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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 54th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KABORE (Burkina Faso)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/44/3, A/44/402, A/44/403, A/44/404, A/44/426, A/44/440, A/44/462, A/44/482, A/44/573, A/44/600, A/44/620, A/44/622, A/44/535, A/44/657, A/44/669, A/44/671; A/C.3/44/1 and 4; A/44/67, A/44/68, A/44/71, A/44/99, A/44/119, A/44/153, A/44/171, A/44/238 and Corr.1, A/44/320, A/44/325, A/44/355-S/20704, A/44/367, A/44/377, A/44/378, A/44/381, A/44/466, A/44/504, A/44/580, A/44/706, A/44/728; A/C.3/44/8)

AGENDA ITEM 109: EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (A/44/98, A/44/539, A/44/668, A/44/171, A/44/409-S/20743 and Corr.1 and 2, A/44/551-S/20870 and A/44/689-S/20921)

1. Mr. POLISHTCHOUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) noted with satisfaction the increased international co-operation which had made it possible to reach agreement on important social and humanitarian questions, including human rights. It was gratifying to note the efforts made by Member States to conduct a political dialogue on those questions and to expand the basis for agreement in the Commission on Human Rights and other bodies dealing with such matters. The prevention of blatant and mass violations of human rights was of paramount importance.
2. There continued to be hot-beds of racism in the world, including the abhorrent system of apartheid in South Africa. The international community must maintain its sanctions against that country until real progress was made in implementing the political rights of its black majority. The report of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/44/22) demonstrated that the peaceful words and promises of the Pretoria régime were incompatible with the criminal practice of apartheid. A single, democratic and non-racial State could be established in South Africa only in accordance with the principles of justice and taking due account of the mutual interests of the various racial and social groups.
3. The electoral victory of SWAPO in Namibia was a success for the United Nations and the entire world community and demonstrated that the most complex questions could be solved by political means.
4. The Israeli authorities continued their arbitrary rule in the occupied territories. Peace could be achieved in the Middle East only if the occupation of the Arab territories was ended and a just solution was found to the Palestinian problem through the convening of a conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the equal participation of all parties concerned.
5. In El Salvador, another crime had been committed recently: the killing of Jesuit priests. He joined those delegations that had expressed their indignation in that regard and demanded that the Salvadorian authorities conduct an investigation and punish those found guilty.
6. United Nations efforts to settle regional conflicts had made a significant contribution to the cause of human rights. In that connection, the implementation

(Mr. Pojischouk, Ukrainian SSR)

of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan was of particular importance. It was necessary to step up the process of national reconciliation and ensure strict compliance with the Accords by all parties. Efforts to achieve a settlement in Kampuchea must aim at guaranteeing the peaceful, independent and non-aligned status of that country.

7. His delegation endorsed the conclusions of the Special Rapporteur on the question of the use of mercenaries (A/44/526) and supported his appeal to States to take effective measures to halt the recruitment, financing, training and transit of mercenaries.

8. His country supported the proposal to enhance the effectiveness of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and to strengthen its key role in promoting international social co-operation. Social questions, international co-operation in the social and humanitarian fields and human rights were coming to the forefront of international relations. Human rights could not be implemented without ensuring peace, and a stable peace could not be achieved without the observance of human rights.

9. Mr. SCHERK (Austria) joined those speakers that had expressed appreciation to Governments for co-operating with the fact-finding mechanisms established by the Commission on Human Rights, and appealed to all Governments concerned to do so. While Austria welcomed the continued co-operation of the authorities in Afghanistan with the Special Rapporteur, it remained deeply concerned about the use of weapons for mass destruction by both sides in the conflict, the large number of political prisoners, arbitrary justice and the ill-treatment of prisoners. It was essential to ensure respect for the principles of humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict.

10. His country was still deeply concerned about the human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran and would welcome increased co-operation by the Government of that country with the Special Representative in order to gain a more comprehensive picture of the prevailing situation. He appealed to the Governments of Iraq and Iran to continue their efforts to settle the situation of the large number of prisoners of war, who were still being deprived of their right to be repatriated or released. Austria was also concerned about the various reports of human rights abuses in Iraq.

11. His delegation was heartened by the progress made in Chile towards the re-establishment of a representative, pluralist democracy, but was still concerned about the use of torture and other human rights abuses referred to in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Chile (A/44/635). Austria looked forward to the progressive adoption of internal measures to increase the protection of human rights in Chile and called upon the Government to resume its co-operation with the Special Rapporteur by allowing him to visit that country again.

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(Mr. Scherk, Austria)

12. His delegation was most disturbed by the human rights violations in El Salvador and was particularly shocked by the barbarous murder of six priests and two women on 16 November 1989. He viewed very seriously the increased activities of paramilitary groups, summary executions, disappearances and abductions reported by the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights. Austria appealed to the parties to the conflict in El Salvador to conclude a cease-fire agreement and resume their dialogue. In any case, the internationally accepted principles of humanitarian law must be observed at all times by the parties to the conflict.

13. His delegation reiterated its deepest concern about the serious violations of human rights in South Africa and the Arab territories occupied by Israel. There were also reports of increased human rights violations in Guatemala. The commitment to full implementation of human rights pledged by the Guatemalan Government should be translated into action as soon as possible. The Commission on Human Rights had discussed at length the question of human rights in Cuba. Austria looked forward to hearing about the results of the direct contacts between the Secretary-General and the Cuban Government in that regard. Human rights violations continued to occur in many parts of the world, however, and a non-selective approach was necessary in dealing with them.

14. The recent free elections in Namibia aroused high hopes for the future of the Namibian people and the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. The changes that had recently taken place in Paraguay were equally encouraging. Austria urged the Government of Paraguay to proceed further on its announced course of fully guaranteeing the enjoyment of human rights in that country.

15. His Government had welcomed the rapid peaceful changes in several Eastern European countries, especially Hungary and Poland. It hoped that the improvements achieved in other countries, such as the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic, would lead to further democratization in all areas. His delegation was gratified by the recent developments in Bulgaria, which pointed towards progress in the democratization of that country, and might have a positive effect on the treatment of minorities.

16. On the other hand, Austria was disappointed that the process of democratization in China had been abruptly halted. The human rights situation in Romania, particularly with regard to ethnic minorities, was also cause for concern. Austria called upon the Romanian Government to extend its full co-operation to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights by allowing him to visit the country.

17. His Government believed that minorities should be regarded not as sources of friction within or between States, but as bridges between nations. The development of their own culture and the practice of their religion enabled minorities to maintain and further develop their cultural identity. In that connection, particular mention should be made of the plight of the Kurdish people, who were scattered over a wide region and were being deprived of the basic right to preserve

(Mr. Scherk, Austria)

their identity. Austria called upon all States with ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to ensure the enjoyment of their human rights in accordance with the International Covenants on Human Rights. The establishment and monitoring of human rights standards in the administration of justice was of paramount importance. Continued efforts must be made to ensure the practical implementation of the various international human rights instruments in the interest of all mankind.

18. Mr. TELLMANN (Norway) said that Norway had always attached great importance to the role of the United Nations in promoting human rights, a role which the Organization could fulfil only if it reacted consistently wherever serious human rights violations occurred and only if States were willing to co-operate with human rights machinery and procedures.

19. He welcomed in that connection the rising tide of democracy in Eastern Europe and the promise it held for improvements in civil and political rights. In the Soviet Union, he drew attention to increasing openness and pluralism, greater religious freedom and freedom of expression, and electoral and legal reforms. In Poland, elections had led to a more pluralistic society and an unprecedented promotion of human rights. Hungary's constitutional reforms, new political climate and easing of emigration and immigration laws were also positive developments, as was Hungary's accession to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Similar positive developments were to be noted in the German Democratic Republic, and he hoped that the leadership in Czechoslovakia would respond positively to the demands for democratic reform in that country. He hoped that the new leadership in Bulgaria would undertake substantial reforms and improve the situation of the country's Turkish minority.

20. With regard to Romania, on the other hand, his delgation regretted the continuation of policies that were inimical to human rights and contrasted with the growing pluralism and democracy elsewhere in Eastern Europe, especially policies that deprived minorities of their rights, restricted freedom of expression and the press and limited the freedoms of association, religious activity and movement. Romania was clearly violating legally binding international human rights instruments and he urged it to comply with requests by the Commission on Human Rights for information and to allow the Commission's Special Rapporteur to visit the country.

21. Unfortunately, in some countries the human rights situation had suffered serious setbacks. Events in China had shocked the world and he urged the Chinese Government to accept democracy and pluralism and respect the rights of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. In Kampuchea, he noted that tremendous human suffering continued and that the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces had regrettably not taken place under international control. Efforts to find a just political solution to the conflict in that country must be accelerated, and the international community must prevent any revival of the brutal policies of Pol Pot. He noted that there had been widespread arrests and abuses in Myanmar; opposition party

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(Mr. Tellmann, Norway)

leaders and sympathizers must be freed from detention in order to ensure free elections. He urged the Government of Myanmar to take measures to ensure democratic development and full respect for fundamental human rights. In Sri Lanka, civil strife had eroded civil authority and resulted in widespread human rights abuses, including indiscriminate violence. He urged all parties to resume a dialogue aimed at a lasting political solution, and to respect the principles of humanitarian law.

22. Concerning South Africa, he condemned apartheid and urged the release of all, not just some, political prisoners and further steps towards the abolition of apartheid. He hoped that the African Charter of Human and People's Rights would supplement United Nations machinery in that area and inspire further initiatives to promote human rights on the African continent.

23. Noting the internal conflicts in Ethiopia and the Sudan, he appealed to the parties to the various conflicts to seek a durable peace and to stop blocking the transport of food into war-torn areas. He also urged the Government of Somalia to put an end to arbitrary arrests, detention and torture, to enter into a dialogue with the opposition forces and to give international news media and human rights organizations regular access to the country.

24. Human rights violations in the Israeli-occupied territories were massive and well documented, and confidence-building measures were required so that the two sides could eventually reach a comprehensive political settlement. Israel should no longer deny the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention in those territories. In Syria, he urged the Government to end such practices as torture and the lengthy detention of political prisoners without formal charges.

25. He hoped that the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq would improve the situation of human rights in both countries, but was concerned about the arbitrary arrests, torture and summary executions reported in Iraq and urged its Government to end such violations of human rights. He was equally concerned about the situation of Iraq's Kurdish minority, the forced relocation of rural populations and the demolition of Kurdish villages. That situation called for international fact-finding and monitoring and he urged Iraq to co-operate with the Commission on Human Rights for that purpose.

26. In Iran, Norway was disturbed by the execution and torture of political prisoners, the lack of respect for freedom of conscience and religion and the absence of procedural guarantees. He was particularly concerned about the situation of the Baha'is in Iran and urged the Government to comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to co-operate with the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights.

27. In Afghanistan, continued armed conflict and instability had resulted in the detention of many political prisoners awaiting trial and a growing refugee problem. Only a comprehensive political settlement based on the exercise of the right of self-determination could enable the Afghan people to enjoy its human rights.

(Mr. Tellmann, Norway)

28. Progress towards the holding of democratic elections had been an important factor in improving the human rights situation in Chile, but in order for the full restoration of human rights to be possible, the Government that would be elected would have to take measures to ensure that no government agencies violated the rights to life, physical and moral integrity and legal security of the Chilean people.

29. Norway was deeply concerned over the escalation of violence and civilian casualties in El Salvador and appealed to the Government and the opposition forces to resume talks and seek a lasting political solution. In the meantime, the recent brutal killings must be investigated, voluntary organizations must be allowed to care for the victims of the war and humanitarian law must be respected by both sides. In Guatemala, the human rights situation was deteriorating and he urged the Government to take measures to prevent involuntary disappearances and politically motivated killings.

30. The United Nations must ensure the effective functioning of its human rights machinery and exert international pressure for change in cases of serious and persistent human rights violations. Within States, private organizations could and must play a crucial role in increasing awareness of human rights and the relevant international machinery. Norway therefore supported the idea underlying the United Nations programme of advisory services in the area of human rights and contributed to the Voluntary Fund for Advisory Services. It also urged broader co-operation between the Centre for Human Rights and UNDP to make human rights a component of multilateral development programmes. The Secretary-General should look into that matter and deal with it in the appropriate context.

#### Rights of reply

31. Mr. TANASA (Romania) said he regretted that some Western representatives had spread falsehoods regarding his country to serve their own political ends. Romania would never succumb to pressure or diktat or take advice on how to conduct its affairs. Those delegations that had slandered it should look to their countries, with their problems of mass unemployment and illiteracy, criminality and drug abuse. Those were the problems that deserved serious attention. The slanderers had said nothing about the achievements of Romania, which had no unemployed and no homeless and provided health protection and cultural rights to its population.

32. Mr. ALFARO (El Salvador) said that armed struggle in his country had resulted in premeditated attacks by rebels on the peace and freedom of the population and that any democracy would defend itself against such attacks perpetrated by Marxist terrorist groups that thought the ends justified the means. His country wanted an end to such attacks and had offered the rebels an opportunity to surrender their weapons and become integrated into the life of the country.

33. Mr. ZIADA (Iraq) said he deplored the parrot-like arguments of the Western countries, which were concerned only with politics. Human rights were not a political matter, or just a question of voting, or of so-called peaceful assembly.

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(Mr. Ziada, Iraq)

Human rights meant first and foremost respect for human dignity, self-determination and sovereignty, and a stand against apartheid, discrimination and all the other obnoxious ideas which had come not from Asia, Africa or Latin America, but from Europe with its materialistic attitudes. It was not Europe that had given the world the great religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and the belief in the soul.

34. Westerners believed in selling themselves and their ideas for money. That was why they continued to support South Africa and to keep silent about what was happening in the occupied Palestinian territories. They had talked about an end to the Iraq-Iran war, while they themselves had been selling arms to both sides. They were the ones who, a hundred years earlier, had forced China into the opium wars for their own trade and profit: as recently reported in the press, 100 million out of 300 million Chinese citizens had been made to use opium. It had been Westerners who had massacred 25,000 peacefully demonstrating Algerians at the end of the Second World War. It was only force - as in the case of the intifadah in Palestine - not belief in humanity, that had made them take notice of what was happening.

AGENDA ITEM 98: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.49/Rev.1 and proposed amendments in document A/C.3/44/L.76

35. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

36. Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced revised draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.49/Rev.1 and drew attention to the revisions to make it acceptable to delegations which had reservations.

37. Mr. WHITAKER SALLES (Brazil) introduced the proposed amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.49/Rev.1 contained in document A/C.3/44/L.76, sponsored by Brazil and Mexico, joined by Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay and Venezuela. While the sponsors understood the concern that had motivated the revision, the revised draft resolution contained some elements which had not yet been agreed upon and which would complicate the Committee's work. The proposed amendments were designed to restore the original basis of the draft resolution, namely, the texts of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two Covenants, on which there was a consensus.

38. Mr. MALAGA (Peru) said that the draft resolution dealt with an extremely important question which required further study, especially since negotiations were still in progress. He appealed to the sponsors of the draft resolution and the proposed amendments to agree to the item being postponed until the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, when it might be possible to reach agreement.

39. Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia) pointed out that the draft resolution had been the subject of informal discussions for more than a month. He deeply regretted

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(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

that amendments had been submitted at so late a stage that it was impossible to reach agreement on them; as a sponsor of the draft resolution, Mongolia would find it difficult to accept them because they would completely alter the raison d'être of the draft resolution. In particular, the proposal to replace, in the title, the words "a healthy environment" by "healthier standards of living" would completely change the subject-matter. The draft resolution dealt with the right of the individual and the family to live in a healthy environment. The sponsors recognized that a healthy environment would raise standards of living, but that was a different matter and should be dealt with in a different way. The proposed amendments should have been embodied in a separate draft resolution, which his delegation would have supported. Draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.49/Rev.1 dealt with an important aspect of social and economic rights and had no direct bearing on the consideration of environmental issues in the Second Committee.

40. In a spirit of compromise, however, and out of respect for the ideas of other delegations, the sponsors of the draft resolution were prepared to respond to the appeal by the representative of Peru.

41. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee agreed to postpone consideration of the draft resolution and the proposed amendments until the forty-fifth session.

42. It was so decided.

43. Mr. WHITAKER SALLES (Brazil), expressing appreciation to the representative of Mongolia, said he hoped that a text would be produced that was satisfactory to all delegations. His own delegation's concern was shared by many others. Draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.49/Rev.1 dealt with serious matters, but it was neither the time nor the place to tackle them. The question needed further study. Moreover, the Committee would be precipitating action on questions which were being or would be discussed in a more appropriate and systematic manner in other forums.

44. Mr. GALAL (Egypt) said that the draft resolution and the proposed amendments were somewhat vague and, in any case, were redundant because the environment was a matter for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Second Committee. His delegation would have abstained in a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.50/Rev.1 on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and proposed amendments in document A/C.3/44/L.77

45. Mr. CHEN Shiqiu (China) introduced the proposed amendments in document A/C.3/44/L.77 on behalf of the sponsors, joined by Zimbabwe. The reason for the proposed amendments was that the draft resolution did not represent the understanding of the majority of the international community on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. The amendments were intended to improve the draft resolution, in particular by restricting the possibility of using freedom of expression and peaceful assembly to interfere in the internal affairs of other States. Incorporation of the amendments would result in a more comprehensive and

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(Mr. Chen Shiqiu, China)

balanced resolution. He therefore hoped that the sponsors of the draft resolution would accept them as a basis for achieving consensus.

46. Mr. ZIADA (Iraq), supported by Mr. GALAL (Egypt) moved closure of debate under rule 117 of the rules of procedure.

47. Mr. VAN WULFFTEN PALTHE (Netherlands), speaking on a point of order, said that he opposed that motion, which would restrict freedom of expression in the Committee. The draft resolution was based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1989/31. The amendments sought to change the subject of the draft and were irrelevant to human rights, which were universal in nature. The amendments in fact constituted a new proposal and were unacceptable. He therefore requested, under rule 113 of the rules of procedure, that the Committee should first decide whether it agreed to treat the amendments as such, before the motion by the representative of Iraq was pursued.

48. Following a procedural discussion, the CHAIRMAN ruled that the Committee should first take a decision on the submission by the representative of the Netherlands that the amendments amounted to a new proposal and were therefore unacceptable.

49. A recorded vote was taken on that submission.

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

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Abstaining: Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Malawi, Nigeria, Poland, Singapore.

50. The submission was rejected by 85 votes to 30, with 9 abstentions.

51. The CHAIRMAN said that since the submission had been rejected, the amendments introduced by the representative of China would be treated as such.

52. Mr. VAN WULFFTEN PALTHE (Netherlands) said that, in view of the decision just taken, he would withdraw draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.50/Rev.1 on behalf of its sponsors.

53. Mr. CHEN Shiqiu (China) said that he welcomed the statement by the representative of the Netherlands, which was what the sponsors of the amendments had wished. Their purpose had been to improve the text of the draft resolution, but since it had been withdrawn, no further action was necessary on the amendments to it.

54. Mr. GALAL (Egypt) said that his delegation regretted the decisions just taken because the draft resolution had been a good one and the amendments would have made it better. He wondered how human rights issues could be addressed if draft resolutions were withdrawn when improvements to them were suggested.

55. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the motion by the representative of the Netherlands because it agreed that the proposed amendments amounted to a different proposal which had nothing to do with the freedoms in question. They sought to eliminate legitimate reference to those freedoms and were therefore unacceptable.

56. Mr. ZIADA (Iraq) said that his delegation had voted against the motion by the representative of the Netherlands because it considered the draft resolution incomplete. In proposing the amendments, those working for true human rights had called on others not to misuse them for political ends. As a result of the vote, those trying to abuse human rights issues had failed in their purpose.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 98.

AGENDA ITEM 114: ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS (continued) (A/C.3/44/L.59 and L.72)

Draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.59 on enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections, and proposed amendments in document A/C.3/44/L.72

58. Mr. ENGO (Cameroon), introducing the amendments in document A/C.3/44/L.72 on behalf of the sponsors, said that the amendments addressed serious issues in the draft resolution. Foreign rule had brought alien practices to many countries. Perhaps the most glaring example was in the choice of leadership and the system by which the populace expressed their aspirations. It was difficult to see why

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(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

peoples far from Europe should adopt a system that had not been universally accepted in one single form even there.

59. There were several reasons why the requirement asserted in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution for an electoral process which accommodated distinct alternatives was not acceptable. Such a requirement was not stipulated anywhere else and could not be presumed simply because it was part of the practice of certain States. In his own country, all the different political parties had opted to form a single entity in an attempt to remove bitter divisions caused by the old system. Although all candidates for election were members of the same party, the system was democratic because it provided for a free choice of those who were to govern. The requirement for distinct alternatives contained in the draft resolution would condemn the Cameroonian process and was unacceptable because peoples had a fundamental right to choose the system by which their representatives were selected.

60. The costs of the electoral process in many developed nations made nonsense of the idea of free access to it for the ordinary man. There seemed to be little justification for a system where choice was restricted by the need for candidates to be rich or powerful. In view of the flaws in the multi-party system in the countries which had given it birth, it was unacceptable, for both legal and practical reasons, to try to insist on distinct alternatives everywhere else. Moreover, especially in developing countries, qualifications other than party affiliation were considered more relevant to the choice of leaders. Until they were persuaded otherwise, nations must remain the ultimate judge of how best to ensure their peoples' participation in Government, either directly or through elected representatives.

61. In conclusion, paragraph 8 of the draft resolution should be deleted because it seemed inappropriate to call upon States to express views on a subject before they had been able to consider it in the General Assembly.

#### OTHER MATTERS

62. Mr. MAHMOUD (Lebanon) expressed his delegation's gratitude for the condolences extended to his country in connection with the tragic death of Mr. René Moawad, President of the Lebanese Republic.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.