



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Human Rights Committee 143rd session

Summary record (partial)* of the 4184th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 3 March 2025, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chair: Ms. Lee (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights)

Chair: Mr. Soh

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

Opening statement by the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

1. **The Temporary Chair** said that she was pleased to declare open the Committee's 143rd session. She wished to warmly welcome the five new members of the Committee, who brought a wealth of knowledge and experience, and to congratulate Ms. Abdo Rocholl, Ms. Bassim, Mr. El Haiba, Mr. Soh and Mr. Yigezu on their re-election.

2. In response to the liquidity crisis facing the United Nations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was doing its utmost to ensure that the work of the human rights treaty bodies could continue. It was encouraging that all the treaty bodies had held or were set to hold their first sessions of 2025. The Committee was meeting during exceptional times marked by profound global challenges that were testing the resilience of the international legal order. The United Nations system, including the Committee, must safeguard the hard-won achievements that had been made in the area of human rights over previous decades. More than ever, collective action was required to defend the universality of human rights and preserve the integrity of international law.

3. At its fifty-eighth session, the Human Rights Council would hold interactive dialogues with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. The Council had recently held its biennial high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty, focusing on the contribution of the judiciary to its abolition. To date, 113 countries had abolished the death penalty, and the global South was now leading the abolition movement. The Council would also hold a panel discussion on early warning and genocide prevention, having encouraged States to make greater use of conflict risk analysis to assess the risk of genocide and identify the need for preventive measures. The work of the treaty bodies was a vital component of such risk assessments.

4. The previous year had proved particularly challenging, with chronic resource constraints exacerbated by the liquidity crisis, which continued to hamper the planning and execution of the treaty bodies' work. That point had been made forcefully by the Chairs of the treaty bodies during their meetings with Member States and other interlocutors in New York. OHCHR was making every effort to ensure that all treaty bodies could fulfil their mandates, including by highlighting the direct impact of resource limitations on human rights protection on the ground. The situation was, however, expected to persist for the foreseeable future.

5. Nevertheless, the treaty body strengthening process remained active, and the General Assembly had recently adopted its biennial resolution on the treaty body system, in which it invited the treaty bodies and OHCHR to continue working towards a regularized reporting schedule and to increase their use of digital technology to that end. The resolution did not, however, endorse certain proposals made by the Chairs of the treaty bodies, such as the proposal for an eight-year predictable review cycle, or the provision of the resources required to implement them. At a recent informal meeting, the Chairs and the treaty body focal points on working methods had explored the latest developments in the treaty body system and had sought to identify possible means of further harmonizing procedures. They had also met with the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures to discuss issues of common concern, such as the independence of experts and the need to adopt a united approach to the challenges facing human rights mechanisms. Coordination between the Chairs and the focal points on working methods would continue, particularly in preparation for the meeting of the Chairs in June 2025.

Solemn declaration by the newly elected members of the Committee in accordance with article 38 of the Covenant

6. *At the invitation of the Temporary Chair, the new members of the Committee – Mr. Fernández Liesa, Mr. Korkelia, Ms. Leinarte, Mr. Saidov and Mr. Šimonović – solemnly undertook to discharge their duties as members of the Human Rights Committee independently, impartially and conscientiously.*

Election of the Chair and other officers of the Committee

7. **Mr. Teraya** nominated Mr. Soh for the office of Chair in view of his unwavering commitment to upholding the Covenant, his instrumental work as Vice-Chair of the Committee and his profound contributions to academia and civil society, all of which demonstrated that he would uphold the highest standards of integrity, impartiality and excellence in advancing human rights.

8. **Mr. Yigezu** and **Mr. El Haiba**, on behalf of the members from African States, seconded the nomination.

9. **Ms. Tigroudja**, on behalf of the members from Western European and other States, seconded the nomination.

10. **Ms. Bassim** said that Mr. Soh would enjoy the support and assistance of all Committee members in the role of Chair.

11. **Ms. Abdo Rocholl**, on behalf of the members from Latin American and Caribbean States, seconded the nomination.

12. *Mr. Soh was elected Chair by acclamation.*

13. **Mr. El Haiba**, on behalf of the members from African States, nominated Ms. Bassim to serve as Vice-Chair.

14. **Mr. Carazo**, on behalf of the members from Latin American and Caribbean States, nominated Mr. Quezada Cabrera for the office of Vice-Chair.

15. **Ms. Donders**, on behalf of the members from Western European and other States, nominated Ms. Tigroudja to serve as Vice-Chair.

16. *Ms. Bassim, Mr. Quezada Cabrera and Ms. Tigroudja were elected Vice-Chairs by acclamation.*

17. *Mr. Soh took the Chair.*

18. **The Chair** said that he was honoured and grateful to have been elected as Chair of the Committee and that he wished to acknowledge the outstanding leadership of his predecessor, Ms. Abdo Rocholl. He warmly welcomed the new members of the Committee.

19. He assumed the position of Chair with a strong sense of duty and dedication. The Committee's mandate to uphold and promote the Covenant was more crucial than ever. The pressing challenges it faced, arising from global developments, economic and social pressures and increasing resource constraints, called for greater efficiency, collaboration and innovation. It would be essential to strengthen cooperation with other human rights mechanisms and leverage new technologies in order to enhance the impact of the Committee's work.

20. As Chair, he would strive to foster an environment of constructive dialogue, inclusivity and consensus-building and to ensure that the Committee's decisions remained principled, effective and fully aligned with its core mandate. Only by working together and offering diverse perspectives and experiences would it be possible to truly uphold the rights enshrined in the Covenant.

Adoption of the agenda (CCPR/C/143/1)

21. *The agenda and the programme of work were adopted.*

Organizational and other matters, including the adoption of the report of the Working Group on Communications

Report on the activities of the Committee during the period 2023–2024

22. **Ms. Abdo Rocholl**, speaking as the outgoing Chair and reporting on the Committee's work during the previous two years, said that significant progress had been made thanks to close collaboration among Committee members, the secretariat and the Petitions and Urgent Actions Section, and thanks to the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and his team.

23. During the period in question, the Committee had held 41 constructive dialogues with States Parties; adopted 12 lists of issues and 19 lists of issues prior to reporting; discussed 5 reports on follow-up to concluding observations; adopted 610 decisions on individual communications; considered 3 reports on follow-up to Views; and held 6 in-person sessions.

24. The Committee had taken a consistent approach to its organization of work, applying methods that were robust yet flexible. Improvements had been made in the planning and assignment of work, as exemplified by the new practice of appointing country task forces well in advance, with due regard for geographical, gender and linguistic diversity.

25. As part of efforts to reduce the backlog of individual cases, a more flexible mechanism had been adopted for assessing complaints. It had thus been possible to cut response time, without compromising due process, and to prioritize urgent cases.

26. In response to requests from many States Parties, time management in the constructive dialogues had been improved, notably by the introduction of an electronic timer. Similarly, greater efficiency and fluidity in the drafting, review and adoption of concluding observations had been achieved through upstream planning.

27. Guidelines had been adopted to facilitate coordination with other treaty bodies and regional organizations and to clarify the role of research assistants. In an effort to improve relations with the media, the Committee had appointed a focal point for outreach and communication, who worked closely with the OHCHR Media Centre. In order to strengthen the participation of stakeholders in the work of the Committee, civil society organizations were now invited to special meetings, similar to those held with States Parties.

28. Paper use had been drastically reduced and improvements to the support provided by the secretariat were now facilitated by regular satisfaction surveys. A system had been introduced to ensure follow-up on Bureau decisions and the induction process for new members had been enhanced, in part through the development of a guide to key aspects of the Committee's mandate and methods of work.

29. The equitable use of all working languages of the Committee was guaranteed in documents and discussions. The working languages of individual members of the Committee, the secretariat and the Petitions and Urgent Actions Section were taken into account in the distribution of work, in order to ensure that documents were drafted as accurately as possible.

30. The heavy workload affected the physical and mental health of both the Committee and the secretariat. With that in mind, she had made a special effort to foster a culture of respect and mutual recognition. Despite the demanding pace, a collaborative and harmonious environment had been established, in which all individuals felt valued. To meet the challenges ahead, it was important to continue to build on those foundations, for respect, empathy and collaboration were as essential as the commitment to protect human rights.

Report of the Working Group on Communications

31. **Mr. Helfer** said that the Working Group on Communications had met from 24 to 28 February 2025. The Working Group had considered 44 individual communications, involving 13 States Parties, that had been submitted between 2016 and 2023. The communications had concerned issues such as arbitrary deprivation of life, voting rights, forced displacement of Indigenous communities and the right to freedom of religion and belief. On the basis of its deliberations, the Working Group would be submitting for the consideration of the plenary 4 recommendations of findings of inadmissibility and 36

recommendations of findings of a violation of the Covenant. It would also be submitting one recommendation of a finding of no violation and two recommendations outlining two possible options.

32. *The report of the Working Group on Communications was adopted.*

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 11.05 a.m.