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President: Mr. Lauber (Switzerland)

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* No summary records were issued for the 1st to 54th meetings.

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 2: Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General (A/HRC/58/L.6 and A/HRC/58/L.30/Rev.1 as orally revised)

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.6: Advancing human rights in South Sudan

1. **Mr. Manley** (Observer for the United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely, Albania, Ireland, Norway and his own delegation, said that the purpose of the draft resolution was to extend the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for another year. The draft resolution was being presented against a deeply alarming backdrop in South Sudan, with increasing fighting in many parts of the country and the recent arrest of the first Vice-President, Riek Machar. The sponsors called on President Mayardit to reverse that action and urged the collective leadership of South Sudan to engage with regional efforts to de-escalate the situation and deliver the peaceful, just and prosperous future set out in the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of 2018. Current events were a sobering reminder that the Commission's monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation and its support for accountability efforts remained vital.
2. The sponsors regretted that, once again, they had been unable to reach consensus with South Sudan on a single consolidated text. However, he was grateful to Ambassador Deng of South Sudan for the ongoing and constructive discussions that had helped enrich the text of the draft resolution and welcomed the continued cooperation by the Government of South Sudan with the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan. The sponsors supported draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.23](#) on technical assistance and capacity-building for South Sudan put forward by the Group of African States. Taken together, the draft resolutions ensured a comprehensive and holistic approach to improving human rights in South Sudan. The sponsors therefore urged the Council to adopt draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.6](#) and, should a vote be called, to vote in favour.
3. **The President** announced that six States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had programme budget implications amounting to \$5,869,800.

General statements made before the voting

4. **Mr. Hassan** (Sudan) said that, despite the positive engagement of South Sudan with all human rights mechanisms and the flexibility it had shown, the main sponsors had not accommodated all its proposals, which could have strengthened and streamlined the text, avoided controversial language and unnecessary overlap between the mandates of the Commission and other mechanisms in the country and secured the consent of the State concerned. The Sudan noted with satisfaction the progress achieved thus far in implementing the Revitalized Agreement, which provided for monitoring and reporting mechanisms that should be considered, respected and supported. As the draft resolution did not enjoy the support of the State concerned, the Sudan called for a vote and called on all other members of the Council to join it in voting against the draft resolution.
5. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that the European Union commended the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for its reporting on widespread human rights violations and abuses being committed with impunity, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and conflict-related sexual violence. The European Union was deeply concerned at the deterioration of the situation in South Sudan, which represented the most serious challenge to the Revitalized Agreement since its signature. It urged all parties to immediately cease hostilities and return to implementing the Agreement. The European Union appreciated the engagement of South Sudan in the negotiations on the draft resolution and continued to encourage progress towards one consensual resolution on the country. Recent developments demonstrated the crucial need for the Commission as well as technical assistance. The European Union remained committed to supporting the people of South Sudan on their path to peace, reconciliation and accountability through the renewal of the Commission's mandate. Accordingly, the States

members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on others to do the same.

6. **Mr. Bekkers** (Kingdom of the Netherlands) said that his Government commended the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for its impartial monitoring and reporting on human rights, welcomed the enactment of legislation on transitional justice institutions and hoped to also see concrete and urgent steps taken towards their operationalization. However, it was concerned at the postponement of the elections, the ongoing human rights abuses and violations and the failure to punish perpetrators. The current escalation of violence between the parties to the Revitalized Agreement must be reversed to avoid a further deterioration of the human rights situation in South Sudan. The Commission's work was clearly vital and would remain so for some time. His delegation therefore called on all Council members to renew the Commission's mandate by voting in favour of the draft resolution.

7. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that China appreciated the efforts of the Government of South Sudan to promote and protect human rights, for instance through the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), accession to the core human rights treaties and the adoption of measures to combat crime and safeguard the rights of vulnerable groups, including women. China had always stood against the politicization of human rights and the imposition of country-specific human rights mechanisms. It was not in favour of renewing the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan because doing so would worsen the conflict and waste United Nations resources. Amid the escalation of the situation in South Sudan, China called on the parties to exercise restraint and cease hostile actions and on the Human Rights Council to take action to remedy the situation rather than adopt a politicized resolution. It called on Council members to vote against the draft resolution.

8. **The President** invited the State concerned by the draft resolution to make a statement.

9. **Mr. Deng** (Observer for South Sudan) said that South Sudan appreciated the main sponsors' constructive cooperation during several rounds of bilateral and informal consultations on the draft resolution, as well as the interest and input of other delegations. The main sponsors had accepted some of the amendments and suggestions made by his delegation and others, for instance to mention progress made in the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and to incorporate a regional perspective by referring to, among others, the role of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Tumaini Initiative led by Kenya. However, the draft resolution still contained terms such as "genocide" and "ethnic cleansing" that did not reflect the reality on the ground, as well as strong language, including the phrases "expressing grave concern" and "notes with regret", which failed to recognize the progress achieved and the Government's constructive cooperation. Moreover, common understanding had not been reached on the points that would have enabled South Sudan to join consensus on the renewal of the Commission's mandate. He wished to assure the Council that South Sudan would continue to cooperate, negotiate and engage constructively with the main sponsors and other delegations until consensus was reached on combining the two issues of the advancement of human rights and the provision of technical assistance, preferably under agenda item 10.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

10. **The President** announced that Germany had withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution.

11. **Ms. Gillhoff** (Germany) said that the rapidly deteriorating situation in South Sudan was gravely concerning. Germany firmly believed that all parties must do their utmost to uphold the Revitalized Agreement and further its implementation and therefore called on all actors to show restraint and recommit themselves to peace. It held in high regard the scrutiny and expert voice of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan and believed there was continued, even increased, need for the Commission and, consequently, for the renewal of its mandate through the draft resolution. Germany commended the main sponsors for

leading an open, respectful and transparent negotiation process, giving due consideration to all voices, and would continue to encourage the combining of the two resolutions on South Sudan under agenda item 2. For the time being, technical assistance alone was clearly insufficient. Germany would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on others to do the same.

12. *At the request of the representative of the Sudan, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechia, Dominican Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand.

Against:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Sudan.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Maldives, Morocco, Qatar, South Africa, Viet Nam.

13. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.6 was adopted by 24 votes to 6, with 17 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.30/Rev.1, as orally revised: Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice

14. **Mr. Ahmad** (Observer for Pakistan), introducing the draft resolution, as orally revised, on behalf of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, except Albania, said that the Palestinian people under occupation had faced horror upon horror in the past 18 months. Whether in the desolate Gaza Strip or the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Council had borne witness to a litany of crimes that demanded that justice be done. The draft resolution had been updated primarily to reflect the landmark advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 19 July 2024 on the illegality of the continued presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the recent findings of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, concerning the widespread and systematic use of sexual violence against the Palestinian people, particularly women and girls. The oral revisions underscored the need to prevent and punish incitement to genocide in Gaza, in line with the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice on 26 January 2024. In addition, the draft resolution invited the General Assembly to consider the establishment of an independent mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes under international law. Such a mechanism would be a natural complement to the Commission of Inquiry already established by the Council.

15. The just cause of the Palestinian people under occupation had always been anchored in their inalienable rights and the cardinal pillars of international law. The outrages of the past 75 years had been brought into focus by the televised assault on Palestinian lives, rights and dignity. International law remained clear, and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, as well as the many relevant resolutions of the Council, the General Assembly and the Security Council, had all affirmed what was right and necessary. Impunity for human rights violations enabled more and worse violations; therefore, the adoption of the draft resolution would signal the Council's strong resolve to end impunity for serial violators. He called on all Council members to adopt the draft resolution, as orally revised, by consensus.

16. **The President** announced that six States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had programme budget implications amounting to \$52,800.

General statements made before the voting

17. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that Cuba firmly supported the draft resolution and emphatically condemned the well-documented serious and systematic violations of human

rights committed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The current genocide followed on from over 70 years of illegal occupation, abuse and exclusion. Those responsible for and complicit in the barbarism must be held accountable and suffer the consequences of their actions, and Cuba would support the establishment of a United Nations mechanism to that end. The impunity with which Israel was acting was made possible by the brazen complicity of the United States of America, which protected the occupying Power with its veto and sent weapons and other military assistance. Those who were indifferent or silent were equally guilty. The measures contained in the draft resolution – the end of the unlawful occupation, the immediate reinstatement of the ceasefire, unimpeded humanitarian assistance, the lifting of the illegal blockade on the Gaza Strip, the end of arms transfers, the cessation of illegal settlements, compliance with the measures issued by the International Court of Justice and guarantees that any reconstruction plan would consider the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people – should be implemented as a matter of urgency. The United Nations and the Council could not continue to fail Palestine.

18. Cuba would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on all Council members to similarly express their support as the least that could be done on behalf of the more than 50,000 murdered Palestinians, mostly women and children. Cuba would always defend the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to build a sovereign independent State.

19. **Mr. Gallón** (Colombia) said that Colombia reaffirmed its solidarity with the Palestinian people and, in line with international law, General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 19 July 2024, reiterated its call for Israel to end its illegal occupation of and settlements in Palestinian territories in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

20. Colombia welcomed the fact that the draft resolution strongly condemned collective punishment, forced displacement and the use of starvation as a means of warfare, instances of which had been documented by various United Nations mechanisms and constituted serious violations of international humanitarian law. Efforts to rebuild Gaza must be led by the Palestinian people, with full respect for their right to self-determination and right of return, and States must comply with arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court to prevent impunity for the crimes committed against the Palestinian people. Accordingly, Colombia called on Council members to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

21. **Mr. Nkosi** (South Africa) said that the draft resolution lay at the core of the Council's mandate, since it was the lack of accountability that fuelled the genocidal actions of Israel, as illustrated by the renewed bombing campaign, undertaken in breach of the ceasefire, which had resulted in over 1,000 deaths since 18 March 2025. The more than 50,000 mostly children and women killed since October 2023 were not mere statistics – they were human beings who had been robbed of their most basic right to life. Despite the orders of the International Court of Justice and countless United Nations resolutions, the catalogue of horrors perpetrated by Israel knew no bounds. Beyond the targeting of civilians, Israel had destroyed vital infrastructure and homes, subjecting Palestinians to collective punishment. It also engaged in forcible transfers, used starvation as a weapon of war and blocked access to humanitarian aid. Survivors in the ruins of Gaza clung to a life of deprivation. South Africa reiterated its call for the ceasefire in Gaza to be respected and for the uninterrupted flow of humanitarian aid.

22. The voices of the victims had been loudly amplified in the work of the special procedures, and South Africa called on the Council to ensure that the Commission of Inquiry was allocated the resources necessary to continue its important work. South Africa was gravely concerned at the unconscionable personal attack against the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Ms. Francesca Albanese, which amounted to an attack on the integrity of the Council itself. The Council had a legal and moral obligation to ensure that Israel was held accountable. It could no longer choose to apply a parallel system of law to Israel, nor be complicit in facilitating its actions. Therefore, South Africa called on Council members to adopt the draft resolution by consensus and, in the absence of consensus, to follow their conscience and vote in support of the draft resolution.

23. **Mr. Bladehane** (Algeria), noting his delegation's principled and strong support for the draft resolution, said that there was a moral and legal obligation to ensure respect for the rule of law and international justice. The ongoing violations of international law committed with impunity, including unlawful killings, forced displacement, destruction of infrastructure, collective punishment and arbitrary arrests, jeopardized the prospects for peace. States should implement the advisory opinions and rulings of the International Court of Justice, as failure to do so would threaten the entire international legal order. Accountability was a prerequisite for lasting peace, and genuine peace could not be achieved without recognizing the legitimate rights of Palestinians, including their right to self-determination. Algeria called on the Council members to support the draft resolution. The Council's credibility hinged on its ability to practice what it preached.

24. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** (Spain) said that States must not forget that respect for international humanitarian and human rights law should be their compass with regard to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and anywhere else in the world where flagrant human rights violations were committed. The draft resolution was critical, as the Council was responsible for defending human rights as an essential pillar of peace, justice and democracy. Against the backdrop of the unbearable violence in Gaza and the West Bank, Spain reiterated the importance of all parties respecting human rights in the interest of peace in the region, including by releasing the hostages. Ensuring accountability for all and in all places was essential; therefore, Spain reaffirmed its support for the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and the mechanisms established by the Council, including the Commission of Inquiry. Spain urged Israel to cooperate with those mechanisms, OHCHR and the special procedures. Furthermore, in the current dire context, there was no substitute for the work carried out by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. Spain reiterated that the two-State solution was the only pathway to peace and to fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians. Therefore, Spain hoped to join consensus on the draft resolution but, if a vote was called, would vote in favour.

25. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that, as the draft resolution was being negotiated, Israel had broken the ceasefire agreement and had launched a new offensive on Gaza, leading to the deaths of a further 1,000 people, including at least 320 children, and had announced plans for the forcible displacement of the Palestinian people, which would constitute a serious violation of international law. Draft resolutions did not often need daily revisions to incorporate new instances of flagrant violations of human rights happening in real time. Chile emphatically condemned the killing by the Israeli Defence Forces of 14 paramedics and rescue personnel and a United Nations worker conducting humanitarian activities in Gaza, in an incident that constituted a serious violation of one of the basic tenets of international humanitarian law. Welcoming the fact that, in keeping with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, the draft resolution denounced the sexual violence being committed in Gaza, Chile recalled the responsibility of States and armed groups to take special protection measures for women and girls in the context of armed conflict. Chile invited the members of the Council to support the draft resolution on the grounds that States had a legal and moral obligation to ensure justice for victims and their families.

26. **Mr. Gunnarsson** (Iceland) said that the lack of accountability and justice continued to enable serious violations of human rights to be committed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the context of the full-blown military engagement since the terrible terrorist attacks by Hamas on 7 October 2023. Iceland was appalled by the recent decision by Israel to resume air strikes and shelling in Gaza. The human suffering witnessed every day was shocking and must end, and the parties to the conflict must agree on the next phase of the ceasefire, humanitarian access and the release of hostages. Iceland consistently condemned violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, supported investigations into such violations and demanded accountability for them. Attacking medical personnel and humanitarian and emergency workers was a clear violation of international humanitarian law. Iceland called on Israel to end its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in keeping with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 19 July 2024. It called on Council members to support the draft resolution.

27. **Mr. Habib** (Indonesia) said that his Government strongly condemned the renewed bombardment by Israel of the Gaza Strip, including during the holy month of Ramadan, and deplored the latest forced evacuation orders issued by Israel, targeting Palestinians living in Rafah. The blatant violation of the ceasefire agreement and the barbaric acts carried out against the Palestinian people once again demonstrated the persistent disregard by Israel of international law. The international community must act decisively to halt such atrocities by demanding that Israel, as the occupying Power, should respect and fully implement the ceasefire agreement.

28. The draft resolution was both timely and critical in the light of the grim developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially the Gaza Strip. It highlighted the need for the members of the Council to renew their collective commitment to upholding the rights of the Palestinian people, including their inalienable right to self-determination. The inclusion of references to the advisory opinion rendered in 2024 by the International Court of Justice reaffirmed that the continued presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was unlawful and must promptly be ended. His delegation supported the establishment of an international, impartial and independent mechanism, as proposed in the draft resolution, which would substantially strengthen global efforts to ensure accountability and justice in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. He therefore urged all the members of the Council to vote in favour of the draft resolution. If it was adopted, the members must collectively ensure its effective implementation, in particular with regard to the establishment of the proposed mechanism by the General Assembly. Indonesia wished to express its unwavering solidarity with the people of Palestine in achieving their fundamental rights and its support for the universal recognition of the Palestinian statehood.

29. **Ms. Macdonal Alvarez** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that her Government strongly condemned the unspeakable human rights violations being committed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by the occupying Power. Those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law must be held to account through independent and impartial national or international criminal justice mechanisms, and victims must be provided an effective remedy, including full reparations. Her Government condemned the killing of humanitarian personnel, including the recent attacks on humanitarian staff of the United Nations and of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, which were clear violations of international humanitarian law. Bolivia, as a member of The Hague Group, upheld the advisory opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2024. Her delegation wished to express its solidarity with the Palestinian people and called on all members to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

30. **The President** invited the States concerned by the draft resolution to make a statement.

31. **Mr. Khraishi** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that the retaliatory war that had begun 18 months previously had resulted thus far in the death or injury of some 170,000 people, mostly children and women. Moreover, the occupying Power continued to use starvation as a method of warfare, to deny humanitarian access and to target journalists and health workers, as well as institutions protected by law. The killing of 15 paramedics and rescue workers had been discovered in Rafah just a few days previously. Over 9,500 Palestinians were being held in Israeli prisons, including some 400 children and dozens of women, and the Israeli National Security Minister had recently outlined 10 punitive measures being imposed on Palestinian detainees – a clear violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention). Palestinian detainees should be released immediately. Despite the failure to convene the planned Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions on the implementation of the Fourth Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which had resulted from a lack of political will and the manifestation of double standards and politicization among the High Contracting Parties, his Government would pursue its efforts in relation to the establishment of a criminal investigation mechanism at the General Assembly.

32. He called on all States to stop exporting arms to Israel, as called for in the draft resolution, and to reconsider trade and diplomatic relations with that country, especially after its refusal to abide by the decisions of the International Court of Justice, including the provisional measures ordered in January 2024 in relation to the rights of the Palestinian

people in the Gaza Strip and the advisory opinion of July 2024 regarding the illegality of the Israeli occupation and the obligation of Israel to bring it to an end as rapidly as possible. He also urged all States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to enforce the arrest warrants issued against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Minister of Defence Yoav Gallant.

33. **The President** said that he understood that Israel did not have a representative in attendance to make a statement.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

34. **Mr. Bálek** (Czechia) said that his Government was deeply troubled by the ongoing suffering of the civilian population in Gaza, which deserved to live in peace and dignity. While the draft resolution contained a number of constructive elements and the main sponsors were to be commended for their efforts to address the urgent challenges in the region, it was important not to overlook the horrific terrorist attacks of 7 October 2023 that had plunged the region into the current cycle of conflict. It was unfortunate that the draft resolution did not take a more forceful stance in condemning the actions of Hamas that had affected the lives of civilians on all sides. Moreover, there was no clear link in the text between a durable ceasefire and the release of all the hostages. It was due to the unbalanced nature of the text that his delegation opposed the draft resolution and called for a vote on it. The establishment of a political horizon for a two-State solution remained of paramount importance. A negotiated settlement remained the only path for guaranteeing security, political stability and democratic development for both Israel and Palestine.

35. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that his Government was deeply concerned about the human rights and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in Gaza. The immediate priority was to implement the ceasefire agreement effectively and to promote constructive negotiations. The occupying Power should fulfil its obligations under international law, protect the Palestinian people's human rights and ensure the safe return of those who had been displaced. China consistently supported the just cause of Palestinians and called upon the international community to take steps to ensure a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the conflict. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on all members to do the same.

36. **Mr. Bekkers** (Kingdom of the Netherlands) said that his country deplored the resumption of fighting in Gaza and was deeply concerned at the catastrophic humanitarian situation in that area. His Government reiterated its call for the cessation of the hostilities and the release of the remaining hostages. All the parties to the conflict must adhere to international humanitarian law. His Government was committed to holding to account the perpetrators of international crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law. However, the draft resolution did not sufficiently address the role of Hamas. The fate of the hostages and the acts of sexual violence committed by Hamas on 7 October 2023 must never be forgotten. His delegation also had reservations about language that pre-empted current judicial investigations into alleged breaches of international humanitarian law. The Kingdom assessed the transfer of military equipment with particular caution and vigilance on a case-by-case basis, in keeping with its obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty and the common position of the Council of the European Union defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment. His delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution.

37. **Ms. Neocleous** (Cyprus) said that her delegation's principled position was founded on the unwavering commitment of Cyprus to accountability and justice and the responsibility of States to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law. Her Government supported the work of the International Court of Justice in a rules-based order with the United Nations at its core. Cyprus had recognized the State of Palestine since 1988. The Palestinian right to self-determination must not be associated with terrorist groups or attacks that did not represent the Palestinian people. Notwithstanding the aforementioned principles, her delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution, as it failed to address comprehensively the international context and ran the risk of being politically misinterpreted; moreover, it did not clearly condemn the attacks of 7 October 2023 by Hamas terrorists, including the hostage-taking and the sexual and gender-based violence committed

by them. Her Government recognized the right of Israel to self-defence within the limits of international law. Her delegation joined the calls for a resumption of negotiations for the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement, which would ensure the release of all the hostages and the unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid. The only sustainable way forward that met the security concerns and needs of the legitimate stakeholders was to revive the Middle East peace process on the basis of a two-State solution in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

38. **Mr. Sterk** (Bulgaria) said that his delegation appreciated the constructive approach of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the delegation of the State of Palestine, in particular, during the negotiation of the text of the draft resolution, notably in responding to some of the concerns raised by the European Union. Bulgaria remained deeply concerned about the disastrous humanitarian situation in Gaza and its disproportionate effects on civilians, particularly women and children. Immediate measures must be taken to prevent any further population displacement and ensure that civilians and humanitarian staff, including United Nations personnel, were protected at all times. All the parties to the conflict must comply with international law and the decisions of the International Court of Justice. Bulgaria continued to support a comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on a two-State solution. Nevertheless, his delegation was concerned that the draft resolution did not clearly and explicitly condemn Hamas for its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 and that it did not include a stronger call for the release of the hostages. Although it recognized the efforts made by the drafters of the text, his delegation considered that some elements rendered its applicability inequitable, and so would abstain from voting on it.

39. *At the request of the representative of Czechia, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Gambia, Ghana, Iceland, Indonesia, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Viet Nam.

Against:

Czechia, Ethiopia, Germany, North Macedonia.

Abstaining:

Albania, Benin, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, France, Georgia, Japan, Kenya, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Republic of Korea, Romania.

40. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.30/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted by 27 votes to 4, with 16 abstentions.*

41. **The President** invited delegations to make statements in explanation of vote or general statements on either of the draft resolutions considered under agenda item 2.

42. **Mr. Da Silva Nunes** (Brazil) said that his Government was extremely concerned at the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the unprecedented disregard for the principles of international humanitarian law shown by Israel in its disproportionate response to the attacks by Hamas on 7 October 2023. The Israeli occupation, which continued in complete disregard of international law, including the recent advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, denied the Palestinian people their basic human rights. Any plan for a better future must address the past, making accountability and justice for violations crucial. His delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.30/Rev.1](#), as orally revised, because of its view that credible, timely and comprehensive accountability for all violations of international law was fundamental to breaking the unrelenting cycle of violence and impunity. The recent death of a Brazilian citizen in an Israeli prison, the circumstances and exact date of which had not been clarified, served as a stark example of the prevailing lack of accountability. All parties must respect international humanitarian and human rights law and must end all human rights violations. His delegation called on all parties to cooperate with the special procedure mandate holders, including the Independent International Commission of Inquiry. It was expected that

international investigative mechanisms would complement the work of the Commission of Inquiry. Brazil was committed to a two-State solution under which an economically viable State of Palestine could live side by side with Israel in peace and security within the 1967 agreed borders, including the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem as its capital.

43. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that Japan unequivocally condemned the terrorist attacks by Hamas and other parties on Israel and had consistently called for the immediate release of the hostages. His Government stressed the importance of protecting civilians and urged all parties to act in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law, and in good faith on the basis of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, including by ensuring access to humanitarian assistance. His Government welcomed the ceasefire agreement that had entered into force in January 2025, which had enabled the release of many hostages and represented an important step towards improving the situation on the ground; it supported continued mediation efforts in that regard. At the same time, Japan was deeply concerned about the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the many casualties, including civilians, resulting from the military operations conducted by the Israeli forces. While many aspects of draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.30/Rev.1](#), as orally revised, reflected the current situation in Gaza, his delegation found some language, which appeared to prejudge the legal outcome of matters still pending, inappropriate. As a result, his delegation had abstained from voting. He hoped that further discussions would be held on issues relating to the establishment of the new mechanism described in paragraph 46 of the resolution, including with regard to the complementary mandates of the Council and the General Assembly.

44. **Ms. Berananda** (Thailand) said that her Government supported the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and the peacekeeping operation in South Sudan, to which it had contributed 273 peacekeepers, including 28 female officers. It welcomed the positive steps taken by South Sudan, including the setting up of two key human rights institutions, and looked forward to further progress, including the establishment of justice system infrastructure that would facilitate the transition towards peace, stability and sustainable development. Her Government also welcomed the role of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan. As one of the main sponsors of draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.23](#), on technical assistance and capacity-building for South Sudan, Thailand continued to believe that the most sustainable solution to human rights challenges must be nationally driven and that capacity-building remained essential in that regard. As such, draft resolutions [A/HRC/58/L.6](#) and [A/HRC/58/L.23](#) were complementary in nature, and her delegation hoped that the Council would in future adopt by consensus a single resolution on South Sudan, supported by the country and reflecting its progress.

Agenda item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

([A/HRC/58/L.1](#), [A/HRC/58/L.4/Rev.1](#), [A/HRC/58/L.5](#), [A/HRC/58/L.9](#), [A/HRC/58/L.16](#) and [A/HRC/58/L.17/Rev.1](#))

Draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.1](#): The negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights

45. **Mr. Kafeero** (Observer for Uganda), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that it was largely composed of text from the previously adopted resolution on the topic, with some new language informed by developments in the human rights field. Specifically, reference was made in the preambular paragraphs to the International Conference on Sanctions, Business and Human Rights organized by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, held in Geneva in November 2024, and to the guiding principles on sanctions, business and human rights presented by the Special Rapporteur at the Conference. The draft resolution also referred to the impact assessment and monitoring tool launched by the Special Rapporteur to assess, document, report on and follow up on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights. By adopting the draft resolution, the Council would invite relevant stakeholders to provide information for the tool

to ensure impartiality and comprehensiveness of assessments and would call upon OHCHR to continue to provide the necessary technical and financial support for the operationalization of the monitoring tool as a stable mechanism under the auspices of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

46. It was well established that unilateral coercive measures in the form of economic sanctions and secondary sanctions had far-reaching implications for the enjoyment of human rights by the general population of targeted States, disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable people. By adopting the draft resolution, the Council would request the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to prepare, in close cooperation with the Special Rapporteur, an in-depth study review – drawing on existing available resources and, if necessary, supplemented by voluntary contributions – on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to health of individuals in vulnerable situations, particularly women and children.

47. The draft resolution condemned the inhuman approach of unilateral coercive measures, which were often imposed by developed countries on the least developed and developing countries; under no circumstances should people be deprived of their basic means of survival or access to critical infrastructure, services and goods on account of unilateral coercion by another State that was economically powerful. The sponsors invited all members of the Council to support the draft resolution.

48. **The President** announced that one State had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

General statements made before the voting

49. **Mr. Nkosi** (South Africa) said that the Human Rights Council was the appropriate forum for addressing all matters related to the enjoyment of human rights, including unilateral coercive measures, which had a negative impact on their enjoyment. Such measures were a blunt instrument used without multilateral consent and were a violation of the normal rules of engagement between States. His delegation recognized the invaluable work done by OHCHR and the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in studying and disseminating information on such measures, whose negative impact had been exacerbated by overcompliance by banks, businesses, and medical and pharmaceutical companies, out of fear of potential penalties. His delegation welcomed the request, in the draft resolution, for a study on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to health of persons in vulnerable situations and supported the use of the assessment tool launched by the Special Rapporteur to evaluate and mitigate the human rights impact of unilateral coercive measures, the means of their enforcement and overcompliance. Without a systematic assessment, it could not be asserted that such measures had no impact on individuals, their human rights or the delivery of and access to humanitarian assistance. It was imperative to bridge the gaps in understanding and to foster dialogue on the issue, bearing in mind the interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights and the interconnectedness of the international system. The international community's actions must be guided by a victim-centred approach in line with the principles of human rights, equity and solidarity. He urged the members of the Council to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

50. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that unilateral coercive measures were contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations and must cease to be imposed and implemented. He welcomed the launch by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights of a tool to assess, document and follow up on the negative impact of such measures on human rights and called on all States to work with the Special Rapporteur in that regard. The ongoing economic embargo imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba was one of the broadest and longest series of unilateral coercive measures ever to have been applied against any country. It constituted a flagrant violation of the human rights of the Cuban people and amounted to the crime of genocide. It was a collective punishment, proscribed by international law and international humanitarian law. The illegal policy applied by the United States served as a warning to the world that any nation that dared to defend its sovereignty and build a future for itself would pay a hefty price for its rebelliousness.

51. His delegation welcomed the fact that the draft resolution included a request to States to refrain from drawing up unilateral lists, such as the list of States that allegedly sponsored terrorism arbitrarily drawn up by the United States, which included Cuba. The list, which had no legitimacy and nothing to do with the fight against terrorism, was the cause of enormous economic and humanitarian damage. His Government appreciated the recent statement issued by a group of special procedure mandate holders of the Council demanding the withdrawal of Cuba from the list and the immediate lifting of the embargo against Cuba, in line with the 32 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the issue. The Cuban delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and invited all Council members to do the same.

52. **Mr. Daka** (Ethiopia) said that his Government strongly advocated for the removal of unilateral coercive measures, which impeded the right to development, hindered humanitarian aid and worsened the socioeconomic conditions of entire populations, particularly those of the least developed and developing countries. It shared the concerns raised in the draft resolution about the adverse effects of such measures on fundamental human rights, especially of women, children and marginalized groups. The continued application of unilateral coercive measures undermined the principles of equity, justice and human dignity and their extraterritorial impact, particularly as a result of overcompliance by international businesses and financial institutions, often led to humanitarian crises. The international community must take steps to prevent such overcompliance and to ensure that humanitarian aid reached those in need. Ethiopia supported the call for dialogue and peaceful means of resolving differences between States, rather than relying on coercive measures. It endorsed the need for an impartial and independent mechanism within the United Nations system to address the adverse impact of such measures on human rights. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

53. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that the European Union appreciated the respectful and transparent exchange of views held during the informal consultations. While it agreed that States should refrain from adopting and implementing illegal unilateral measures, it rejected the fundamental misconception in the draft resolution that all unilateral measures were contrary to international law and negatively impacted the enjoyment of human rights. Autonomous legal measures could be introduced in response to flagrant violations of international law, especially when the adoption of sanctions by the United Nations was made impossible by the obstruction of certain Security Council members. A number of Member States had already imposed such sanctions. The sanctions imposed by the European Union were aimed at stemming or averting serious violations of international law and had positive implications in defending human rights, the rule of law, peace and security. They were never an end in themselves, but always a measure of last resort, when diplomatic efforts had failed to achieve a positive result. They were targeted at those responsible for wrongful policies or actions, were based on legally robust evidence and were regularly reviewed. Designated persons and entities could challenge restrictive measures before the Court of Justice of the European Union; a number of such challenges had been successful. The sanctions had no extraterritorial application and did not impose general prohibitions on trade or other economic activity. They also contained humanitarian exemptions to ensure that they did not have any unintended adverse humanitarian consequences. To further prevent and, when unavoidable, mitigate overcompliance, the European Union undertook various support and outreach activities. Moreover, the European Union maintained its commitment to providing development assistance and humanitarian aid in countries to which sanctions were applied. The European Union remained open to collaborating with the Non-Aligned Movement on issues relating to the draft resolution. However, given the fundamental misconception in the draft resolution, his delegation was compelled to call for a vote; the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote against it.

54. **Mr. Espinosa Olivera** (Mexico) said that Mexico was opposed to the use of unilateral coercive measures, which were contrary to international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) concerning friendly relations and cooperation among States. However, his delegation regretted the focus of the draft resolution, which failed to take account of concerns that had been raised on various occasions.

In particular, Mexico did not consider the Human Rights Council to be the appropriate forum for addressing the consequences of failures to comply with international law such as those that might arise when unilateral coercive measures were applied in a manner contrary to established norms. Furthermore, affirmations that could be interpreted as placing conditions on States' compliance with their human rights obligations should be avoided. The delegation of Mexico would therefore abstain from voting on the draft resolution.

55. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that his Government rejected the imposition of unilateral and extraterritorial measures by any State against another State that were not in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. It reiterated its long-standing position that international inclusion, dialogue and cooperation should be prioritized as the most effective tools for promoting friendly relations among States and their peoples. The only way to achieve development was through full respect for the rule of law, with strong democratic institutions, the separation of powers and an environment that fostered accountability and transparency and ensured the effective protection and promotion of the human rights of all.

56. The latest iteration of the draft resolution continued to give the impression that the imposition of illegal unilateral coercive measures gave targeted States a pretext for not fulfilling their human rights obligations. It was not clear how such measures affected the right to freedom of expression or freedom of peaceful protest, among other civil and political rights, or how they might affect military expenses, which were ever increasing. Another issue of concern was the legal confusion surrounding the concept of sovereignty in the twenty-fifth preambular paragraph of the text: sovereignty was a principle, not a right. Any violation of or interference with that principle was possibly an issue of security and international law, but not one of human rights. His delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution.

57. **The President** announced that Chile and Colombia had withdrawn their sponsorship of the draft resolution.

58. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that her delegation supported the draft resolution. Chilean foreign policy was guided by the principles of multilateralism, the peaceful settlement of disputes and constructive dialogue between States at the United Nations. The use of unilateral coercive measures was not in keeping with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles that governed peaceful relations between States, and could negatively impact the enjoyment of human rights, the free circulation of goods and services and international cooperation, thereby jeopardizing achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the provision of humanitarian assistance. There was evidence that such measures disproportionately affected the most vulnerable groups and could have grave humanitarian consequences.

59. Her delegation's support for the draft resolution should not be interpreted as support for any regimes or individuals responsible for grave violations of human rights that had been subjected to individual coercive measures; no sanction could justify such acts. Chile reiterated its call to States to abstain from adopting any unilateral measures that were not in line with international law and the Charter, and categorically rejected any attempt to politicize the draft resolution, the spirit of which should be focused on protecting the human rights of persons affected by such measures.

60. **Mr. Gallón** (Colombia) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution. The use of unilateral coercive measures was contrary to the spirit of the Charter and the principles that governed peaceful relations between States. Although the imposition of such measures could adversely affect the enjoyment of human rights, free trade and international cooperation between States, it did not excuse targeted States from responsibility for committing grave human rights violations or crimes against humanity, or from international scrutiny of their compliance with international human rights law. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had established in its general comment No. 8 (1997) on the relationship between economic sanctions and respect for economic, social and cultural rights that any targeted State must respect the civil and political rights of its citizens and do everything possible to protect at least the core content of the economic, social and cultural rights of the affected peoples of that State.

61. Unilateral coercive measures were measures of an economic, financial or commercial nature. Country-specific action taken by the Council through its mechanisms and special procedures did not constitute unilateral coercive measures, and Colombia would continue to defend it as a legitimate multilateral tool for addressing grave and persistent violations of human rights at the international level. Discussions in the Council on unilateral coercive measures and their impact on human rights should be objective and impartial.

62. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that unilateral coercive measures constituted typical acts of unilateralism, which exemplified power politics and the law of the jungle. Such measures seriously violated the purposes and principles of the Charter and the basic norms of international relations, gravely undermining international peace and stability, the development and prosperity of countries and the human rights of the people of sanctioned countries. Her Government firmly opposed the indiscriminate imposition of such measures and hoped that the international community would recognize their illegal and harmful nature. Her delegation welcomed the reference in the draft resolution to the guiding principles on sanctions, business and human rights presented by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and the establishment of the Sanctions Research Platform. It called on the international community to support the Special Rapporteur in discharging her mandate by providing her with relevant data. Her delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on other members of the Council to do likewise.

63. *At the request of the representative of Spain, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Maldives, Morocco, Qatar, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Viet Nam.

Against:

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Switzerland.

Abstaining:

Costa Rica, Marshall Islands, Mexico.

64. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.1 was adopted by 28 votes to 16, with 3 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.4/Rev.1: Cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage

65. **Ms. Neocleous** (Cyprus), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Ethiopia, Greece, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Mali, Poland, Serbia and her own delegation, said that its main objective was to consolidate a human rights-based approach to protecting cultural heritage. Since 2016, the Council had adopted three resolutions on the development of tools to promote the protection, restoration and preservation of cultural heritage while promoting universal respect for cultural rights. At the current session, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights had presented his report on the intersessional workshop on cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage (A/HRC/58/35), as mandated in the previous resolution in the topic, which contained recommendations on the development of those tools.

66. The draft resolution under consideration was focused on digitization, an innovative process that was transforming how individuals engaged with, preserved and shared cultural heritage. While it was perceived as a catalyst for narrowing digital divides, digitization was often conducted without sufficient adherence to human and cultural rights frameworks. The draft resolution was intended to reinforce efforts to ground digitization initiatives in human rights principles, including through strategies to ensure meaningful access to digital heritage by addressing all digital divides, especially for persons in vulnerable situations, and promoting consultation with heritage communities regarding the meaning they attached to

their heritage. It included a request for the High Commissioner to develop tools for the dissemination of an approach to digital heritage tools aligned with the principles for the protection of cultural rights and to convene a one-day workshop to discuss good practices and challenges in digitizing cultural heritage.

67. The main sponsors had conducted extensive consultations with all delegations and had taken many suggestions into account with the aim of ensuring that the text was balanced and built upon agreed language. They hoped that all members of the Council would support the draft resolution by consensus.

68. **The President** announced that 20 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had programme budget implications amounting to \$383,100.

General statements made before the decision

69. **Mr. Simas Magalhães** (Brazil) said that his Government supported the essential role played by the Council in consolidating norms and best practices for promoting human rights, including cultural rights, globally. Although synergies between the different bodies of the United Nations system should be encouraged with a view to ensuring the protection of human rights, the Council should endeavour to avoid overlaps with the mandates of specialized bodies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Inter-agency cooperation should be guided by mutual institutional respect with the aim of ensuring normative and operational coherence in the United Nations system. Such discussions should, among other topics, address situations of armed conflict, which had an impact on people's enjoyment of their right to access their own cultural heritage.

70. A significant part of the cultural heritage of developing countries was held by museums in other States. His delegation called on States to strengthen international cooperation on the return of cultural property of spiritual, ancestral, historical and cultural value to countries of origin. Market countries in particular needed to strengthen measures to prevent the illicit trafficking of cultural property, including by providing appropriate training to customs and border officials. His delegation also strongly encouraged private entities to play a proactive role in enhancing their procedures for determining the legal provenance of cultural property that they acquired or sold. It hoped that such issues would be addressed in future resolutions related to cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage.

71. **Mr. Espinosa Olivera** (Mexico) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution, which addressed both positive aspects of the digitization of cultural heritage and related challenges. While digital technologies could facilitate the creation and dissemination of cultural heritage and engagement with it, if their role was not considered from a human rights perspective they could exacerbate existing societal gaps, to the detriment in particular of persons in situations of vulnerability. His delegation welcomed the specific reference made in the draft resolution to the importance of the role played by people of African descent and Indigenous Peoples in protecting and preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The delegation of Mexico also appreciated the reference to initiatives for the repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains of Indigenous Peoples, as voluntary mechanisms alone were insufficient without the participation of Indigenous Peoples and explicit recognition of their rights. His Government, which had hosted the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development in 2022, especially welcomed the reference in the draft resolution to the declaration adopted at that Conference in which culture was recognized as a global public good.

72. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that the European Union welcomed the draft resolution and the request in it for OHCHR to develop appropriate tools for the dissemination of an approach to digital heritage, including digitization of cultural heritage, that promoted universal respect for cultural rights by all. Unprecedented opportunities created by digital technologies were revitalizing cultural heritage, and virtual museums, for example, provided people with new ways of experiencing otherwise inaccessible works of art. The European Union actively supported efforts to improve access to and engagement with cultural activities through various projects funded under the Creative Europe and Horizon Europe programmes. The one-day workshop proposed in the draft resolution, which

would explore ways of further integrating cultural rights into digitization efforts, was more relevant than ever at a time when cultural heritage was evolving rapidly thanks to digital technologies. The European Union hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

73. **Mr. Hamad** (Sudan) said that one of the important issues addressed in the draft resolution was the role of technology and international cooperation in combating the looting and smuggling of and illicit trafficking in cultural objects and in restoring stolen cultural property to its country of origin. Reference was made in the draft resolution to the destruction and pillaging of cultural heritage sites by non-State actors in the context of conflicts. The situation in his own country was a case in point. The Sudan National Museum, the Khalifa House Museum, the Republican Palace Museum and other sites in Sudan had been looted and damaged by the Rapid Support Forces, and some artefacts had been smuggled abroad. His delegation called for the draft resolution to be adopted by consensus.

74. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that his delegation appreciated the complementarity between the draft resolution and draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.13](#), presented by Cuba, on the promotion of the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for cultural diversity. It was pleased that the right of everyone to take part in cultural life was recognized in the draft resolution, as was the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in developing actions to protect cultural heritage and promote cultural diversity. At a time when some Governments were attempting to impose a single cultural model on the world, efforts to protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which was of crucial importance for the historical and cultural memory of peoples, needed to be stepped up. Cuba reiterated its commitment to implementing the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. His delegation supported the draft resolution because it believed that the protection of cultural heritage and cultural diversity was essential for guaranteeing full respect for human rights, promoting dialogue between peoples and building peace.

75. **Mr. Daka** (Ethiopia) said that Ethiopia was deeply committed to preserving cultural heritage and was proud to join others in promoting the recognition and protection of cultural rights as fundamental human rights. The collaborative efforts of the draft resolution's sponsors had been crucial to ensuring that it addressed the need for global cooperation to safeguard cultural heritage for future generations. His delegation recognized the essential role that cultural heritage played in shaping the identity, history and values of all peoples. Its protection was crucial not only for maintaining the cultural identity of communities but also for fostering peaceful coexistence, promoting sustainable development and advancing human dignity for all. As a country with ancient traditions, practices and languages that spanned millennia, Ethiopia supported the call for an enhanced international response to protect cultural heritage and for international cooperation for the return and restitution of looted cultural property. The emphasis placed in the draft resolution on developing innovative approaches to digital heritage would help bridge existing divides and ensure wider access and engagement with cultural heritage, particularly for marginalized communities. The holistic approach to the protection and preservation of cultural heritage outlined in the draft resolution involved the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, including Governments, civil society, local communities and Indigenous Peoples, in fostering a comprehensive and inclusive strategy to that end. His delegation called upon all members of the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

76. **Mr. Gallón** (Colombia) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution and valued the importance that was attached to the cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples. Since 2022, his Government had been actively engaged in diplomacy and dialogue with other States with a view to repatriating more than 800 items that formed part of the cultural heritage of the Indigenous Peoples of Colombia. It therefore supported the initiatives mentioned in the draft resolution for the return of cultural property. His delegation was grateful to the sponsors for having incorporated its suggestion to highlight the importance of the cultural heritage of people of African descent in the context of the proclamation of the second International Decade for People of African Descent in General Assembly resolution 79/193. His delegation urged Council members to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

77. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that China attached importance to the right to culture and the protection of cultural heritage and supported the efforts made by the international community to that end. Her delegation was concerned that the draft resolution still contained references to “cultural rights defenders”, which was not a clear concept or consensual language. Nevertheless, the delegation of China would join the consensus on the draft resolution and hoped that the sponsors would take her delegation’s views into consideration in future resolutions on the topic.

78. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.4/Rev.1 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.5: Freedom of religion or belief

79. **Mr. Broilo** (Observer for Poland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the European Union, said that it provided for the renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief for an additional three years and included a call for Governments to cooperate fully with the mandate holder and to step up their efforts to promote and protect freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, with an emphasis on the importance of a continued and strengthened dialogue in that regard. The European Union had once again brought the draft resolution on that topic before the Council because the free exercise of the right to freedom of religion or belief, which contributed directly to democracy, development, the rule of law, peace and stability, was far from being achieved. Reports about discrimination and even persecution of persons belonging to religious minorities or who chose not to believe, or to change their religion or belief, persisted. The Council had heard earlier in the session that acts of torture and ill-treatment were often committed on the basis of religious intolerance and discrimination. The European Union was grateful for the contributions that had been made to the draft resolution and to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in particular for its constructive engagement. The draft resolution complemented draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.18](#) on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief. The European Union hoped that the draft resolution would once again be adopted by consensus.

80. **The President** announced that 10 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had programme budget implications amounting to \$257,100.

General statements made before the decision

81. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that his delegation recognized the importance of protecting the right to freely choose one’s religion or belief, or to profess no religion. The draft resolution was timely given recent concerning manifestations of discrimination on religious grounds, particularly in developed countries. Cuba condemned all forms of religious intolerance, including Islamophobia. His delegation rejected the manipulation of religious freedoms to promote political agendas that were alien to religious practice and the protection of human rights. No country had the right to preach to the rest of the world. With its typical hypocrisy, the Government of the United States had established a list of countries based on politically motivated judgments about the extent of religious freedom in them, in which Cuba had arbitrarily been included. The existence of that list, which his Government rejected, demonstrated that the Government of the United States needed to resort to dishonest accusations to justify taking inhumane steps such as the imposition of unilateral coercive measures, which violated the human rights of the Cuban population. His delegation supported the draft resolution and hoped that it would help to strengthen the international legal framework and prevent intolerance, discrimination and violence on religious grounds.

82. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.5 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.9: Neurotechnology and human rights

83. **Mr. Selinis** (Observer for Greece), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely Chile, Singapore, Switzerland and his own delegation, said that while neurotechnology had the potential to contribute to improvements in diverse areas, including accessibility and mobility, communications and education, its rapid development raised critical ethical, legal and societal questions, particularly concerning human dignity,

autonomy and privacy. It was essential in that context to ensure that human rights were protected.

84. The draft resolution was based on the findings of the report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee on the impact, opportunities and challenges of neurotechnology with regard to the promotion and protection of all human rights (A/HRC/57/61) and included references to ongoing developments in other United Nations forums and work carried out by other mandate holders of the Council. Special emphasis had been placed on issues such as enabling access for all persons to human rights-compliant, safe and reliable neurotechnologies and ensuring prior, free and explicit consent for all neurotechnological interventions. The importance of applying the existing human rights framework to address the challenges and realize the opportunities of neurotechnologies was also highlighted. The draft resolution included a request for the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to draft a set of recommended guidelines for applying the existing human rights framework to the conception, design, development, testing, use and deployment of neurotechnologies.

85. The main sponsors had endeavoured to incorporate the constructive contributions made by member States and civil society into the draft resolution to the extent possible. They invited the Council to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

86. **The President** announced that 24 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

General statements made before the decision

87. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that since the main sponsors of the draft resolution had presented the first resolution on the topic at the fifty-first session, there had been significant progress in various areas of neurotechnology, and the value of the global neurotechnology market was growing rapidly. Neurotechnology presented major opportunities in the field of health and had the potential to improve the lives of people with Parkinson's disease, epilepsy and other conditions. At the same time, the capacity of States to respond to such developments and the speed with which they were able to do so resulted in gaps in the promotion and protection of human rights that made some people vulnerable. The report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee indicated that neurotechnology presented significant challenges in particular for the rights to privacy, physical integrity, freedom of thought and due process and the prohibition of torture and other cruel or degrading treatment. The role of the Council was thus crucial. The development of guidelines, as proposed in the draft resolution, would represent a significant step forward in bridging gaps in the protection of human rights in the context of neurotechnology. The continuing development of neurotechnologies would necessitate a continued collective effort to regulate them at all stages of their life cycle. Her delegation hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

88. **Ms. Too** (Kenya) said that her delegation appreciated the effort made by the drafters to address the complex ethical, legal and societal implications of neurotechnology. As the African "Silicon Savannah", Kenya had made contributions to the draft resolution that included highlighting the need to ensure equitable access to emerging technologies, particularly with a view to driving sustainable development. It was essential to ensure that such technologies served all of humanity, including people in vulnerable situations, in line with the principle of non-discrimination.

89. Her delegation welcomed the emphasis placed on the importance of recognizing that neurodata were highly sensitive and needed to be handled securely, particularly in the light of challenges faced by the global South regarding data sovereignty. Future resolutions on the topic should address issues such as technology transfer, which was crucial for bridging all digital divides and ensuring that the benefits of neurotechnology were globally accessible. Her Government advocated employing the precautionary principle in the life cycle of such technologies and addressing their potential weaponization. The drafting of recommended guidelines, as requested in the draft resolution, was essential to addressing such concerns. Her delegation invited all member States to engage robustly with those issues with a view to ensuring that the development, deployment and use of such technologies were aligned with relevant international and human rights laws. The draft resolution represented a vital

opportunity to create a foundation for responsible innovation and address concerns in a way that upheld human dignity and protected both the very essence of human beings and equitable access to cutting-edge technologies, especially in the medical field, while mitigating risks.

90. **Ms. Popa** (Romania) said that Romania welcomed the continued attention that the Council devoted to the intersection between technological innovation and the protection of fundamental rights. The draft resolution was well calibrated, inclusive, timely and forward-looking, and acknowledged both the transformative potential of neurotechnologies and the complexity of their ethical, legal and societal dimensions. Her delegation commended the balance achieved in the text between recalling the essential role of a human rights-based framework in the development and application of neurotechnology and recognizing the potential of such technology to promote health, accessibility and inclusion. The principles of informed, explicit and revocable consent and the protection of persons in vulnerable situations, which were highlighted in the draft resolution, were critical safeguards for upholding human dignity. Romania welcomed the contributions made to the draft resolution from across the United Nations system, including the findings of special rapporteurs and the ethical reflections of the International Bioethics Committee. Her delegation reaffirmed its belief that progress and dignity must go hand in hand and that neurotechnologies, if governed responsibly, could indeed serve humanity. Romania would join the consensus on the draft resolution.

91. **Mr. Gallón** (Colombia) said that the importance of the topic addressed by the draft resolution, which outlined the link between neurotechnology and the rights to freedom of expression and privacy and other issues such as mental health, had been demonstrated during the informal consultations. His delegation welcomed the incorporation into the text of the input received from the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy, who had drawn attention to the Inter-American Declaration of Principles regarding Neuroscience, Neurotechnologies and Human Rights. The Colombian delegation was also grateful for the drafters' acceptance of its proposal to highlight one of those principles, namely, respect for human dignity, in the text. Future resolutions on the topic could be strengthened by including references to a human rights-based approach and placing greater emphasis on the key role played by businesses and the private sector. His delegation was pleased to support the draft resolution and called on the Council to adopt it by consensus.

92. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that the Human Rights Council was the appropriate forum for enriching the debate on neurotechnology and promoting its progressive development with a human rights-based approach. As significant advances in such technology emerged, it was essential for the Council to call for its democratization and to work to address the multiple and intersecting forms of technological discrimination, including the gender-related digital divide. Tackling those issues was particularly important for developing countries such as his own.

93. The draft resolution rightly recognized that, while neurotechnology could be promising for human health and innovation, the continued development of some of its applications could pose a number of ethical, legal and societal questions and had implications for human dignity and autonomy. The erosion of mental privacy, the loss of cognitive freedom, mass surveillance, mind control and neurodiscrimination were just some of the main human rights challenges presented by neurotechnology. It was therefore regrettable that, despite the insistence of his and many other delegations, the draft resolution did not explicitly mention that the best way to guide the development of neurotechnology was through the adoption of a human rights-based approach. That omission was especially disappointing given the significant impact that the text could have and the position of the Council as the foremost human rights forum. A human rights-based approach should guide all policies, plans, measures and legal regulations on neurotechnology. His delegation hoped that future resolutions on the topic would explore some of the main human rights challenges presented by neurotechnology, including the hacking of brain data and the potential use of artificial intelligence-driven neuromodulation to influence an individual's political opinions and purchasing decisions, in greater detail.

94. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.9 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.16: The negative impact of the non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin to the countries of origin on the enjoyment of human rights, and the importance of improving international cooperation

95. **Mr. Antwi** (Ghana), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of African States, said that Africa lost billions of dollars annually to illicit capital flows. That alarming phenomenon undermined democratic governance, weakened the rule of law and compromised social, economic and political progress. It was therefore urgent for assets of illicit origin, particularly those derived from corruption, to be returned in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

96. The draft resolution included references to the intersessional expert meeting on the obstacles to the repatriation of funds of illicit origin and the report of the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights. It also included a request to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize, prior to the sixty-second session of the Council, a one-day intersessional expert meeting on strengthening international cooperation and shared responsibilities in facilitating the repatriation of illicit funds to advance human rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, and, before the sixty-third session, a regional expert meeting in Africa on ways to support governments' efforts in repatriating funds of illicit origin to advance the realization of those rights. Those meetings would offer Member States and other stakeholders the opportunity to discuss challenges, share good practices and formulate actionable recommendations. His delegation called on members of the Council to support the draft resolution and work with the African continent to tackle the non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin, thereby mitigating its negative impact on human rights.

97. **The President** announced that 11 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had programme budget implications amounting to \$897,700.

General statements made before the voting

98. **Mr. Bladehane** (Algeria) said that his delegation wished to express its full support for the draft resolution. It was widely accepted that the diversion and flight of funds of illicit origin deprived developing countries of resources that were essential for their economic and social development. Such funds, which were often derived from corruption, tax avoidance and other illicit financial practices, undermined national efforts to tackle poverty, promote economic and social rights and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Their non-repatriation had a direct, adverse impact on the development policies of the countries concerned, which was disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable groups, and thus constituted a clear violation of the right to development.

99. While the United Nations Convention against Corruption established the repatriation of illicit funds as a fundamental pillar in the fight against that phenomenon, the reality was that efforts to return such funds to countries of origin continued to be hampered by various legal, administrative and political obstacles. For that reason, his delegation wished to stress the need for enhanced international cooperation and genuine political will to guarantee the prompt and effective return of illicit funds. Achieving that objective would require the lifting of the unjustified restrictions and barriers imposed by certain jurisdictions in response to requests for the return of illicit assets. There was also a need for greater transparency and improved cooperation among the judicial and banking sectors during investigations into illicitly acquired assets.

100. His delegation reiterated its call for a fairer and more effective international framework that would enable countries that fell victim to illicit financial practices to recover their legitimate resources and reinvest them to promote the development and well-being of their population. It urged all members to support the draft resolution as a sign of their common commitment to global economic justice and effective respect for human rights.

101. **Mr. Daka** (Ethiopia) said that his delegation fully supported efforts to ensure the effective repatriation of illicit funds. Doing so was a matter of urgency; the flow of such funds, which often originated in developing countries, deprived those countries of the critical resources needed to guarantee sustainable development, poverty reduction and the full

realization of human rights. The challenges associated with the recovery of illicit funds were all too familiar to African countries, whose efforts to achieve sustainable development and combat inequalities were being hampered by the loss of billions of dollars every year.

102. The draft resolution outlined the significant consequences that illicit financial flows had on development, stability, democracy and the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also outlined the importance of collective action, which reflected his delegation's belief that the only way to combat corruption and ensure that the proceeds of crime were returned to countries of origin was through multilateral cooperation. The draft resolution represented a necessary step towards improving that cooperation and was an important tool for fostering trust and ensuring the effective use of resources for the benefit of developing countries. His delegation strongly supported the draft resolution and urged the Council to adopt it by consensus.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

103. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that Japan was a Party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and attached great importance to asset recovery and international cooperation in that area. The fact remained, however, that discussions on asset recovery should be held in the appropriate forum, which, in the case of the highly technical and specialized issues addressed in the draft resolution, was not the Human Rights Council. It was also regrettable that the proposals submitted by several delegations during the informal consultations with the aim of addressing the inconsistency of parts of the draft resolution with the United Nations Convention against Corruption and other relevant instruments had not been reflected in the text. Similar concerns had been raised in relation to previous resolutions on the topic, but to no avail. His delegation thus requested a vote on the draft resolution and would vote against it.

104. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that the European Union was committed to tackling corruption, including its root causes, and strengthening international cooperation to ensure the return of illicit assets in line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Any discussions on that topic held in Geneva should be based on the relevant resolution of the General Assembly ([A/RES/79/234](#)), which had been adopted by consensus in the Second Committee.

105. The European Union remained concerned that the draft resolution failed to make proper use of existing instruments and did not make a clear connection to the promotion of all human rights. The adoption of the draft resolution would also be in contradiction to the calls to improve the efficiency of the Council, since the topic had already been addressed by the General Assembly and the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery. Discussions on the topic should be based on a more balanced approach, with sufficient importance attached to the root causes of corruption, the embezzlement of public funds and international organized crime and their broader repercussions. In order to add value, the draft resolution should have addressed the specific human rights challenges associated with those phenomena and placed greater emphasis on the principles of transparency, accountability, due process and participation to guarantee the careful use of repatriated funds. For all those reasons, the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote against the draft resolution.

106. **Mr. Espinosa Olivera** (Mexico) said that the draft resolution addressed aspects linked to financial flows, tax avoidance, money laundering, asset recovery and the establishment of a public global asset registry that fell outside the Council's mandate. There was a need to avoid a duplication of efforts with the work being done by the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Bank Group. Wording that could be construed as conditioning the fulfilment of human rights obligations on the availability of economic resources should also be avoided. In view of those concerns, his delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution and called on the sponsors to find compromises to ensure that future resolutions on the topic would enjoy wider support.

107. **Mr. Gunnarsson** (Iceland) said that corruption and illicit financial flows weakened institutions and undermined the rule of law. His Government had sought to strengthen its framework for tackling those flows and remained committed to supporting asset recovery. Such issues should, however, be addressed by the General Assembly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery. In addition, his delegation was concerned that the draft resolution failed to make proper use of existing instruments and did not make a clear connection to the promotion of human rights. The draft resolution should take a more balanced approach and address issues such as the root causes of corruption, the embezzlement of public funds and transnational organized crime and their broader repercussions. For those reasons, his delegation would abstain from voting.

108. **The President** announced that China had withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution.

109. **Ms. Li Xiaomei** (China) said that the non-repatriation of illicit funds severely impeded the realization of human rights, meaning that more efforts needed to be made to secure their recovery and return. China continued to view the United Nations Convention against Corruption as the key instrument guiding international anti-corruption efforts and called for that cooperation to be strengthened. Her delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution and called on other Council members to do the same.

110. *At the request of the representative of Japan, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Maldives, Morocco, Qatar, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Viet Nam.

Against:

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Japan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Switzerland.

Abstaining:

Iceland, Marshall Islands, Mexico.

111. *Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.16 was adopted by 29 votes to 15, with 3 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/HRC/58/L.17/Rev.1: Human rights, democracy and the rule of law

112. **Mr. Filip** (Romania), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, namely, Morocco, Norway, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Tunisia and his own delegation, said that the draft resolution proposed that the theme of the sixth session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, to be held in 2026, should be "Education for civic participation: empowering future generations, fostering knowledge and critical thinking".

113. Education for democratic governance was an essential pillar of robust and well-informed societies, in particular in a world in which disinformation, the erosion of trust in public institutions and political polarization were becoming increasingly prominent threats. The text of the draft resolution thus sought to draw attention to the importance of access to information, the media, digital literacy, the protection of civil society and the promotion of social inclusion in countering those challenges and ensuring access to quality human rights education. The draft resolution also recalled the international commitments assumed by States under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Pact for the Future and the UNESCO initiatives on education for democracy and human rights.

114. He wished to thank those delegations that had participated in the negotiations on the draft resolution for their valuable input, much of which had been reflected in the text. Their interest in that process and their comments were testament to the importance and relevance of the themes selected. It was expected that the sixth session of the Forum on Human Rights,

Democracy and the Rule of Law would bring together a wide range of stakeholders and serve as an opportunity to shape future discussions on the matter. His delegation encouraged States to participate in the Forum and hoped that the Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

115. **The President** announced that 16 States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

General statements made before the decision

116. **Mr. Guillermet Fernández** (Costa Rica) said that all regions of the world were witnessing a dismantling of democracy, and the rule of law was being eroded through the spread of disinformation and direct attacks against multilateralism, human rights and the universal system. The draft resolution highlighted that respect for human rights, including the right to freedom of opinion and expression, was an essential pillar of democratic societies, thereby serving as a reminder that any arbitrary restrictions on such rights, no matter how small they appeared, should be addressed as a matter of urgency as soon as they came to light. Internet shutdowns, disinformation, hate speech during elections, restrictions on the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and the criminalization and repression of human rights defenders were some of the main challenges alluded to in the text.

117. Against that backdrop, his delegation wished to thank the main sponsors for focusing the draft resolution on the importance of human rights education and mentioning the World Programme for Human Rights Education, whose excellent plans of action had been approved by the Council on multiple occasions. His delegation hoped that the Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus and that all States would put it into practice. Human rights education, training and learning and education for democracy were complementary and mutually reinforcing. Promoting critical thinking and ensuring that individuals had the skills they needed to participate in decision-making processes were key for building inclusive and peaceful societies. Efforts to strengthen democracy should be guided by a clear and comprehensive understanding of human rights rather than ignorance and discriminatory narratives.

118. **Mr. El Ouazzani** (Morocco) said that education and culture were among the key principles underpinning democracy and citizen participation. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the theme chosen for the 2026 session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, which highlighted the importance of quality education for the promotion of citizen responsibility and strong democracies that were capable of withstanding all forms of isolationism and extremism. His Government recognized that the building of knowledge and skills was essential for progress and development and had thus sought to ensure that education and citizenship were at the heart of its new development model. His delegation hoped that Council members would adopt the draft resolution by consensus, thereby putting into practice their shared aspiration to strengthen democracy and consolidate the rule of law.

119. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that his delegation welcomed the draft resolution's focus on the role played by education in strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Individuals should first be taught that there were different forms of democracy and that no country or region had the right to declare itself a beacon of democracy or human rights or to stigmatize others. They should be taught that respect for the sovereignty and inalienable right of each State to choose its own political, economic and social system was an essential condition for peaceful coexistence among countries.

120. The draft resolution recognized that challenges to democracy and human rights arose in all countries. All States had a duty to continuously strengthen their national legal systems and should be able to do so without interference. Socioeconomic development was crucial for developing strong political systems. In that context, his delegation hoped that steps would be taken at future sessions to strengthen the link between the resolutions on that topic and the ongoing efforts to give effect to the right to development in international law.

121. **Mr. Ogando Lora** (Dominican Republic) said that, in a world undergoing rapid and unexpected changes, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law remained essential conditions for lasting peace and sustainable development. His delegation welcomed

the choice of theme for the 2026 session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, which would help create future generations that were committed to inclusive democracy, critical thinking and mutual respect. The Forum would be an opportunity to share good practices in increasing citizen participation, including by involving vulnerable and marginalized groups in work to promote development and the strengthening of institutions. There could be no development without rights and no rights without justice. Inclusive, resilient and fair democracies could not be achieved without a well-informed and empowered population. In that connection, his delegation considered that the Council had an obligation to adopt the draft resolution and encouraged it to do so by consensus.

122. **Mr. Oike** (Japan) said that Japan was a steadfast advocate for freedom, human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It firmly believed that maintaining and strengthening the international order based on those principles was essential for fostering a peaceful and stable international environment, in particular as that order faced increasing challenges. Japan had consistently emphasized the importance of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in various bilateral and multilateral forums. Responsibility for fostering a peaceful and stable international order in the future lay with the younger generations. Accordingly, Japan agreed with the idea emphasized in the draft resolution that education was an indispensable foundation for the protection of freedom, human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The draft resolution was thus worthy of the unanimous support of Council members, and his delegation hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

123. **Ms. Fuentes Julio** (Chile) said that, while the literacy rate in Chile had reached almost 100 per cent, the Government continued to face numerous challenges in ensuring that citizens were able to fully exercise their rights and participate in society. One such challenge was creating communities of individuals who were able to come together to cordially discuss issues based on their different experiences. Her delegation welcomed the emphasis that the draft resolution placed on the role that efforts to improve digital and media literacy and provide a civic education could play in fostering more inclusive decision-making processes, countering disinformation and hate speech and consolidating democracy. The text also focused on the importance of education for strengthening respect for human rights at a time of innovation and technological change, which helped foster greater gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Civil participation was essential in times of crisis, which meant that discussions on the topic were more urgently needed than ever. Accordingly, Chile welcomed the announcement of the 2026 session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and hoped that it would be inclusive in nature. Her delegation wished to express its support for the draft resolution and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

124. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council, said that, at a time when democratic values were being slowly eroded by disinformation, fake news and the restriction of civic space and freedom of expression, critical thinking and the development of active and engaged citizens were essential for the strengthening of societies. The theme proposed for the 2026 session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law was of increasing relevance given the existing and emerging challenges worldwide, which illustrated the need for robust democratic safeguards and citizen engagement. Any discussions on that pertinent topic should be organized through the Forum. The European Union was pleased to support the draft resolution and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

125. **Ms. Too** (Kenya) said that the draft resolution reaffirmed the fundamental principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, which were intrinsically linked to the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, human rights and development. Her delegation particularly appreciated the reference to attacks on schools, students and education personnel and remained deeply concerned that such attacks continued to escalate, with devastating consequences for children, especially girls and those with disabilities. Protecting educational environments and upholding the right to education were paramount, including in times of conflict. Education was vital for development, peace, security, the rule of law and the full enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. The draft resolution showcased the Council's collective commitment to a rules-based system that served all nations equitably. There was a need to address democratic backsliding, protectionism, unilateralism and

disregard for international law. All stakeholders should be able to have a say on decisions affecting them. Her delegation called on all Member States to implement the provisions of the draft resolution in full and to work together to create an environment in which human rights, democracy and the rule of law could flourish.

126. **Mr. Jiang Han** (China) said that the promotion and protection of human rights were contingent upon the safeguarding of democracy and the rule of law. While his delegation would join the consensus on the draft resolution, it was concerned that the text contained non-consensual language, such as references to human rights defenders, and hoped that the main sponsors would take into consideration the views of all parties in the future.

127. *Draft resolution [A/HRC/58/L.17/Rev.1](#) was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.