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Third Committee**Summary record of the 49th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 21 November 2014, at 10 a.m.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 64: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*) (A/C.3/69/L.24/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.24/Rev.1: Rights of the Child

1. **The Chair** recalled that, in a recorded vote at the Committee's 48th meeting, an oral amendment to operative paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) of the draft resolution had been rejected. She noted that the delegation of Togo had withdrawn its sponsorship.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.24/Rev.1: Rights of the Child, as orally revised, was adopted.*

3. **Ms. Al-Temimi** (Qatar) said that her delegation supported the resolution, but had reservations regarding paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)), which referred to evidence-based education programmes on human sexuality for adolescents and youth. Qatar was committed to fully implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but the specifics of regional situations and the history and religious backgrounds of States had to be taken into account.

4. **Ms. Vadiati** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that her delegation was pleased to join the consensus on the resolution while formally dissociating itself from paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)), which was not in the best interests of the child or the promotion of the rights of the child.

5. **Ms. Hassan** (Djibouti), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that the Group had first raised its concern about paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) of the resolution with the facilitators of the negotiations two weeks earlier, not the night before consideration of the resolution as stated at the Committee's 48th meeting. Instead of considering the sensitivities surrounding that paragraph and making the necessary changes, as the African Group had hoped, the European Union and the Latin American and Caribbean Group had forced it to propose an amendment to the paragraph. Since African delegations valued both the resolution for its positive impact on the promotion and protection of children and the importance of achieving a consensus among the Member States, the African Group had refrained from

calling for a vote on the resolution as a whole and had instead proposed an amendment. The unequivocal support of the delegations who had voted in favour of that amendment sent a strong message to the international community that the issues referred to in paragraph 47(l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) were not universally accepted. Indeed, they were not the subject of any negotiated international human rights instrument, and the contents of the paragraph violated not only the spirit, but also the letter of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. When a resolution failed to uphold the very Convention that it sought to implement, the Group could not take a back seat. The language of paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) called upon States to develop educational programmes and teaching materials, including on comprehensive evidence-based human sexuality, in order to, inter alia, modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages. Those purposes were not in line with article 29 of the Convention, and the adoption of paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) set a very negative precedent for the work of the United Nations. Certain Member States were seeking to impose their cultural and social values and preferences on others in violation of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which included respect for the sovereign right of all States and the need for international cooperation in addressing all issues. The Group therefore formally disassociated itself from paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)); its members would not implement it.

7. **Monsignor Grech** (Observer for the Holy See) noting that, under the Convention on the Rights of Child, States parties were obliged to safeguard the rights of the child from the moment of conception, said that the Holy See welcomed the adoption of the resolution and the concern it expressed for children living in poverty and other difficult situations. The Holy See also welcomed the recognition of the family's primary responsibility in the protection and nurture of the child. His delegation wished to express the Holy See's well-established reservations, however, to the inclusion of references to sexual reproduction and health and gender. The wording "appropriate health care services, including age-appropriate health care programmes in the area of sexual and reproductive health," must not be understood to include access to abortions. Also, by "gender", his delegation understood

the term to mean “male” and “female” as it generally and historically had done. In addition, with respect to so-called “education and information on sexuality”, his delegation reaffirmed the primary responsibility and rights of parents, including the right to freedom of religion, regarding the education and upbringing of their children. Those rights were enshrined in several international instruments and must be respected.

8. **Ms. Khvan** (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation placed the promotion of the rights of the child among the top priorities of its social policy and was committed to observing its international obligations in that area. Her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution. However, as on several previous occasions, it had not been able to join the list of sponsors, because the priorities of some groups of Member States, particularly the European Union and the Latin American and Caribbean Group, had been disproportionately reflected in the document, while the approaches of other States had not been taken into due account, which was counterproductive. Real success in solving such important issues as the promotion of the rights of the child could only be achieved through joint efforts and equal and cooperative relationships between States.

9. Her delegation appreciated the efforts of the main sponsors to consider the individual concerns of States, including the Russian Federation, and be flexible during discussions on the draft resolution. However, the final document was the product of discussions with the European Union and the Latin American and Caribbean Group, and only minimal amendments had been made. The draft resolution should be the result of collective efforts and her delegation called on the European Union and the Latin American and Caribbean Group not to politicize the issue of the rights of the child. In future, a more constructive, business-like and cooperative approach should be taken.

10. **Ms. Abdulbaqi** (Saudi Arabia) said that her delegation had sought to achieve a consensus on the text of the resolution given the importance of promoting the rights of the child, but the sponsors of the resolution had refused to adopt any text that enjoyed a consensus. Her delegation rejected attempts to address controversial issues in the context of universal rights without regard for the social and religious views of Member States and therefore wished to place on record its reservation to paragraph 47 (l)

(new paragraph 48 (l)). Her country’s position on that matter would be the same for any other resolution.

11. **Mr. Elmajerbi** (Libya) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution due to the importance of protecting the rights of the child. Libya was working to implement all the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its legislation protected children from all forms of discrimination, violence and abuse. His delegation wished to express its reservation regarding the references in the resolution to sexual and reproductive health and sexual education for children. The attempts made by certain delegations to include such concepts and impose them on other countries ran counter to the underlying principles of international human rights law. The religious, social and cultural values of all Member States must be respected.

12. **Ms. Smaila** (Nigeria) said that Nigeria had joined the consensus on the resolution, but wished to reiterate its objection to the increasing tendency to introduce references to certain practices and lifestyles into the deliberations of the Third Committee that bore no relation, and were in fact liable to be detrimental, to human rights, as in the case of paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)). Her delegation disassociated itself completely from that agenda, which was being thrust upon Member States at every opportunity by certain interest groups and threatened to undermine the foundation of society by destroying customs, traditional values and religious beliefs and, ultimately, family structure. The United Nations should not be a forum for certain propaganda that did not enjoy any respectability or legal support and on which there was no universal consensus. States had the sovereign right to interpret treaties in the light of their own domestic realities, particularly their customary, judicial and religious outlooks.

13. Obligations should not be imposed on Member States if they could not be faithfully implemented because they conflicted with national laws and the values of their people. History would hold States responsible for maintaining the purity and sanctity of their children by preserving their innocence. Nigeria therefore vehemently opposed any notion that undermined parental authority and family autonomy in providing guidance to children in all aspects of their lives; and by family, she meant the basic social unit consisting of parents, that is, a man and a woman, and their children.

14. **Mr. Medrana** (Palau) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution. The protection of children was the responsibility of all and was given priority in his country. The Convention on the Rights of the Child had been the first treaty ratified by Palau after it gained independence in 1994. Children received free schooling and health care, and the Government had prepared, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a baseline report on the situation of children in Palau that would guide its implementation of the Convention. The right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and hazardous work was interpreted broadly by the Government to include protection from exploitation by the tobacco, baby food and other industries and all activities that interfered with the education or development of the child, as well as from abuse.

15. **Ms. Robl** (United States of America) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution but understood that its adoption did not imply any obligation for States to become party to the instruments mentioned in it or to implement obligations under instruments to which they were not a party. The resolution also had no impact on the obligations of the United States under current treaty or customary international law. The support of the United States for the resolution was consistent with its limited authority at the federal level with respect to education, which was primarily the responsibility of state and local governments, and based on the understanding that the language on the mobilization of all necessary resources would not be interpreted as constituting new or expanded commitments regarding official development resources.

16. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that his delegation wished to place on record its reservation to paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)). The interpretation and implications of that paragraph were subject to his country's national laws and cultural values.

17. **Ms. Yassine** (Brazil) said that many delegations had underlined the fact that the Convention on the Rights of the Child, among all treaties, was the one close to achieving universality, and in recent years the resolution on the rights of the child had been adopted by consensus without any proposed amendments. It was worrisome that the adoption process had been so turbulent in 2014. Convinced of the importance of comprehensive, evidence-based sexuality education, Brazil had voted against the amendment proposed by

the African Group. Her delegation would remain open to engaging in dialogue to find common ground on the subject in the future, since it was crucial to avoid a repetition of what had occurred at the current session.

18. **Mr. Elbahi** (Sudan) said that, while highlighting the importance of the promotion and protection of children's rights, his delegation dissociated itself from paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)), since references to sexual and reproductive health had no place in the draft resolution on the rights of the child. Also, while reaffirming the importance of protecting children in conflict, his delegation disassociated itself from the reference made in the resolution to the International Criminal Court.

19. **Ms. Abdullah** (Iraq) said that, while joining the consensus on the resolution, her delegation wished to place on record its reservation to paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) on the grounds that the cultural values of States with regard to social issues, such as sexual education, needed to be taken into account.

20. **Mr. Jiddou** (Mauritania) said that his delegation wished to place on record its reservation regarding paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) since it contained language that was counter to the national and cultural values of Mauritania and to sharia.

21. **Ms. Abdullah** (Yemen) said that his delegation wished to place on record its reservation to paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)) since the language it contained was not consistent with the legislation and values of her country.

22. **Ms. Larsen** (Norway) said that his delegation was a proud sponsor of the resolution, whose content, including paragraph 47 (l) (new paragraph 48 (l)), did not, in its view, contravene the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child or impose new obligations that would interfere with the sovereignty of States. Delegations actually agreed more than might have been apparent: they agreed on the content, but differed in the terms they used. Norway looked forward to further dialogue aimed at achieving a consensus and common understanding on the matter at future meetings of the Third Committee.

23. **Ms. Riley** (Barbados) said that all the concerns raised had been legitimate ones, and every State had the sovereign right to implement human rights obligations according to its particular national context and values. The negotiation process was not just for

voicing concerns, however, but also for advancing proposals. It was not in the interests of Member States to have the resolution on the rights of the child subjected to a vote. She encouraged delegations to engage fully and in good faith in the negotiations of the text in 2015, so that the next resolution on the rights of the child could be adopted without contention. She also reminded Member States that General Assembly resolutions were not legally binding and imposed no obligation upon States.

Agenda item 63: Report of the Human Rights Council (continued) (A/C.3/69/L.65)

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.65: Report of the Human Rights Council

24. **Ms. Hassan** (Djibouti), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the African Group, said that the African Group attached a great deal of importance to the draft resolution and to the framework General Assembly resolution 60/251 and remained firmly committed to ensuring that paragraphs 5(c), (i) and (j) of the latter were respected. The establishment of the Human Rights Council had been a milestone in the global effort to promote and protect human rights and significant developments had been made thanks to its constructive, cooperative and non-selective approach, which was based on the provision of advice and technical and financial support.

25. The recommendations contained in the most recent report of the Council were important for the African Group and many other Member States. In light of the paramount importance of the participation of all Member States in the work of the Council, the Group warmly welcomed the establishment of the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council as well as the steps taken to operationalize the Fund. The universal periodic review remained the best universal mechanism to assist States in fulfilling their human rights obligations.

26. The Charter of the United Nations and internationally agreed human rights instruments had established that the principles of non-discrimination and equality were cross-cutting principles related to the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. However, the African Group was extremely concerned by the attempts to introduce new notions

and concepts that were not referenced in international human rights law. It strongly rejected any attempt to undermine the international human rights system by seeking to impose concepts or notions pertaining to social matters, including private individual conduct, that fell outside the internationally agreed legal human rights framework. Such attempts disregarded the universality of human rights. People were not inherently vulnerable, but some individuals and groups found themselves in vulnerable situations due to factors such as the socio-economic environment in which they lived.

27. The African Group reaffirmed its support for the right of Member States to enact laws that met “just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society”, as enshrined in article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Notions that had no international legal foundation and which fell under the domestic jurisdiction of States, such as those relating to sexual orientation and gender identity, should not be introduced at the level of the United Nations. Focusing on concepts on which there was no international agreement, definition or consensus only served to create division within the Council and undermine its balanced and egalitarian approach to the promotion and protection of human rights.

28. The African Group called on Member States to refrain from giving priority to the rights of certain individuals, which could be detrimental to the realization of other, internationally agreed rights, and to increase their efforts to eliminate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It also urged all Member States and relevant international human rights mechanisms to increase their efforts to consolidate their commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights for all on an equal footing. The principles underpinning the Council’s mandate, particularly those related to the principle of using cooperation and genuine dialogue to strengthen the capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations, were extremely important. It was therefore incumbent upon the Council to ensure that its work was universal, objective and non-selective.

Agenda item 26: Social development (*continued*)**(a) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly** (*continued*) (A/C.3/69/L.11/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.11/Rev.1: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

29. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that all issues related to the high-level plenary meeting mentioned in paragraph 62 of the draft resolution, including the date, format, organization and scope, were yet to be determined. It was therefore not possible at the present time to estimate the potential cost implications of the requirements for the required meetings and documentation. Once the modalities, format and organization of the meeting had been determined, the Secretary-General would make the costs known. The date of the meeting would have to be determined in consultation with the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management. Adoption of the draft resolution would therefore not give rise to any financial provisions under the programme budget at that stage.

30. **Ms. Sabja** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain and Montenegro had joined the sponsors. The text incorporated the majority of the suggestions that had been made during consultations and bilateral meetings with all interested delegations. Particular attention was drawn to the tenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 60 and 62. The text reiterated the importance of poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work in the post-2015 development agenda. Compared with previous draft resolutions, it placed greater emphasis on the responsibility of transnational corporations to respect all applicable laws and international principles; the importance of economic, social and cultural rights; and the importance of non-discrimination, inclusivity and meaningful participation in the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit.

31. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Luxembourg, Serbia and Slovenia had joined the sponsors.

32. *Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.11/Rev.1 was adopted.*

33. **Mr. Sfregola** (Italy), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union, welcomed the constructive approach that had been taken by all delegations during the negotiations and said that the resolution contained a number of important elements related to social development, including the interrelated and mutually reinforcing nature of poverty eradication, social integration, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The European Union welcomed the addition of paragraph 16 on the importance of economic, social and cultural rights, as the new language acknowledged that social development could only be achieved through a human rights-based approach.

34. The European Union regretted, however, that once again the negotiations had failed to adequately address a number of important macroeconomic and financial issues. Discussions were still in progress in the Second Committee, which was the appropriate body to deal with economic and financial issues. By simply following the previous year's text, the current resolution did not fully reflect the evolving debate on certain economic and financial issues. The discussions at the high-level plenary meeting and the debates within the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development that would be held to mark the twentieth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development in 2015 should feed into a more comprehensive attempt to update the language of the resolution to adequately address twenty-first century challenges to social development efforts.

35. **Ms. Robl** (United States of America) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution. It shared the stated goals of poverty eradication, full and productive employment for all and social inclusion. Her Government was committed to accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, including by investing in national plans to boost agricultural development, and supported the draft resolution's continued attention to the rights of indigenous peoples. It also strongly endorsed the need to promote respect for all human rights and

fundamental freedoms in the context of development, and agreed that Governments must respect human rights as they formulated and implemented food, education, labour and health policies.

36. However, the text's references to the global financial crisis were out of date. Moreover, the draft resolution once again inappropriately included a call for action by international financial institutions and unbalanced advocacy of "policy space" and made a broad request for debt relief while ignoring country-level commitments. While external economic factors — such as official development assistance, energy price fluctuations, or global economic trends — could affect development, primary responsibility lay with national governments and domestic policies played a critical role in helping to provide opportunities, remove obstacles to broad-based economic growth and address the population's needs.

(b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family
(continued) (A/C.3/69/L.12/Rev.2)

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.12/Rev.2: Celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family

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

38. **Ms. Sabja** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), introducing the draft resolution, said that Kazakhstan, Turkey and Uzbekistan had joined the sponsors. Attention was drawn to paragraphs 1 and 4. The celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family was an important reminder and provided an opportunity to call attention to the need to continually strengthen family policy and recognize the central role of the family in sustainable development. The current text, which was simpler and more procedural than the previous year's resolution, had been drawn up on the basis of the consensus reached during informal consultations and addressed the concerns of all delegations.

39. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Belarus and Russian Federation had joined the sponsors.

40. *Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.12/Rev.2 was adopted.*

41. **Ms. Robl** (United States of America) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution. While the nature and role of the family had evolved over time, it retained its fundamental value in providing a nurturing atmosphere for its members. The United Nations must recognize the many different types of family that now existed, including those headed by a mother and father, a single parent, a same-sex couple or grandparents.

42. **Mr. Sfregola** (Italy), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union, said that the member States recognized the crucial role of the family and had taken measures to support families since 1989. Parents, caregivers and families played a crucial role in improving prospects for children and young people as well as caring for the elderly, and policies should support the valuable contribution that families were making to society. Indeed, a transformative post-2015 agenda would be impossible without taking families into account. However, for policies to be successful, they must recognize the diverse types of family that had developed over time. The European Union understood all references to "family" in the draft resolution to reflect that diversity and encouraged all stakeholders to use the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family to raise awareness of the importance of families and ensure that the discussions over the next 20 years were inclusive, constructive and beneficial to all families.

43. **Ms. Hewanpola** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Switzerland, Turkey and Vanuatu, said that those delegations had been pleased to join the consensus on the draft resolution. Ensuring that the family, which had a central role to play in society, was a safe environment that enabled all of its members to reach their full potential and realize their human rights was essential to ensuring a high quality of life for all as well as the cohesion of communities more broadly. Recognition must be given to the various types of families that existed in different cultural, social and political systems. All forms of families, including single-parent families, extended or inter-generational families, families with parents of the same gender or different genders and child-headed households were valid and deserved equal recognition and support, as recognized by the international community in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Upholding the principles of diversity and non-

discrimination was fundamental to fulfilling human rights obligations and the international community was urged to recognize, respect and protect the rights of all families.

44. **Ms. Ortigosa** (Uruguay), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and El Salvador, said that the concept of the family was extremely important. Those States understood the references to “family” in the draft resolution to refer to all types of family that existed in different cultural, political and social systems.

Agenda item 27: Advancement of women (continued)

(a) Advancement of women

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.20/Rev.1: Intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula

45. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee), making an oral correction to the draft resolution, said that footnote 12 should read “[A/69/256](#)”.

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

47. **Mr. Faye** (Senegal), speaking as the main sponsor, said that Bangladesh, Belarus, India, Indonesia and Russian Federation were not sponsors of the draft resolution. However, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uruguay had joined the sponsors.

48. He presented a number of oral amendments to the text. In the fifth preambular paragraph, paragraph 1 and paragraph 2, “child and forced marriage” should now read “child, early and forced marriage”. In paragraph 4, the words “and intensify” should be inserted after the word “renew”. In paragraph 12(k), the words “physical and mental” should be inserted after the words “standard of”.

49. His delegation welcomed the positive action that had been taken to end obstetric fistula, which was often the result of prolonged labour or giving birth without a

birth attendant. However, that preventable condition was still a serious obstacle to the social development and empowerment of women and continued to cause deaths and the breakdown of families. Consequently, the issue should be taken into account in the post-2015 development agenda.

50. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Andorra, Cyprus, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, Palau, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Turkmenistan and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had joined the sponsors.

51. *Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.20/Rev.1, as orally revised and corrected, was adopted.*

52. **Mr. Sfregola** (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Union, thanked Senegal for including many new important elements in the draft resolution, including in paragraph 3. Prevention was the key to ending obstetric fistula, and education remained one of the best means of prevention. Comprehensive sexuality education was needed to give young people the information and skills enabling them to make decisions about their health and sexuality, as well as to avoid early childbearing, one of the predominant root causes of obstetric fistula. The European Union regretted that that important issue could not be included in the draft resolution. It aimed to continue working with all delegations on that issue given its importance for protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls. It underlined its support for that important initiative, and for the United Nations Population Fund.

53. **Monsignor Grech** (Observer for the Holy See) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution. The key to overcoming obstetric fistula was linked to respect of the human rights of all women. His delegation affirmed its support for quality, accessible and professional maternal and emergency obstetric care, skilled attendance at birth and prenatal and postnatal care.

54. With regard to sexual and reproductive health, so-called reproductive rights, family planning and other language, the Holy See reiterated its reservations as set out more fully in the report of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Beijing Platform for Action. In particular, the ICPD report rejected recourse to abortion for family planning and denied that it created any new rights in that regard. His delegation understood gender to mean male and female only and to have no meaning other

than the customary or general usage of that term. It would continue collaboration with all actors of the international community to make specific contributions and intensify efforts to end obstetric fistula.

55. **Ms. Murillo** (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador and Uruguay, said that those countries were honoured to sponsor the draft resolution. Her delegation would have liked paragraph 4 to have been more comprehensive and evidence-based. Sex education was a very broad issue and included developing respectful relationships based on gender equality and human rights. Her delegation had been flexible on that language and hoped that the main sponsors would be more flexible on that matter in future.

Agenda item 64: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

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

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.23/Rev.1: Child, early and forced marriage

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

57. **Ms. Kalamwina** (Zambia) said that Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Burundi, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Estonia, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, San Marino, Senegal, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Thailand, Togo, Turkmenistan, and United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors. The draft resolution made it clear that child, early and forced marriage continued to impede development, particularly in the areas of poverty eradication, education, gender equality, women's empowerment, child mortality, maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases. The Government of Zambia was committed to ending that practice and the draft resolution would be an important step towards ensuring that girls could reach their full potential. Child, early and forced marriage must be adequately addressed in the post-2015 development agenda.

58. There was one revision to the text: in the second line of paragraph 5, the words "and girls" should be

removed in order to bring the paragraph in line with language that had been recently agreed in the General Assembly, as well as in many other forums. Zambia strongly encouraged the remaining States to support that important draft resolution, which was an important step towards ending child, early and forced marriage and would thereby improve the lives and futures of millions of girls.

59. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Ecuador, Eritrea, Mali, Nicaragua, Suriname, Switzerland and Tunisia had joined the sponsors.

60. **Ms. AlMuzaini** (Kuwait), speaking on behalf of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, said that putting an end to child, early and forced marriage was an important step, and those States would like to promote the rights of girls around the world. The paragraphs of the draft resolution regarding the importance of education and health were of key importance and contained valuable initiatives. The delegations of those States reaffirmed the importance of national sovereignty in implementing the provisions of the draft resolution in accordance with national legislation and existing human rights instruments.

61. **Ms. Vadiati** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that her delegation would join the consensus on the draft resolution. However, it was concerned that the main sponsor, Canada, needed to pay more attention to other challenges faced by women and girls on an equal footing and in an impartial manner, such as the elimination of violence against and targeted killing of indigenous and aboriginal children, in particular girls. Her delegation placed on record a reservation regarding the new trend of bringing language from different contexts and agenda items to the context of the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, for example, in paragraph 5. It also remained concerned about paragraph 7, which referred to the ongoing consultation on the post-2015 development agenda.

62. *Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.23/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.*

63. **Mr. Holtz** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), speaking on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, said that those countries were pleased

with the clear and balanced message of the draft resolution that child, early and forced marriage was a violation of the human rights of women and girls, that States had the obligation to protect the rights of all women and girls and that all stakeholders must work together to alleviate poverty and change the deep-rooted gender inequalities, norms and stereotypes and harmful practices, perceptions and customs that were inherently linked to those deplorable practices.

64. However, they were concerned by the unexpected and last-minute deletion of an important reference to the rights of girls to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, particularly as reservations on that reference had not been strongly expressed during the informal consultations. Comprehensive sexuality education was essential for all adolescents and young people, especially girls, to make positive, responsible and informed decisions about their sexuality. When such education was not provided, it left them potentially vulnerable to coercion, abuse, exploitation, unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Child, early and forced marriage could not be eliminated without recognizing, respecting and protecting the rights of girls over their sexuality. The Third Committee failed to do justice to girls if it did not recognize that lack of respect for the sexual and reproductive rights of girls was at the core of the issue. Those countries understood the reference to “women” in the draft resolution to refer also to young women and adolescents.

65. **Monsignor Grech** (Observer for the Holy See) said that his delegation supported all efforts to end child, early and forced marriage and welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution. In order to end that harmful practice, major challenges, including poverty and insecurity, along with some traditional customs, must be overcome. In that context, his delegation reiterated its position with regard to sexual and reproductive health, also referred to as reproductive rights, and other language, as more fully set out in the report of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action. His delegation understood the term gender to refer to male and female according to its general and historical usage.

66. **Mr. Elbahi** (Sudan) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution. However, it had reservations about the content of paragraph 5.

Agenda item 66: Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
(continued)

(a) Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (continued)
(A/C.3/69/L.56/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.56/Rev.1: Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

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

68. **Mr. Viktorov** (Russian Federation) said that Algeria, Angola, Burundi, China, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritania, Morocco, Tajikistan, Uganda and Zimbabwe had joined the sponsors. During the Second World War millions of innocent people had been victims of war crimes against humanity, as confirmed by, inter alia, the Nuremberg Tribunal. The victory over Nazism had been a landmark in the global human rights architecture, leading to the establishment of pioneering instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Despite those well-known facts, attempts were still made to deny history — how else could the resolve of certain States to put the draft resolution to a vote be explained?

69. In Europe over the past few months, there had been a worrying increase in the erection of monuments in tribute to Nazis, the declaration of days celebrating liberation from Nazism as days of mourning and attempts to declare those who had fought against the anti-Hitler coalition and collaborated with Nazis as national heroes and heroes of the national liberation movement with the permission or even support of the authorities. Such acts were attempts to falsify history and were an explicit demonstration of cynicism and blasphemy towards those who had freed the world from Nazism. Furthermore, they were criminal acts according to article 4 of the International Convention

on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

70. The sponsors of the draft resolution considered the glorification of those involved in crimes of Nazism to be totally unacceptable. Since work had begun on the draft resolution, they had striven to make the text more balanced and acceptable to delegations. His delegation believed that the adoption of the draft resolution with the widest possible support from Member States would have a significant impact on the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

71. He read out the following oral revisions: in paragraph 43, the reference to “paragraph 42” should be replaced with “paragraph 41”; in paragraph 46, the reference to “paragraph 42” should be replaced with “paragraph 43”. He also read out a few minor corrections to the Russian text of the draft resolution.

72. **Mr. Shapoval** (Ukraine) said that his delegation was convinced that no delegation supported the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism, the Holocaust, racism, Xenophobia or any other form of intolerance, and it condemned Nazism and neo-Nazism, as well as other violent totalitarian ideologies, in the strongest possible terms. Ukrainians still remembered the millions of their compatriots lost as a result of another totalitarian regime — Stalinism — and they condemned Hitler and Stalin equally. The Russian Federation should stop glorifying Stalinism and feeding neo-Stalinism. Unless Stalinism and neo-Stalinism were equally condemned along with Nazism, neo-Nazism and other forms of intolerance, Ukraine would not be in a position to support the draft resolution.

73. Nazism and neo-Nazism and other forms of intolerance should be dealt with in a manner that was appropriate, balanced and precise. It was totally unacceptable and wrong to manipulate history and twist its essence in pursuance of an aggressive political agenda, which was how the Russian Federation was handling the matter. Ukraine firmly opposed the cynical attempt of the Russian Federation to present itself as a champion of combating Nazism and neo-Nazism while repeating those same crimes against Ukraine. The Russian Federation had not only illegally annexed Crimea and started an undeclared hybrid war on Ukraine, but it was also openly supporting various

Russian neo-Nazi groups in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

74. Russian Federation official policy was aimed at blaming others, while the Russian Federation itself was actively supporting radical movements and neo-Nazism in Ukraine and abroad. Russian Cossacks in Crimea openly promoted nationalistic, xenophobic and chauvinistic policies. It was becoming increasingly dangerous to speak Ukrainian in Crimea and in areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions held by terrorists. Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups feared to leave Crimea owing to the high risk of being prevented from returning to their homes. Information propaganda rooted in Russian consciousness continued to fuel chauvinism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and ethnic strife. The world had been shocked by the secret protocol between the Soviet Union and Germany in 1939, which had resulted in the division of Europe and brought the whole world to war. The draft resolution sent the wrong signal to the international community, particularly the younger generation, because it could be interpreted that other violent totalitarian ideologies might be tolerable in some circumstances. Against that background, Ukraine would vote against the draft resolution.

75. **Ms. Divakova** (Belarus) thanked the Russian Federation for consistently promoting the important issue of combating glorification of Nazism and the spread of other contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. Her country shared the concern outlined in the draft resolution about the use of the Internet and, in particular, social media to propagate ideas on racial supremacy and war. Belarus had paid a high price for the crimes of Nazis, with a quarter of its population killed during the Second World War. The draft resolution allocated a significant role to United Nations human rights mechanisms in countering glorification of Nazism. All measures in that regard should be implemented through partnership between States, civil society and the media.

76. The 2015 meeting of the General Assembly dedicated to the end of the Second World War would be an important milestone in uniting the efforts of all States in countering all forms of neo-Nazism, extremism, intolerance and hatred. Belarus would support the draft resolution and called on all States to follow its example.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.