



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Human Rights Committee 140th session

Summary record (partial)* of the 4112th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 28 March 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Santos Pais (Vice-Chair)

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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In the absence of Ms. Abdo Rocholl, Mr. Santos Pais (Vice-Chair) took the Chair.

The discussion covered in the summary record began at 12.35 p.m.

Closure of the session

1. **The Chair** said that, at its 140th session, the Committee had considered and adopted concluding observations on the initial report of Somalia and the periodic reports of Chile, Guyana, Indonesia, Namibia, Serbia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Most of the constructive dialogues had been held in person under the simplified reporting procedure, apart from the dialogue with Guyana, which had been held in hybrid format at the State party's request. The Committee had adopted a list of issues in relation to the periodic reports of Mongolia and Viet Nam and lists of issues prior to reporting in relation to Andorra, Azerbaijan, Djibouti and Mali.

2. The Committee had considered 43 individual communications under the Optional Protocol to the Covenant. Of those cases, 19 had been decided on the merits, 9 had been declared inadmissible and 15 had been discontinued. Violations of the Covenant had been found in all the cases that had been decided on the merits.

3. To address the growing concern about the nearly 2,000 individual communications that were pending consideration by the treaty bodies, 70 per cent of which related to the Covenant, a strategy had been agreed with the Petitions and Urgent Actions Section to substantially increase the number of cases to be considered at the upcoming sessions. Under that strategy, the Section would provide the Committee with a list of joined repetitive communications whose drafts would be ready for the July and October 2024 sessions and another of those to be ready for 2025, as well as a breakdown of communications received since 2015 that were ready for drafting.

4. The Committee had adopted a progress report on follow-up to concluding observations after reviewing the information submitted by Finland, Paraguay, Tunisia and Uzbekistan. A report on follow-up to Views had not been ready for adoption, but the Committee had received assurances that one such report would be prepared for each of the remaining sessions of the year. The Committee had also adopted its annual report, covering its activities at the 138th, 139th and 140th sessions. In addition, the Committee had held its thirteenth informal meeting with States parties, which had been attended by representatives of over 60 States parties.

5. Regarding the treaty body strengthening process, a questionnaire had been circulated among the treaty bodies by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights concerning the committee coordination mechanism, one of the proposals contained in the working paper on options and guiding questions for the development of an implementation plan for the conclusions of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies at their thirty-fourth meeting. The Committee had on several occasions expressed its discomfort with the proposal, which appeared to entail a significant shift of the responsibilities for the strengthening process from the secretariat onto Committee members. The Committee's response to the questionnaire, including its expectation that documents would henceforth be submitted for the Chairs' consideration far enough in advance to allow them to consult with their respective membership, would be transmitted to the High Commissioner ahead of the next meeting of the Chairs in June.

6. Assuming that the 141st session went ahead as planned despite the liquidity crisis at the United Nations, the Committee would be reviewing the periodic reports of Croatia, Honduras, India, Maldives, Malta, Suriname and the Syrian Arab Republic. It would adopt a list of issues in relation to Chad and lists of issues prior to reporting on Austria, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Latvia and Sierra Leone. It would also evaluate the information on follow-up to concluding observations received from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The Committee expected to be able to convene its usual one-week session of the Working Group on Communications, to which it had had an entitlement since 1978. However, in a spirit of pragmatism and to help cut costs, the Committee was prepared to reduce its next session from five weeks to three weeks and four days.

7. Lastly, the Committee was pleased to note that the High Commissioner had established a dedicated office to lead the Organization-wide digital transformation effort, and called on the Member States to provide sustainable funding for an initiative that would be of critical importance to the future of the human rights architecture.

8. **Ms. Bassim** said that she commended the Committee and the secretariat for the volume of work accomplished during the session despite the challenges faced.

9. **Mr. Quezada Cabrera** said that the Committee should be pleased with the results of its intensive work over the course of the session.

10. **Mr. Teraya** said that, at the current session, one State party had engaged in dialogue with the Committee for the first time and should be commended for its commitment to progressing towards building a nation grounded in human rights principles, despite its serious situation. Another State party reviewed that session, meanwhile, had a long-standing tradition of human rights protection, but that in itself was not a guarantee against violations. The non-linear nature of the realization of human rights emphasized the necessity of the Committee's monitoring role; therefore, he hoped that the Member States and other stakeholders would continue to find its work meaningful and therefore maintain their support.

11. **Mr. Soh** said that he hoped the Committee would meet again in July as planned.

12. **Ms. Kpatcha Tchamdja** said that she wished to underscore how rich the session had been in terms of work accomplished and information exchanged.

13. **Mr. Carazo** said that he wanted to convey his best wishes to the members of the Committee who were up for re-election in May.

14. After the customary exchange of courtesies, **the Chair** declared the 140th session of the Human Rights Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.