



General Assembly

Sixty-third session

71st plenary meeting

Thursday, 18 December 2008, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

President: Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann (Nicaragua)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kpotsra (Togo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 64 (continued)

Promotion and protection of human rights

- (b) **Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms**

Report of the Third Committee (A/63/430/Add.2)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly took action this morning on the draft resolutions contained in the report (see A/63/PV.70).

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak with respect to the resolutions adopted under this sub-item.

Mr. Lukiyantsev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Last week, we commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As Russian Federation President Medvedev stressed in a message sent to participants in the commemorative meeting of the General Assembly held on 10 December, goodwill and resolute effort on the part of all relevant actors, including States, international organizations and civil society institutions, are required if we are to overcome negative trends in the area of promoting and protecting

human rights. The purpose is to ensure respect for human rights and help to build a more just world order, taking into account the diversity of today's world and traditional human values. As we have repeatedly noted, international cooperation in the area of human rights should contribute to the promotion of mutual trust, understanding and respect among States.

Russia is convinced that human rights should be a unifying, rather than a divisive, factor in international relations. Such an approach means that no issue that could lead to confrontation or division among United Nations Member States should be included in the agenda. Here, unfortunately, we are dealing with precisely such an issue. That is why we share many of the concerns expressed in the statement made at the 70th plenary meeting by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic on behalf of a number of States.

While the Russian Federation is opposed to discrimination, intolerance, repression and acts of violence against persons of non-traditional sexual orientation, that narrow and specific issue should be addressed within the framework of existing international legal instruments for the protection of human rights. Artificially placing persons of non-traditional sexual orientation in a separate group could well overburden an already heavy General Assembly agenda and change the main focus of United Nations efforts to protect human rights and overcome discrimination and xenophobia.

Mr. Rachkov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity

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are complex and varied. The Republic of Belarus believes that those issues, which are sensitive and uniquely narrow in scope, should not be considered hastily, requiring a particularly prudent and thoughtful approach.

The Republic of Belarus agrees that a consensual approach should be taken in respecting the rights of all social groups. We believe that human rights issues should not be addressed in a manner that leads to rifts or confrontations among Member States. Rather, they should be discussed in a spirit of equitable and mutually respectful dialogue, as called for in resolution 61/166, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-first session at the initiative of Belarus.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I call on the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Father Bené (Holy See): The Holy See is taking the floor in explanation of position with regard to the statement delivered at the 70th plenary meeting by the representative of Argentina.

The Holy See appreciates the attempts made in the statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity to condemn all forms of violence against homosexual persons and to urge States to take the measures necessary to put an end to all criminal penalties against them. At the same time, the Holy See notes that the wording of the statement goes well beyond the aforementioned and shared intent.

In particular, the categories “sexual orientation” and “gender identity”, used in the text, find no recognition or clear and agreed definition in international law. If they had to be taken into consideration in the proclaiming and implementing of fundamental rights, they would create serious uncertainty in the law and undermine the ability of States to enter into and enforce new and existing human rights conventions and standards.

Despite the statement’s rightful condemnation of and protection from all forms of violence against homosexual persons, the document, when considered in its entirety, goes beyond that goal and instead gives rise to uncertainty in the law and challenges existing human rights norms.

The Holy See continues to advocate that every sign of unjust discrimination towards homosexual persons be avoided and urges States to do away with criminal penalties against them.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 64.

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

**Report of the Third Committee
(A/63/430/Add.3)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 29 of its report.

Before proceeding further, I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution II, entitled “Situation of human rights in Myanmar”, is postponed to a later date to allow time for the review of its programme budget implications by the Fifth Committee. The Assembly will take action on draft resolution II as soon as the report of the Fifth Committee on its programme budget implications is available.

We will now take decisions on draft resolutions I and III. Draft resolution I is entitled “Situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Comoros, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Against:

Algeria, Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, Russian Federation, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gambia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Suriname, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Zambia

Draft resolution I was adopted by 94 votes to 22, with 63 abstentions (resolution 63/190).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran".

I call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on a point of order.

Mr. Khzaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation would like to invoke rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to move a no-action motion on the draft resolution under consideration, draft resolution III of document A/63/430/Add.3.

I would like to reiterate the principled position of my Government that considering country-specific resolutions in the General Assembly is completely unjustified and unwarranted while the Human Rights Council in Geneva is successfully holding meetings of the Universal Periodic Review working groups and considering country situations on the basis of universality and non-selectivity.

We remind all delegations of the fact that, to avoid politicization and selectivity in the consideration of human rights situations, the Human Rights Council, as the most competent and specialized institution within the United Nations mechanism, has been established and entrusted with the mandate of the international monitoring of human rights through the Universal Periodic Review.

Thus, our motion of no action today is by no means an attempt to prevent the United Nations from considering human rights institutions, but rather is a request for rejection of the manipulation of the United Nations system by Canada and a certain few other countries. To preserve the credibility of both the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, there is a need to approach human rights issues in a comprehensive, cooperative and constructive manner. Manipulation and abuse of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and machinery, which has unfortunately become a prevalent tradition exercised by certain countries, should not be tolerated any more, primarily because of their destructive impact on the credibility, efficiency and legitimacy of that mechanism.

Based on what I have just said, I would like to request that delegations vote in favour of the motion.

The Acting President: The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken on draft resolution III. Rule 74 reads as follows:

"During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposal of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

I shall now call on delegations wishing to make statements with respect to the motion before the Assembly.

Mr. Escalona Ojeda (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela once again expresses its firm rejection of the consideration of draft resolutions that respond to certain selective political interests and are based on double standards whose application is clearly contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that any action taken within the framework of the United Nations should be oriented towards the promotion and protection of human rights, and based on fostering international cooperation and dialogue between States. We should like to pose the following question: Do we really want to investigate the human rights situation in a particular country, and thus take the measures required for an exhaustive neutral investigation, or do we simply want to condemn a country?

Human rights problems are widespread worldwide, and I believe that we have taken the right path in opening investigations through the Human Rights Council, giving all interested parties the right to objectively and without pressure present their cases. We believe this is the path to follow if we truly wish to defend human rights.

At this very moment in the Gaza Strip, there is a grave situation, a humanitarian crisis. Which path is being taken there — an a priori condemnation or the setting up of an investigation? The path chosen by this very body is that of investigation.

Thus, we defend the right of the parties to equality in addressing issues and problems.

That is why we are expressing our support for the no-action motion proposed by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding draft resolution III, in accordance with rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. We urge all delegations to support that motion and thus to prevent the use of human rights as a tool for intervention, criminalization and political pressure. Once again, we urge that such methods, which would discredit the struggle for human rights, not continue to be used.

Mr. Normandin (Canada): We wish to express our deep disappointment that a no-action motion has been presented in the plenary of the General Assembly. That is an extraordinary step taken to stifle debate and undermine the jurisdiction and the responsibility of the Assembly. The draft resolution under consideration was adopted by the Third Committee after a no-action motion had been presented and had failed. The draft resolution was then recommended by the Third Committee to the General Assembly for our consideration today.

That is how the work of the Committees of the General Assembly is intended to proceed: we debate and discuss and consider the issues in Committee, and then we reach a decision. And that decision becomes our collective recommendation to the plenary of the General Assembly. The use of a no-action motion in the Assembly is therefore even more egregious than in Committee.

A no-action motion in the General Assembly after an identical motion has been attempted and has failed in the Third Committee, and after the Committee has recommended the draft resolution to the General Assembly for adoption, signifies a complete disregard for the Committee and its decision-making process. It also undermines the jurisdiction of the General Assembly.

Of course, we may have differing views on the substance of a human rights draft resolution, but we must all agree on the critical importance of maintaining the integrity of our work in the Third Committee and in the General Assembly. The Assembly must be permitted to consider any draft resolution recommended to it by the Committee on its individual merits.

For all those reasons, Member States have consistently rejected no-action motions in such circumstances in the past. We therefore strongly urge all Member States once again to vote “no” on this no-action motion in order to allow the General Assembly to vote on the merits of the draft resolution.

Ms. Nassau (Australia): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of Andorra, Argentina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Palau, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and my own country, Australia.

Our delegations are intent on ensuring that United Nations bodies continue to be forums for addressing serious human rights situations wherever they occur, and we are strongly opposed to the stifling of debate on such issues. Regardless of their subject matter, all such draft resolutions should be reviewed and actioned on their merits.

A no-action motion on this draft resolution had already been presented in Third Committee and had failed. The draft resolution was then adopted by the Committee and recommended to the General Assembly for adoption. The introduction of yet another no-action motion only serves to undermine the credibility and the jurisdiction of the Third Committee and of the General Assembly.

For those reasons, we oppose the use of no-action motions. We call on all others to join us and vote “no” on this no-action motion.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): We requested the floor to support the no-action motion on draft resolution III, entitled “Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran”.

Pakistan believes that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. It is, however, important that the international human rights agenda be addressed in a fair and balanced manner. That can be done only through an approach based on dialogue and cooperation.

A lesson that emerges from the results of country-specific resolutions is that such resolutions do not encourage better promotion of human rights. In addition, they reflect the politicization of human rights issues instead of encouraging cooperation among nations on the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the world. Another problem of country-specific resolutions is that they create artificial barriers to equal and constructive dialogue between the Member State and the relevant international human rights mechanism.

Pakistan fully supports the no-action motion on draft resolution III and will vote in favour. We also strongly urge all delegations to support the motion.

The Acting President: I shall now put to the vote the motion submitted by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran that no action be taken on draft resolution III. A recorded vote on the motion has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Abstaining:

Antigua and Barbuda, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada,

Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania

The motion of no action was rejected by 84 votes to 69, with 25 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Belize advised the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Khzaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): In accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, my delegation would like to present two oral amendments to draft resolution III.

The amendments are to delete operative paragraphs 6 and 7 of the draft resolution. Those paragraphs would request the Secretary-General to prepare a report and request continued consideration by the General Assembly of the human rights situation in Iran. Given the fact that, under the established procedures of the United Nations human rights mechanism, such a report should be prepared by the relevant rapporteur of the Human Rights Council rather than by the Secretary-General, and given the fact that such a report already exists, my delegation requests the deletion of operative paragraphs 6 and 7.

The whole campaign is of a political nature, something from which we believe the United Nations mechanism should be detached and protected. It is a commonly accepted belief that safeguarding human rights will never be achievable by political means or by applying double standards.

Therefore, my delegation would request that the Assembly proceed with these amendments separately, and we request delegations to vote in favour of them.

The Acting President: The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran has submitted oral amendments to paragraphs 6 and 7 of draft resolution III, to the effect that they be deleted. In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on the amendment submitted by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

We will proceed to consider the two amendments one by one. First, we turn to the amendment on paragraph 6 of draft resolution III.

I shall first give the floor to delegations wishing to explain their votes before the voting.

Mr. Normandin (Canada): We have asked to take the floor in explanation of vote before the vote to explain why we will be voting against the proposed amendment. We will be doing so for a number of reasons, both procedural and substantive.

Procedurally, we express our surprise and disappointment that these last-minute amendments have been put forward. Proposing an amendment when concerns have not been previously raised at any point in the Third Committee, despite numerous opportunities to do so, is highly irregular.

Substantively, on the amendment related to paragraph 6, we question the reasons behind the opposition to that paragraph. In previous debates, we often heard the representative of Iran argue that information with respect to the situation of human rights in his country and upon which our deliberations are based is inaccurate or out of date. Well, we can think of no better way to resolve this debate in a balanced and accurate fashion than to ask the Secretary-General to provide an update on the human rights situation in the country.

I would also recall that last year the General Assembly rejected a similar late amendment in plenary meeting. So, for all those procedural and substantive reasons that I have outlined, we should do the same this year. We will thus be voting "no" on the proposed amendment, and we encourage all other delegations to do the same.

Ms. Gasri (France) (*spoke in French*): We are taking the floor to explain the reasons for which we will vote against the proposed amendment. The Third Committee had the opportunity to consider the draft resolution that is before the General Assembly for adoption. Delegations then had an opportunity to express their views and present amendments, which they did not do.

Whatever the case may be, we believe that the lack of progress on the situation of human rights in Iran fully justifies that the report of the Secretary-General be given follow-up and that the General Assembly take up the situation once again at its next session.

That is why we will vote against the proposed amendment and also against the second proposed amendment.

The Acting President: We shall first take a vote on the oral amendment to paragraph 6 of draft resolution III. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada,

Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Suriname, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zambia

The oral amendment was rejected by 72 votes to 50, with 50 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Panama advised the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: We turn next to the oral amendment to operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution III.

(spoke in French)

I call on the representative of Canada, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote.

Mr. Normandin (Canada): Once again on this amendment, we will be voting against for both procedural and substantive reasons. I have already outlined the procedural reasons in my previous intervention, so I will not repeat them. They have to do with the introduction of a late amendment in plenary meeting, which is highly irregular.

On the substance, through paragraph 1 of this draft resolution the General Assembly expresses its deep concern at the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In paragraph 3 it calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran to address those concerns and take specific measures, and in paragraph 6 it requests an update from the Secretary-General on the situation, to be presented at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Having expressed its deep concern on an important issue, called for specific action and requested a report for the sixty-fourth session, it would be highly contradictory for the General Assembly not to continue its examination of the issue at its next session.

For all those reasons, both procedural and substantive, we will vote "no" on this amendment and we encourage all delegations to do the same.

The Acting President: We shall now take a decision on the proposed amendment to paragraph 7 of draft resolution III. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho,

Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Suriname, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zambia

The oral amendment was rejected by 71 votes to 50, with 51 abstentions.

The Acting President: Since the oral amendments submitted by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on operative paragraphs 6 and 7 have not been adopted, we shall proceed to take a decision on draft resolution III as a whole. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, China, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian

Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zambia

Draft resolution III was adopted by 69 votes to 54, with 57 abstentions (resolution 63/191).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Belize advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Pak Tok Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reaffirms its position of non-recognition and total rejection of the resolution just passed against our Republic (resolution 63/190).

The resolution is a product of political conspiracy by the main sponsors aimed at changing the ideology and the system of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is nothing but the culmination of politicization, selectivity and double standards in dealing with human rights issues. The promotion and protection of human rights the sponsors are talking about is nothing but a pretext for interference in our internal affairs. Their real intention is a change: a change in the ideology, a change in the system and a change in the Government in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Even though such resolutions, which have no value and no meaning whatsoever, are continuously adopted, people-centred socialism in our country, and our style, which were chosen and built by our people themselves, is and will be invincible.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 64.

(d) Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Report of the Third Committee (A/63/430/Add.4)

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Third Committee?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 64?

It was so decided.

(e) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Report of the Third Committee (A/63/430/Add.5)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, as orally corrected by the Rapporteur this morning to update the status of the Optional Protocol. The draft resolution is entitled "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto". The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution, as orally corrected?

The draft resolution, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 63/192).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 64?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 97**Crime prevention and criminal justice****Report of the Third Committee (A/63/431)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 26 of its report and one draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 27 of the same report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV, one by one, and on the draft decision.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Preparations for the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice". The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 63/193).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons". The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 63/194).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity". The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 63/195).

The Acting President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders". The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 63/196).

The Acting President: We now turn to the draft decision, entitled "Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of

crime prevention and criminal justice". May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 97?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 98**International drug control****Report of the Third Committee (A/63/432)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 13 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "International cooperation against the world drug problem". The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/197).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 98?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 110 (continued)**Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly****Report of the Third Committee (A/63/433)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The draft decision, entitled "Programme of work of the Third Committee for the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly", was adopted by the Third Committee. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

Agenda item 119 (continued)**Programme planning****Report of the Third Committee (A/63/434)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 23 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan,

Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Canada

The draft decision was adopted by 175 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Bahrain advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 119.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Third Committee, His Excellency Mr. Frank Majoor of the Netherlands, the other members of the Bureau and all representatives for a job well done.

The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Third Committee before it.

Agenda item 45 (continued)**Culture of peace****Draft resolution (A/63/L.55)**

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on this agenda item at its 46th to 50th plenary meetings, on 12 and 13 November 2008. Members will also recall that the Assembly took action on draft resolution A/63/L.24/Rev.1 under this agenda item at the 50th plenary meeting and on draft resolution A/63/L.23 at the 64th plenary meeting, on 5 December 2008.

I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore, who will introduce draft resolution A/63/L.55.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): It gives me great pleasure to introduce, on behalf of Singapore, Egypt

and the other sponsors — Albania, Australia, Austria, Belize, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, the Maldives, Morocco, the Netherlands, Oman, Panama, Qatar, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Thailand — draft resolution A/63/L.55, entitled “Supporting the United Nations International School in enhancing international education and promoting multicultural interaction”.

The United Nations International School (UNIS), is an educational institution that is dear to the hearts of many, past and present, who have served in the United Nations family here in New York, as well as to our children. It is as diverse as the United Nations, catering for 1,500 students from 130 countries, and employs a multinational and multicultural staff representing 70 countries.

UNIS remains a valuable asset to the United Nations community and has become a crucible of multiculturalism and multilingualism. For instance, although English is the primary medium of instruction, all students study French or Spanish and have the additional options of learning Arabic, Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese and Russian. These represent a wider selection than the number of official languages in the United Nations. The school strives to foster and promote an appreciation of the diverse cultural heritages of its student body, guided by the spirit and the ideals of the United Nations Charter.

While UNIS is self-sufficient in terms of its operational needs, it is currently undertaking a fund-raising campaign for the renovation of its ageing and outdated facilities and infrastructure. After five years of planning, the School’s Board of Trustees has initiated a phased renovation programme to upgrade the nearly 40-year-old campus.

The main intent of this draft resolution is to assist UNIS symbolically and, we hope, substantively in its fund-raising efforts. The adoption of this draft resolution would send a strong signal to the School’s non-governmental donors that Member States fully support the School and its mission, and would provide a basis on which UNIS could also approach Governments and other non-governmental entities that might be willing and able to contribute. I would like to emphasize that the draft resolution itself does not oblige any Member State to contribute financially to UNIS, but only urges such a course of action for those in a position to do so.

We have been heartened by the strong level of support that this draft resolution has received, and we are grateful to the countries that have agreed to sponsor it. Given the nature and the intent of the draft resolution, it is our strong hope that Member States will unanimously support this worthy cause and that the draft resolution can be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/63/L.55, entitled “Supporting the United Nations International School in enhancing international education and promoting multicultural interaction”. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/63/L.55 was adopted (resolution 63/198).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 45.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.