23. Equal access to comprehensive sexuality education was vital to ensuring that all people were able to grow and learn in safety and health and with the confidence to achieve in any field. Evidence-based programmes that included gender equality were more effective and enabled adolescent girls and boys and young women and men to make informed decisions freely and autonomously on their sexual and reproductive health.

24. All delegations should support the rights of women and girls and vote against any amendments relating to those issues.

25. **Ms. Hassan** (Egypt) said that “intimate partner violence” was an unclear and undefined concept that was not internationally agreed. Since many countries had dissociated themselves from that concept in General Assembly resolution 71/170, it had not been included in resolution 73/148. The inclusion of that concept in the draft resolution had been surprising, considering the multiple requests for its deletion made during the negotiations. Her delegation would vote in favour of the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.59](#) on the basis that unclear and undefined concepts should be avoided in a United Nations document. However, Egypt agreed with the second part of the sixteenth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, which was consistent with its Constitution and its national strategy for the elimination of violence against women.

26. Her delegation did not support the use in paragraph 6 (d) of the unclear and ambiguous term “femicide” in place of the agreed wording “gender-based killing”. Her delegation would therefore vote in favour of the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.62](#).

27. With regard to paragraph 15 of the draft resolution, Egypt had consistently dissociated itself from the same paragraph in previous resolutions and would vote in favour of the amendment contained in document [A/C.3/75/L.70](#). That paragraph had been copied from a document containing a clear clause on national

sovereignty; her delegation did not support its inclusion when taken out of context.

28. **Mr. Kamal** (France) said that, together with the delegation of the Netherlands, his delegation had facilitated more than 20 hours of negotiations in a transparent manner. Where possible and relevant, agreed language had been used to address so-called sensitive issues. A delicate balance had been struck in the draft resolution, with a view to making progress in combating violence against women and girls. It was regrettable that multiple hostile amendments – targeting recently agreed language and paragraphs that had been discussed at length – had been proposed. Such an approach was contrary to the working methods of the Committee and the principles of multilateralism. All delegations should support the common efforts to end violence against women and girls and vote against all the amendments.

29. **Ms. Eugenio** (Argentina) said that her delegation welcomed the transparent and constructive approach taken by the facilitators during the large number of informal consultations. The draft resolution took up the enormous challenge of addressing gender-based violence, which had been increasing, especially domestic violence and intimate partner violence. In the draft resolution, important references were made to the essential health services that States should provide to the survivors of such violence and to the need to remove barriers to access to justice. Her delegation welcomed the inclusive language that had been agreed by consensus.

30. The international community should ensure that United Nations resolutions reflected the realities in all countries. In that regard, a key priority of Argentina was the inclusion of diversity as a cross-cutting focus in all policies, programmes and measures for combating gender-based violence. Her delegation welcomed the references to important initiatives such as the Generation Equality Forum and the Spotlight Initiative, which contributed to combating gender-based violence across the world.

31. It was regrettable that last-minute amendments had been proposed that sought to undermine agreed language from key international instruments. It was also regrettable that amendments had been proposed to paragraphs that had been discussed at length during the informal consultations, setting a bad precedent for the working methods of the Committee. Her delegation would vote against all the amendments.

32. The right to lead lives free from violence, independently and without discrimination was key to building more equitable and fair societies in which the human rights of all were respected.

33. **Mr. Sautter** (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova, said that the decision to propose amendments to agreed language in such an important draft resolution was deeply regrettable. Multilateralism required all Member States to act in good faith. The delegations of the Russian Federation and the United States had had ample time to express their views during the almost 21 hours of negotiations, which had been conducted in an exemplary and transparent manner.

34. The draft resolution provided much-needed guidelines on addressing the surge in violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Member States should put aside their differences and join forces in solidarity with the victims and survivors of violence.

35. Most of the proposals of the Russian Federation were purely editorial in nature. The Russian Federation had been able to agree to the same language in several other resolutions, including the omnibus resolution on COVID-19, which the Russian Federation had voted in favour of less than two months previously. Moreover, the Russian Federation had not proposed those amendments in relation to other gender-related draft resolutions adopted during the current session.

36. The proposals by the United States to remove references to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, were very worrying. According to the World Health Organization, the reallocation of resources during the COVID-19 pandemic risked reversing decades of progress, exacerbating maternal mortality and morbidity and increasing rates of adolescent pregnancy, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. All the amendments proposed by the United States targeted language that had been approved in the other gender-related draft resolutions adopted during the current session.

37. The States members of the European Union would vote against all the amendments.

38. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.59 to amend the sixteenth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic People's Republic of

Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Oman, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Chad, China, Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates.

39. *The proposal was rejected by 108 votes to 22, with 33 abstentions.*

40. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.60 to amend the final preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Belarus, Cameroon, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, India, Indonesia, Iran

(Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Oman, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Angola, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, China, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

41. *The proposal was rejected by 105 votes to 19, with 36 abstentions.*

42. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.61 to amend paragraph 6 (b) of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea,

Eritrea, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palau, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, United Arab Emirates.

43. *The proposal was rejected by 104 votes to 33, with 24 abstentions.*

44. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.62 to amend paragraph 6 (d) of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Lao

People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Oman, Palau, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Singapore, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam, Yemen.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, China, Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates.

45. *The proposal was rejected by 105 votes to 24, with 31 abstentions.*

46. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.63 to amend paragraph 11 of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Armenia, Belarus, Cameroon, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nicaragua, Oman, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen.

47. *The proposal was rejected by 106 votes to 10, with 42 abstentions.*

48. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.64 to amend paragraph 13 of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Oman, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam.

*Against:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Qatar, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

49. *The proposal was rejected by 107 votes to 13, with 37 abstentions.*

50. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.65 to amend paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Oman, Qatar, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, China, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Libya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

51. *The proposal was rejected by 103 votes to 20, with 36 abstentions.*

52. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.69 to amend the final preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, Eritrea, Jamaica, Libya, Nicaragua, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan, United States of America.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and



Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Bahrain, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen.

53. *The proposal was rejected by 117 votes to 12, with 28 abstentions.*

54. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.70 to amend paragraph 15 of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Belarus, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Nauru, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan, Tonga, United States of America, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central

African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, China, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

55. *The proposal was rejected by 113 votes to 17, with 33 abstentions.*

56. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.71 to amend paragraph 6 (i) of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Jamaica, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nicaragua, Oman, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, United States of America, Yemen.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, China, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Kuwait, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palau, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

57. *The proposal was rejected by 102 votes to 20, with 38 abstentions.*

58. **Ms. Khusanova** (Russian Federation) said that, recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic had negatively affected all segments of society, including women and girls, who faced both socioeconomic hardships and an increase in violence, her delegation had participated actively in the lengthy negotiations on the draft resolution and had engaged bilaterally with the coordinators. Despite the many hours of consultations, the final text seemed more like a first draft. Her delegation had been as flexible as possible with regard to a number of paragraphs taken from the previous resolution, but a significant number of new passages had been added that included wording from which her delegation had dissociated itself during the adoption of other resolutions, including the omnibus resolution on COVID-19.

59. It was regrettable that her delegation's calls for mutually acceptable outcomes had been ignored. In addition to the paragraphs to which her delegation had proposed amendments, namely, the sixteenth and final preambular paragraphs and paragraphs 6 (b) and (d), 11, 13 and 17, her delegation could not support the following paragraphs and wording: paragraphs 6 (i) and 15, on which her delegation had repeatedly stated its position; the ninth preambular paragraph, in which certain Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda were singled out at random; the categorization in the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 9 and 16 of human rights defenders as a separate group requiring more protection than others; the passage in paragraph 6 (k) concerning some kind of training on the gender-responsive investigation of crimes of violence against women and girls; and the focus on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence in paragraph 6 (m). Regarding the reference to the Generation Equality Forum, her delegation had repeatedly expressed its concerns about the lack of consensus on that initiative and the desire of the organizers to impose their vision of "women's issues" on the United Nations. Furthermore, Member States had not provided a mandate for the Forum to take place; they had simply taken note of the initiative, which would be led by two States. Finally, her delegation could not condone the inclusion, at a late stage, of the full version of paragraph 21, which was based on wording from the resolution on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

60. Her delegation could not accept the constant attempts to force States to join the consensus solely on the basis of their commitment to eliminating violence against women and girls. The Russian Federation would continue to combat all forms of violence on the basis of universal instruments and to participate actively in international cooperation in that area. Unfortunately, the authors of the draft resolution had disregarded the positions of other States, had shown no interest in engaging in open and equal dialogue, and had used the draft resolution to promote their national priorities at the expense of international cooperation in protecting women from violence. Her delegation therefore requested a recorded vote on the draft resolution and would abstain from voting.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

61. **Mr. Kamal** (France) said that his delegation was dismayed that a recorded vote had been requested. Such a request undermined the efforts necessary to combat violence against women and girls and was an insult to

the victims of such violence and to the call of the Secretary-General for peace in homes around the world. It also disregarded the results of the voting on the amendments. The delegation of the Russian Federation had participated in all the informal negotiations, and most of its comments had been taken into account, indeed more so than those of other delegations. There was no veto power in the General Assembly. The delegation of the Russian Federation should dissociate itself from the paragraphs it found to be problematic and retract its request for a vote. Should the voting go ahead, all delegations should vote in favour of the draft resolution.

62. **Mr. Sautter** (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova, said that the decision to request a vote on the draft resolution was deeply regrettable, given that global solidarity was needed more than ever to address the collective challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Undermining consensus on such an important text sent the wrong signal to victims and survivors of violence, who had been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The delegations of France and the Netherlands had conducted exemplary, fair and transparent consultations, during which they had sought to accommodate different views to reach consensus.

63. In April 2020, in response to the appeal of the Secretary-General, 146 Member States and observers had committed themselves to making the prevention and redress of violence a key part of national response plans. The draft resolution provided an ambitious but realistic set of guidelines in that regard. Emerging data showed that violence, in particular domestic violence, had intensified during the pandemic, with reports of such violence nearly doubling in some countries. Women living in poverty or other vulnerable situations had been disproportionately affected.

64. There should not be anything controversial about a call to eliminate violence and ensure that women and girls could live their lives in peace. The States members of the European Union would therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution.

65. **Ms. Sánchez García** (Colombia) said that it was regrettable that a vote had been requested on the draft resolution. Long hours had been spent negotiating the text, and many of the concerns of the Russian Federation had been taken into account, often at the expense of the

proposals of other delegations. Her delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution.

66. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

None.

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Libya, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic.

67. *Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.19/Rev.1 was adopted by 170 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.*

68. **Ms. Charikhi** (Algeria) said that the Algerian Act on combating all forms of violence and the national strategies for its implementation proved her country's determination to put an end to violence against women and girls and protect them from any form of violence or abuse that could have a negative impact on their physical or psychological well-being. Nevertheless, her delegation had been forced to abstain from voting on the draft resolution, because the text contained references to problematic concepts that either were not properly defined or were subject to interpretation, and it did not contain sufficient caveats relating to national contexts and laws and religious and cultural specificities.

69. In particular, the sixteenth preambular paragraph contained the concept "intimate partner violence", despite several calls for its removal owing to the lack of a shared definition thereof. In paragraph 16, the concept "femicide" was used in a way that had not been agreed on previously. In the eighteenth preambular paragraph, the agreed language had been changed in a way that diminished the recognition of the important role of the family in eliminating violence against women and girls and the need to support the capacity of the family to prevent all forms of violence against them. The twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 9 and 16 contained multiple references to "human rights defenders", a concept that was not properly defined at the international level and that created a form of discrimination whereby so-called human rights defenders should supposedly be given additional rights and a higher level of protection than other citizens.

70. In addition, paragraph 15 should have been balanced with a stronger reference to the cultural contexts and religious backgrounds of States. Although that paragraph was based on the Beijing Platform for Action, one of the first paragraphs of that instrument stated that the implementation of the Platform was the sovereign responsibility of each State, in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the significance of and full respect for various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions. The lack of such a caveat in the draft resolution undermined the balance built into the Platform and resulted in an out-of-context paragraph. Future draft resolutions on the subject should

be more balanced and reflect the various specificities of countries, so as to enable their adoption by consensus.

71. **Ms. Elmarmuri** (Libya) said that, despite the serious threat to human rights posed by violence against women and girls, her delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution, because it contained wording that detracted from its intended purpose and concepts that were not internationally agreed, despite the need to respect the cultural and religious specificities of all countries. Regarding paragraph 3, there was no definition of religion that would allow States to avoid their obligations and refuse to combat all forms of violence against girls and women. All religions had served as an important basis for international conventions.

72. **Ms. Barber** (United States of America) said that, while her country remained deeply committed to genuine and effective efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, the draft resolution strayed from the critical issue at hand, which was particularly troubling amid a global pandemic, in which vulnerable women were at a heightened risk of domestic violence as a result of stay-at-home orders and quarantine mandates. In the United States, the recent Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act provided \$45 million for health services and family violence prevention efforts and services. Globally, her Government continued to support emergency assistance programmes for survivors of gender-based violence.

73. Instead of focusing on how to protect women and girls from violence, the authors of the draft resolution had co-opted a serious issue to further the cause of the global abortion industry, incorrectly characterizing abortion as an essential health service, falsely referring to it as "safe" and suggesting that lawful abortion restrictions amounted to violence against women. Abortion was not health care, nor was it an international human right. As affirmed in the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family, Member States had the sovereign right to impose lawful restrictions on access to abortion without any external pressure or interference. The promotion of access to a procedure that resulted in the loss of millions of baby girls every year was particularly hypocritical in a draft resolution on violence against women. It was also disturbing in the light of the recent reports of the alleged use of forced abortion and sterilization by the Chinese communist party as part of a continuing, violent campaign of repression against Uighur and other minority women in Xinjiang. Despite those reports, the United Nations Population Fund continued to operate in China subject to the Population and Family Planning Act and the

corresponding implementing regulations that provided the framework for the country's coercive birth policies.

74. Through its proposed amendments, her delegation had sought to address those issues and refocus attention on finding solutions to combat violence against women. It was regrettable that those amendments had been rejected, leaving problematic language in the twenty-eighth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 6 (i) and 15. Her delegation disassociated itself from those paragraphs.

75. Her delegation also disassociated itself from paragraph 7 (b), in which it would have preferred the term "health care" to be used rather than "health services". The latter term had connotations that suggested the promotion of abortion or a right to abortion, which was unacceptable to her country and inconsistent with Member State consensus.

76. With regard to the references in the draft resolution to international law and the 2030 Agenda, her delegation had addressed its concerns in its detailed statement delivered at the 7th meeting (see [A/C.3/75/SR.7](#)).

77. When references were made in the draft resolution to educational policies, programmes and teaching materials, the United States would understand them in ways that were consistent with the approaches of its federal, State and local authorities.

78. According to United States law, sexual harassment, while condemnable, was not necessarily violent. Efforts to expand the definition of violence beyond violent acts themselves undermined the draft resolution.

79. **Ms. Iileka** (Namibia) said that, while her delegation recognized the difficulties inherent in virtual negotiations, it was disappointing that it had not been possible to reach consensus on the inclusion of stronger wording on important issues such as femicide, access to justice and the women and peace and security agenda. It was even more disappointing that, despite the major concessions made by many delegations, the draft resolution had ultimately been put to a vote.

80. **Ms. Hassan** (Egypt) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, since the elimination of all forms of violence against women remained a priority for Egypt. Under the Egyptian Constitution adopted in 2014, the State was obliged to protect women from all forms of violence, empower them and provide care as necessary. Many measures had been put in place to implement the national strategy to combat violence against women, especially in the justice and social systems.

81. Negotiating important and sensitive issues in a virtual setting was challenging. It was regrettable that controversial wording had been included, in some cases for the first time, in the final text, despite multiple requests for the authors to focus on agreed language rather than on initiatives lacking consensus that were implemented outside the regulatory framework of the United Nations. Egypt consequently wished to dissociate itself from the sixteenth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 6 (i), 10, 15, 17 and 22. Egypt did not consider itself to be bound by the provisions of those paragraphs, nor did it consider them to be agreed language.

82. **Mr. Zareian** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country attached great importance to the adoption of policies and measures for preventing and combating violence against women and supported international efforts to combat and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. Although some points and paragraphs in the draft resolution were unacceptable to the Islamic Republic of Iran, his Government understood that the draft resolution would be implemented on the basis of the national laws and regulations of States and their cultural and religious circumstances.

83. **Ms. Nassrullah** (Iraq) said that her country strongly supported the irreplaceable role of the family in raising and supporting children. The family was a natural and fundamental unit of society that should be protected by the State. It was therefore regrettable that language regarding the family had been diluted in the draft resolution and that the acknowledgement that the family provided a supportive environment for the empowerment of all women and girls had been omitted. Her delegation was disappointed that its comments in that regard had not been taken into account and that it had not been possible to use the language that had been agreed upon two years previously. Her delegation was also disappointed that its views on the use in the draft resolution of controversial terminology that did not enjoy consensus had not been accommodated. Her Government did not support the inclusion of references to initiatives that had not been intergovernmentally negotiated or agreed and would apply the draft resolution as appropriate in accordance with its national laws and policies. Iraq would continue to combat all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence.

84. **Ms. Alnesf** (Qatar) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution to demonstrate its support for preventing violence against women and girls and enhancing their roles in sustainable development. Regarding the references to reproductive health, Qatar

would implement the twenty-eighth preambular paragraph and paragraph 15 in line with its national laws and religious values. The same applied to references to sex education, given that her Government focused on the target audience in the design of its educational programmes. Her country's understanding of paragraph 6 (g) was based on its cultural values.

85. **Ms. Gebrekidan** (Eritrea) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the basis of its firm belief that international cooperation was crucial in combating and eliminating violence against women and girls. However, the sponsors of the draft resolution could have produced a more balanced text and taken into account the views and concerns of all delegations. Given the restrictions on the Committee's work and the absence of in-person negotiations, her delegation had hoped that the sponsors would focus on making technical updates to the text. However, the initial version had contained many new additions and controversial proposals, including references to initiatives that were not intergovernmentally negotiated or agreed, such as the Generation Equality Forum. Furthermore, there was a disproportionate focus on certain aspects of the issue of the elimination of violence against women and girls at the expense of other aspects.

86. **Ms. Moutchou** (Morocco) said that the draft resolution was a means to support the call of the Secretary-General for peace in homes and to note with concern the recent outbreaks of domestic violence, in particular in the context of confinement measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The negative effects of the pandemic on respect for the rights of women and girls required a strong and united response by the Assembly. Her country would remain a strong supporter of the rights of women and girls and would continue to support the draft resolution in the future.

87. **Ms. Elmansouri** (Tunisia) said that it was regrettable that a vote had been requested on a draft resolution that had always been adopted by consensus in the past. The draft resolution served as a strong voice of support for women and girls who were victims and survivors of violence; such support was all the more important in the light of the devastating and disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls, including in the form of domestic violence, femicide and intimate partner violence. It was particularly regrettable that, in discussions on the concept of intimate partner violence, more attention was given to the intimate partner than to violence. The delegations of France and the Netherlands had endeavoured to conduct transparent negotiations and to accommodate all the different points of view. Her country strongly supported women and girls and gender

equality through its national policies and laws and through regional and multilateral forums.

88. **Ms. McDowell** (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Australia, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, said that it was cause for concern that the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in an exponential increase in incidents of violence. It was disappointing that a vote had been requested on the draft resolution.

89. **Ms. Craib** (United Kingdom) said that her delegation was deeply disappointed that a vote had been requested on a draft resolution that enjoyed significant cross-regional support, as demonstrated by the rejection of all the amendments and the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole. The draft resolutions under the current agenda item had traditionally enjoyed consensus. The request for a vote sent a terrible signal to all women and girls who experienced sexual and gender-based violence and set a worrying precedent.

90. **Mr. Balobaid** (Yemen) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the basis of its belief in the importance of eliminating all forms of violence against women. However, his country did not agree with the controversial terminology that was not the subject of consensus and dissociated itself from all terms that were not set forth in its laws, including the term "partner", which was inconsistent with its national legislation and policies.

91. **Ms. Eugenio** (Argentina) said that it was regrettable that a vote had been requested on a draft resolution of such importance, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The content of the draft resolution was balanced, and the facilitators had been respectful of the views and positions of all Member States. Her delegation reiterated its firm support for the draft resolution.

92. **Monsignor Hansen** (Observer for the Holy See) said that his delegation had engaged actively in the negotiations with a view to promoting the authentic advancement of women and girls, which entailed absolute respect for their inherent dignity and acknowledgement of their critical role not only in society, but also in the family. His delegation had hoped that consensus could be reached, but the discussions during the current meeting confirmed that sensitive issues and language and terminology that did not enjoy consensus continued to divide delegations and weaken common efforts.

93. The Holy See considered the term "sexual and reproductive health" and related terms to apply to a holistic concept of health. It did not consider abortion, access to abortion or access to abortifacients to be

covered by that term. The Holy See understood the term “gender” to be grounded in biological sexual identity and difference.

*Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.15: Intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilation*

94. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

95. **Ms. Bonkougou** (Burkina Faso), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of African States, said that at least 200 million women and girls had undergone female genital mutilation; more than 4 million girls were subjected to that practice each year; and most girls were cut before the age of 15 years. Notwithstanding the progress made in recent years in combating female genital mutilation, those facts were alarming. Following the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it was vital to move beyond debates on terminology to focus on meaningful commitments to address the suffering of women and girls. Efforts must be stepped up to counter the disastrous long-term physical, psychological and social consequences of female genital mutilation.

96. Despite the current circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretary-General had managed to produce his related report (A/75/279), which gave an overview of global efforts to combat female genital mutilation. Her delegation was particularly grateful to UNFPA for its constant support in combating female genital mutilation and its assistance in the preparation of the draft resolution.

97. In the light of the current circumstances and the related recommendations of the Bureau, the Group of African States had decided to propose a draft resolution that was a technical rollover, thereby avoiding any new text that would lead to long negotiations. The draft resolution was therefore almost identical to General Assembly resolution 73/149, which had been adopted by consensus. The Group had informed all delegations of its decision, and no delegation had opposed that decision or proposed any changes to the text. The last-minute proposal of amendments relating to terminology that had been used in the Sustainable Development Goals and that had always enjoyed consensus in the Committee was therefore regrettable. Delegations should maintain the consensus by which the draft resolution had always been adopted and vote against any amendments.

98. **Mr. Mahmassani** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Andorra, Antigua and

Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam.

99. He then noted that New Zealand and Ukraine also wished to become sponsors.

100. **The Chair** drew attention to the proposed amendment contained in document A/C.3/75/L.74 and noted that it had no programme budget implications.

101. **Mr. Mack** (United States of America) said that, in the absence of negotiations on the draft resolution, his delegation had sent its concerns, including its proposed amendment contained in document A/C.3/75/L.74, to the Chair. The proposal reaffirmed the preference of the United States for the alternative language that it had proposed previously. The amendment had been submitted within the deadline for written submissions. Any claims that it was a last-minute amendment were therefore inaccurate.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

102. **Mr. Sautter** (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova, said that the persistent proposal by the United States of amendments to agreed language was deeply regrettable, especially given that similar amendments had been rejected in the previous week. Putting forward amendments to a rollover text went against the practices of the Committee.

103. Increased rates of female genital mutilation had been observed in recent months, with lockdowns being seen as an opportunity to carry out that harmful practice undetected. The diversion of resources for the care of COVID-19 patients had also left girls at risk and survivors with no recourse to essential prevention, protection and support services. Concerted efforts and solidarity were therefore required to preserve and protect the physical and mental health of women and

girls. Screening for violence in the context of sexual and reproductive health could be effective in preventing the recurrence of violence, but the deletions proposed by the United States would have the opposite effect. The States members of the European Union would consistently vote against all the amendments proposed by the United States during the current meeting.

104. **Ms. Romulos** (Mexico), speaking also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay, said that it was unusual to propose amendments to a rollover text, and the amendment put forward by the United States was therefore surprising. The proposal to remove any reference to "health-care services" was disappointing, given that it was long-standing agreed language, including from the 2030 Agenda, that struck a fine balance to accommodate the different views of delegations on the scope of health needs. The term "health-care services" went beyond the provision of medical care for immediate health needs to include medical tests, counselling and the provision of health-related information and education.

105. Terminology such as "sexual and reproductive health" had been used since the mid-1990s to encompass a wide range of perspectives. In the 2030 Agenda, Member States had committed themselves to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services. The attempt to upset the consensus on those issues and undermine the normative framework underpinning the Committee's work was deeply unfortunate and must not be accepted.

106. Equal access to comprehensive sexuality education was vital to ensuring that all people were able to grow and learn in safety and health and with the confidence to achieve in any field. Evidence-based programmes that included gender equality were more effective and enabled adolescent girls and boys and young women and men to make informed decisions

freely and autonomously on their sexual and reproductive health.

107. All delegations should support the rights of women and girls and vote against any amendments relating to those issues.

108. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.3/75/L.74 to amend the ninth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 1 and 5 of draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.15.*

*In favour:*

Belarus, Nauru, Qatar, Russian Federation, United States of America.

*Against:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Abstaining:*

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Haiti, Iraq, Jamaica, Kuwait, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palau, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan,



Syrian Arab Republic, Tonga, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam.

109. *The proposal was rejected by 136 votes to 5, with 20 abstentions.*

110. *Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.15 was adopted.*

111. **Mr. de Souza Monteiro** (Brazil) said that his delegation had decided to join the consensus on the draft resolutions under agenda item 28 in view of the priority given by the Government of Brazil to the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls. Although his delegation had raised questions during the consultations regarding the balance of the texts, the draft resolutions offered important contributions to combating discrimination and violence against women and girls, and to ensuring their right to health, which was particularly relevant in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It was also important in that context to address the need to increase the participation of women in decision-making processes.

112. With regard to language relating to sexual and reproductive health, the texts should in no way be interpreted as promoting or supporting abortion as a method of family planning. His Government implemented comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policies within the well-established framework of its national legislation.

113. **Mr. Mack** (United States of America) said that female genital mutilation or cutting was a harmful traditional practice that violated the health and human rights of women and girls and hindered development outcomes. His Government was working towards the global elimination of female genital mutilation or cutting, including by assisting countries in the implementation of relevant laws, supporting community-based programming to raise awareness of the harmful effects of that practice and promoting coordination among international donors, Governments and community leaders. His delegation recognized the importance of the draft resolution in global efforts to address that ongoing challenge.

114. It was disappointing that the amendment proposed by his delegation had not been accepted and that health-related wording that was problematic for the United States remained in the draft resolution. The United States therefore dissociated itself from the ninth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 1 and 5 of the draft resolution. “Sexual and reproductive health” and “health-care services” were controversial terms that detracted from the recommendations in the draft resolution to address female genital mutilation. Those terms had connotations that suggested the promotion of

abortion or a right to abortion, which was unacceptable to his Administration. While the United States was committed to improving women’s health throughout their lives, it could not accept references to “sexual and reproductive health”, “sexual and reproductive health-care services”, “safe termination of pregnancy” or any similar wording that would promote abortion or inaccurately suggest a right to abortion. As affirmed in the Geneva Consensus Declaration, each nation had the sovereign right to implement related programmes and activities in accordance with its laws and policies, without external pressure or interference. Consistent with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its report, the United States did not recognize abortion as a method of family planning, and there was no international right to abortion. The United States fully supported the provision of quality health care to women and girls around the world without promoting abortion.

115. With regard to the references in the draft resolution to international law, including international human rights conventions, to the 2030 Agenda and to educational policy, programmes and materials, his delegation had addressed its concerns in its detailed statement delivered at the 7th meeting (see [A/C.3/75/SR.7](#)).

116. **Mr. Xing** Jisheng (China), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation firmly opposed and categorically rejected the baseless accusations made by the representative of the United States regarding the issue of Xinjiang. From 2010 to 2018, the Uighur population in Xinjiang had grown by 25 per cent, almost double the population growth rate of all ethnic groups in the region (14 per cent) and much higher than that of the Han people (approximately 2 per cent). The allegations made by the delegation of the United States therefore had no basis in fact. The United States should address its own problems properly and stop spreading lies and provoking confrontation at the United Nations.

**Agenda item 63: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions** (*continued*) ([A/C.3/75/L.48](#))

*Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.48: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*

117. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

118. **Ms. Melfald** (Norway), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that, in the light of the extraordinary circumstances of the

COVID-19 pandemic and the guidance provided by the Bureau, it had been decided to propose a draft resolution that was a technical rollover of General Assembly resolution 74/130 without holding substantive negotiations. Only technical updates had been made, with no additions or deletions of substantive text. By taking such an approach, the Nordic countries did not intend to set a precedent; it was their hope that the conditions in 2021 would be conducive to full-fledged negotiations.

119. **Mr. Mahmassani** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Belize, Czechia, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Mongolia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Palau, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa and Ukraine.

120. He then noted that the following delegations also wished to become sponsors: Chad, Gabon, Micronesia (Federated States of), Panama and Uganda.

121. **Mr. Al Khalil** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, given the strong ties between his country and Norway through the Norwegian Refugee Council, his delegation had hoped for more fruitful negotiations with the delegation of Norway. Regarding the draft resolution, the Syrian Arab Republic had concerns of paramount importance, which had been outlined during the conference on the return of refugees held in Damascus on 11 and 12 November 2020. First, the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations in Geneva had made efforts to reach consensus on the text by asking to engage in negotiations as usual. However, its request had been rejected on the pretext that the Bureau had recommended that only technical changes be made because none of the conference rooms in New York were large enough to accommodate social distancing during informal consultations. However, that argument could not be used in Geneva or at any other duty station.

122. Second, the delegation of Norway had placed the draft resolution under a silence procedure. His delegation and the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran had submitted two letters proposing amendments relating to the substance of the draft resolution that would have enabled those delegations to join the consensus, but those letters had been ignored. His delegation had then suggested holding negotiations in New York in the hope of reaching a balanced text, but those calls had also received no response.

123. For those reasons, his delegation requested a recorded vote on the draft resolution and would abstain from voting.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

124. **Mr. Duarte Lopes** (Portugal), speaking also on behalf of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden, said that it was sincerely regrettable that a vote had been requested on such an important draft resolution that served as a key vehicle for the international community to reaffirm its support for the mandate and work of UNHCR. The text was and should remain humanitarian in its nature and objectives.

125. The delegation of Norway had facilitated the process in a diligent, fair and transparent manner in both Geneva and New York. There had been broad agreement regarding the suggestion to propose a technical rollover without any negotiations or changes to the substance of the text, which was fully in line with the modalities of work of the Committee during the seventy-fifth session. Undermining the consensus would have only negative consequences, especially for the beneficiaries of the work performed by UNHCR. For those reasons, those delegations would vote in favour of the draft resolution.

126. **Ms. Craib** (United Kingdom) said that her country was committed to supporting refugees, upholding the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and enabling a longer-term, more holistic approach to refugee assistance and protection. UNHCR was a valued partner of the United Kingdom and played a vital role in upholding the Convention and in providing critical assistance to and protecting the world's most vulnerable refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless persons. The draft resolution was key to supporting the vital work of UNHCR across the globe. Her delegation hoped that the circumstances would allow discussions on the text to recommence in the following year.

127. The international community had an obligation, both to the millions of displaced persons around the world and to the countries that so generously hosted them, to work collectively and productively to adopt the draft resolution. It was deeply regrettable that a vote had been requested, undermining the consensus on a non-political humanitarian text.

128. **Ms. Pritchard** (Canada) said that her Government was a long-standing supporter and partner of UNHCR. The dedicated commitment of UNHCR personnel, who had continued to deliver in the face of a global pandemic, was commendable. Her delegation also recognized the efforts of refugee-hosting countries to continue to offer international protection at a time when systems and services were under increased pressure owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The critical role of

UNHCR in the international refugee protection regime was more vital than ever, especially amid a global pandemic that was increasingly affecting refugees and other persons of concern. During such exceptional times, her delegation supported the proposal of a draft resolution that was a technical rollover of General Assembly resolution 74/130, which remained highly relevant and continued to provide UNHCR with essential guidance.

129. The international community had considered the humanitarian impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in other forums, such as the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council, during which 172 delegations had endorsed the call to action in support of the humanitarian response in combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

130. Given that steadfast support for the draft resolution held immense value in underscoring international support for the UNHCR mandate, her delegation was deeply disappointed that a vote had been requested and strongly recommended a return to the adoption of humanitarian resolutions by consensus. All delegations should vote in favour of the draft resolution and send a strong signal of support to UNHCR and the persons of concern that it served.

131. **Mr. Zareian** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the only omnibus resolution on the situation of refugees, which was a humanitarian issue with serious implications for the protection of human rights, should fully and fairly reflect the main challenges affecting refugees around the world. It was regrettable that the main sponsors had disregarded the fundamental and dramatic shifts in the global refugee crisis. Foreign aggression, foreign occupation, unilateral coercive measures and the recent outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had led to the creation of large waves of refugees and impaired the capacity of host countries to provide support for them. Such measures by the United States, for example, had made it difficult for both his Government and UNHCR to respond adequately to the basic needs of refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which had played host to the largest protracted refugee situation in the world for the past four decades. It was both unfair and unreasonable to expect that a country targeted by economic terrorism should single-handedly bear the burden of such illegal acts. The voices and needs of millions of refugees could not go unheeded merely to satisfy the party that continued to violate their rights.

132. The draft resolution would lose credibility and functionality if emerging challenges and new developments were not addressed. Despite good faith

attempts by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva to engage in the negotiations, the draft resolution fell short of addressing the challenges facing refugees in his country. To express dissatisfaction with the process and the final text, his delegation would abstain from voting.

133. **Ms. Melfald** (Norway) said that it was regrettable that one Member State had requested a vote on the draft resolution, which was contrary to the broad, cross-regional support expected for a technical rollover. The departure in the past two years from the tradition of adopting the draft resolution by consensus was unfortunate. Uniting in favour of the technical rollover would be a first step towards more constructive dialogue in the future in support of the humanitarian and non-political mandate of UNHCR. All Member States should support the technical rollover and vote in favour of the draft resolution.

134. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.48.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts

and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

None.

*Abstaining:*

Cameroon, Eritrea, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Libya, Poland, Syrian Arab Republic.

135. *Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.48 was adopted by 174 votes to none, with seven abstentions.*

136. **Mr. Varga** (Hungary) said that his country was a long-standing and strong supporter of UNHCR and its mandate, and was committed to the full implementation of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the 1967 Protocol thereto. The UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe and the UNHCR Global Service Centre were hosted in Budapest, with the generous long-term support of his Government. Nevertheless, owing to the references in the draft resolution to the global compact on refugees, which the Government of Hungary had decided not to join, his delegation had abstained from voting.

137. **Mr. Mack** (United States of America) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution to underscore its support for the work of UNHCR in providing protection and humanitarian assistance and ensuring respect for the dignity of refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless persons and other persons of concern.

138. It was regrettable that the draft resolution contained language that ran counter to United States law and policy, and his delegation therefore wished to dissociate itself from paragraph 33. Consistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States and its national obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, his country joined the international community in opposing arbitrary detention, which violated human rights and fundamental freedoms and

undermined the rule of law. In certain instances, United States law required that certain people, including migrants, asylum seekers and stateless persons, remain in government custody for public safety and national security reasons, pending the adjudication of their immigration proceedings, including any requests for protection. Alternatives to detention were already in use in the United States, such as electronic monitoring to ensure that immigrants complied with their release conditions. The United States maintained its sovereign right to enforce its immigration laws and to determine whom to admit to its territory, subject to international obligations.

139. Despite its reservations, his delegation supported the draft resolution because of the work of UNHCR in alleviating human suffering and providing principled, impartial and needs-based assistance, which was at the core of UNHCR operations and all humanitarian responses. It was regrettable that some delegations continued to politicize the draft resolution.

140. **Mr. Angeleno** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, given the importance of UNHCR in the implementation of the commitments contained in the global compact on refugees, which his country had joined. As developing countries still had a number of concerns with regard to the complexity of the refugee phenomenon, those issues should be addressed during the various phases of implementation of the compact.

141. His delegation continued to condemn the political instrumentalization of the international protection of refugees and migration. It also rejected the narrative promoted by certain countries for domestic political reasons that human mobility should be treated as a security issue. Both the international community and UNHCR should consider the structural causes behind the phenomenon, and in particular the negative impact of the illegal imposition of unilateral coercive measures on developing countries, in violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

142. To ensure non-politicization, Member States must give due respect to the mandate of UNHCR, comply with General Assembly resolution [46/182](#) and uphold humanitarian principles.

**Agenda item 68: Promotion and protection of the rights of children** (*continued*)

**(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children** (*continued*) (A/C.3/75/L.16/Rev.1)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.16/Rev.1: Protecting children from bullying*

143. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

144. **Mr. de la Fuente Ramirez** (Mexico), introducing the draft resolution, said that bullying affected one in every three children across the world and threatened their physical and mental health, with short-, medium- and long-term consequences. The promotion and protection of the rights of all children in all parts of the world was a key priority of his country. National and international efforts to end all forms of violence against children should always be made in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 2030 Agenda, in particular target 16.2.

145. The draft resolution addressed the issue of violence against children in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and underlined the urgent need to protect all children, whether in person or online, wherever they might be. The increased use of the Internet, digital platforms and remote learning had left children more exposed to violence online and had opened new doors for exploitation and sexual abuse, which must be stopped. In the draft resolution, Member States were called upon to ensure that child protection and mental health services were recognized as essential during confinement and public health measures.

146. His delegation was grateful to all Member States for participating in the transparent and inclusive negotiations and to the many delegations that had supported the cause. Sponsoring the draft resolution would send a strong signal about the seriousness of the problem, which required a collective commitment towards girls, boys and adolescents throughout the world.

147. **Mr. Mahmassani** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bahamas, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Croatia, Czechia, El Salvador, France, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

148. He then noted that the following delegations also wished to become sponsors: Albania, Kiribati, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Zambia.

149. **Ms. Barber** (United States of America) said that Governments, communities and families all had important roles to play in protecting children from bullying and fostering their health, emotional well-being and development. Promoting empathy and communication was crucial to laying a foundation for kindness, mindfulness, integrity and leadership in adulthood. Addressing bullying was a priority focus of the First Lady of the United States.

150. With regard to the references to education in the draft resolution, relevant decisions would be made in the United States in ways that were consistent with the approaches of the federal, State and local authorities. The United States understood that General Assembly resolutions did not change the current state of conventional or customary international law and that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights did not create legal obligations. Furthermore, the United States did not understand the draft resolution to imply that States must join or implement obligations under international instruments to which they were not a party. Any reaffirmation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child applied only to those States that were parties to it. Her delegation had clarified its views on other issues referred to in the draft resolution, including the 2030 Agenda, in its detailed statement delivered at the 7th meeting (see A/C.3/75/SR.7).

151. It was implied in several places in the draft resolution that bullying always constituted violence. However, not all forms of bullying were physically violent, nor did they always have a negative impact on the exercise of the rights of the child. The United States interpreted the draft resolution in accordance with its long-standing position on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including article 17. Any measures taken by States to prevent bullying must be consistent with their human rights obligations.

152. *Draft resolution A/C.3/75/L.16/Rev.1 was adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*