

COUNCIL MONITOR

International Service for Human Rights



Human Rights Monitor Series

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, REPORT ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE 5TH SESSION (18 JUNE) AND THE ORGANISATIONAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL (18-20 JUNE 2007).

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Overview

Due to the events leading to the adoption of the President's text of 18 June, and the subsequent spill-over of the Council from the disbandment of the 5th session straight into an organisational session of the new members of the Council, including the change of President, it has been difficult to provide comprehensive Daily Updates on events from 18 to 20 June. This report is intended to complement the news updates that have been published by ISHR and to serve as a more continuous and comprehensive overview of developments over these three days.

The Council will meet again on 22 June to discuss organisational matters for the next session of the Council.

Summary of events of 18 June 2007

The morning meeting of the final day of the 5th session of the Council opened with a statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Patricia Espinoza Cantellano. She mentioned Mexico's efforts to improve its domestic human rights record, including in the areas of trafficking in persons, gender violence, torture, and the abolition of the death penalty. She also drew attention to the importance of the universal periodic review (UPR) in the promotion of international cooperation.

The President of the Council, Louis Alphonso de Alba, then adjourned the meeting until further notice in order that States could enter into bilateral discussions on the President's Text of 17 June. However, ongoing objections by the Chinese delegation over the exclusion of the question of a 2/3 majority vote for country resolutions, and pursuant objections by other States, meant that the Council did not reconvene until 12 pm.

The President reappeared at 12 pm and informed the Council that an 'agreement' had been reached, and that he "would like to propose that you accept this text as a compromise on the understanding that it includes also the code of conduct and that tomorrow the Council can take action on them".

The amended President's Text simply added under the rules of procedure that: 'Proposers of a country resolution have the responsibility to secure the broadest possible support for their initiatives (preferably 15 members), before action is taken'.

Summary of events of 19 and 20 June under the new Presidency

Introduction of outgoing President

The first meeting of the second cycle of the Council was delayed until 4pm due to closed consultations. The organisational meeting was finally opened by outgoing President Luis Alfonso de Alba. He welcomed the Council in his capacity as the 'provisional President', as the designated incoming President had not yet been elected. While Ambassador de Alba declined to read a personal statement he had written on the previous day, he thanked Louis Arbour, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations team, and the Government of Mexico for their continual support throughout the year.

Election of officers

The first agenda item for the day's meeting was the formal election of officers. The Ambassador of Poland, on behalf of the Eastern European Group, was given the honour of presenting the Council with its new President - Ambassador Doru Romulus Costea, Ambassador of Romania - who was then elected by acclamation.

President Costea opened his commentary by expressing his gratitude to former President de Alba, who had set a high standard in his position. He declared that he looked forward to the profound task of effectively implementing the mechanisms of the institution-building process. President Costea then challenged the Council, stating that "future generations will judge us by our abilities" and that the results will not be measured by the good decisions it takes, but by the change in the situations of those who are victims of human rights violations. Lastly, he warned the Council that it must avoid politicisation, selectivity, and double standards by basing its interactions on constructive dialogue, transparency, and respect.

The Ambassador of Brazil then took the floor to present nominations for the Bureau of the Council.

- The new Council Rapporteur, from the Latin American and Caribbean group, is Permanent Representative Alejandro Artucio of Uruguay.
- The African Group nominated Ambassador Mohamed-Siad Doualehof of Djibouti.
- The Western European and Others Group nominated Ambassador Boudewijn Van Eenennaam from the Netherlands.
- Ambassador Dayan Jayathilake, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, was named as Vice President from the Asian Group.

Adoption of the President's Text

President Costea explained that his first order of business was to proceed with the “necessary follow-up concerning the agreement on the package” from the night before, including the code of conduct for special procedures mandate holders contained in draft resolution L.3 Rev. 1. This would also include action on drafts L.4, L.5, and L.6¹ as well as the elaboration of the Council’s agenda and programme of work as provided in Rule 8 of the newly agreed rules of procedure. Canada then interrupted with a point of order challenging this interpretation of the events of midnight on 18 June as relayed by the President. Canada insisted that ‘agreement’, in their view, did not constitute ‘adoption’. To underline this point, Canada quoted from the President’s statement of 18 June that “it is inappropriate to proceed with this exercise. It is, in fact, literally impossible because of the logistic difficulties and I would like to propose that you accept this text as a compromise on the understanding that it includes also the Code of Conduct and that tomorrow the Council can take action on them.”² The alternative view that the Text had been adopted would call into question the definition of consensus. It would also undermine the equality of members of the Council, and thus the legitimacy of the Council and the United Nations.

Faced with this challenge to his interpretation of the agreement of 18 June, President Costea repeated his view that the organisational meeting needed to “proceed with the necessary follow-up concerning the agreement on the package.” He then called on the members of the Council to determine by vote if his interpretation of the facts was correct. All States voted in favour of the President’s interpretation, except Canada, which voted against. The Council therefore determined by a vote of 46 to one that the “agreement” on the Text on institution-building submitted by President de Alba constituted adoption of the Text by consensus and therefore the Text was to be applied immediately.

Canada was given an opportunity to explain its vote after the vote. It referred to the principles enshrined in General Assembly *Resolution 60/251* of universality, impartiality, objectivity, and non-selectivity, and stressed that these were violated by the inclusion of the situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories as a fixed agenda item. By selecting one issue as more important than others, these four pillars have been violated.

President Costea was forced to interrupt Canada as Egypt raised a point of order. Egypt complained about the content of Canada’s statement, saying explanations of votes had to be limited specifically to what was voted upon, and could not touch upon issues of substance peripheral to the vote. In response, the President agreed with Egypt but allowed Canada to complete its statement, saying that it had been his intention all along to open the floor for comments on the agreement reached the night before.

Canada then initiated the general comments from delegations on the outcome of the institution-building process, which lasted until the closing of the day’s meeting.³ Canada stated that, while there are many positive

¹ Draft resolution on the follow-up to the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lebanon; Draft resolution on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Follow-up to Human Rights Council resolutions S-1/1 and S-3/; Draft decision on the follow-up to Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/4/8 of 30/03/07 entitled "Follow-up to HRC decision of 13/12/06 entitled 'Situation of human rights in Darfur (S-4/101)'".

² A transcript of the President’s closing statement is available on the OHCHR extranet under “Oral Statements”.

³ ISHR’s forthcoming report on events from 18-20 June will provide a summary of these general comments.

elements to the agreement, such clear contradictions, as expressed by the failure to treat all mandates equally, could not be accepted. In addition to concern over the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Canada expressed dissatisfaction that the mandates on Cuba and Belarus were discontinued without formal Council action.

Statements on the adoption of the President's Text

The remainder of 19 June and most of the morning of 20 June passed as various delegations added their opinions of what had happened and their hopes for the future.

An overwhelming number of States expressed profound thanks to the former President, Ambassador De Alba, and congratulated and welcomed the new President. States also repeatedly emphasised the achievement inherent in a consensus decision, and reiterated their commitment to implementing the text for the protection and promotion of human rights. Additionally, delegations stressed the importance of universality, objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity in the work of the Council. The institution building process was regarded as a difficult process, but one that has come to a positive conclusion

Canada, as the first State to take the floor, noted that the text had many positive elements, but expressed its deep regret regarding the inclusion of the item on the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) in the agenda. Canada claimed that this inclusion was inconsistent with the concepts of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, as laid out in *Resolution 60/251*. Canada also strongly criticised the deletion of mandates on Cuba and Belarus and argued that both situations warrant scrutiny from the Council.

Algeria, on behalf of the African Group, expressed the opinion that no provision of the UPR should compel a State to implement any recommendations that it has not previously agreed to, either within the context of a treaty or the UPR itself.⁴ Algeria expressed the sincere commitment of the African Group to protecting human rights, which is evident in the *African Charter on Human and People's Rights*. Algeria commented that 'no one can have a monopoly on compassion' and that the Human Rights Council should not be an arena for confrontation between developed and developing countries. Algeria reminded the Council that all of the country mandates established by the Commission focused on developing countries, and explained that the African Group believed that the Council should render services to all, not just certain countries. The State also expressed a desire for transparency, accountability, and a culture of mutual acceptance and obligation. In this spirit, the African Group emphasised its unanimous acceptance of the code of conduct.

China expressed its support for the President's Text but reiterated its concern regarding the politicisation of country mandates. The State explained that it had been attempting to 'safeguard the credibility of the Council' by putting through its proposal on country human rights situations, which was then reflected in the President's Text. China expressed its hope that the criteria will be strictly followed during the discussion of country situations.

Germany, on behalf of the European Union (EU), noted that the text was a compromise and explained that the EU was not entirely satisfied with the result. The EU expressed its deep concern in relation to country mandates, reiterating its preference to maintain all existing mandates and its desire to move away from the selectivity of the former Commission. Supporting the UPR, Germany highlighted that the outcome of the UPR must add value to the Council and that consideration of the level of development of a country should not compromise the universality of the mechanism. Germany expressed support for the code of conduct, underscoring that it did not originally see the need for it but accepted the compromise proposal. Finally, the State elaborated that the Council can now go ahead and show its worth as an improved organ which will be of real benefit to the people who are in need of support.

Pakistan (on behalf of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference) stressed the importance of equality in the UPR. It agreed with the African Group, explaining that because of the cooperative nature of the process

⁴ Supported by Malaysia.

States can only be held to account for what they have promised. Pakistan then discussed the mandate on the OPT and highlighted that its duration has been established ‘until the end of occupation’.⁵ Pakistan showed support for the program of work and agenda, particularly the separate items on OPT and racism. However, the State expressed its concern that the inclusion of an agenda item entitled ‘other items’ could allow for any situation to be raised and be used as a means for embarking on a ‘witch hunt’.

Highlighting its deep concern, **the USA** stated that it believed the Council would ‘take action’ on the package on this day (in accordance with Canada’s interpretation of events) and expressed its disappointment on "a member’s right to call for a vote...being denied." The USA then cautioned that the biased permanent agenda item on the OPT and the arbitrary eliminations of the country mandates on Cuba and Belarus raised serious questions about the institutional priorities of the Human Rights Council and its ability to assess human rights situations in an unbiased fashion.

Sri Lanka, on behalf of the Asian Group, also expressed some concerns with the adopted text, although it noted its own participation was carried out in the spirit of flexibility and consensus. Sri Lanka thanked China for its flexibility and sacrifice in achieving consensus, despite the support they received from the ‘great majority’ and assured the Council of its continuing support for the promotion and protection of human rights.

India voiced its support of the text, stating that it struck a fine balance⁶ and took into account the varying interpretations and demands of stakeholders, reaffirming the centrality of dialogue in the process. India then identified two issues that must be addressed in the coming days: the methods for the UPR and the review and rationalisation of mandates. India also welcomed the code of conduct.

The delegation of the **Russian Federation** drew attention to its own work undertaken to move towards universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity in the Human Rights Council. The State detailed its endeavours to ensure that the Council would become the core instrument of the UN human rights system and that its work will be free from political context and manipulation. Related to this, the Russian Federation expressed its satisfaction at the intergovernmental nature of the Council, particularly the UPR, and also its support for the code of conduct. The Russian Federation then explained that it was not able to set forth all its points and that there may be a lack of understanding. They therefore advised the Council that they would circulate their own official document on their understanding of certain aspects of the institution-building procedure.

Brazil, on behalf of GRULAC, complimented the President’s Text, highlighting the nature of the UPR as a cooperative, open mechanism. The State also showed support for guidelines for review of mandates, detailing them as a balance between two opposing perspectives. It was explained that the code of conduct has many improvements, and that it now focuses on both mandate holders and States’ responsibilities.

Over 40 States, both members and non-members of the Council, proceeded to make comments outlining their expectations for the functioning of the new elements of the Council. Most States made a point of welcoming the **UPR**, praising it as balanced, innovative, and a core mechanism of the Council.

- The United Kingdom stressed that the UPR must be more than a ‘paper exercise’ and it welcomed support from the OHCHR in the form of independent expertise.⁷
- Malaysia elaborated that the UPR should be a forum for constructive dialogue and cooperation, an avenue to share best practices and capacity building.⁸
- Emphasising the importance on non-selectivity, Pakistan (in its national capacity) underscored that a biased and selective approach to the mechanism would be harmful to the Council.

⁵ Supported by Malaysia.

⁶ Supported by Switzerland.

⁷ Supported by Slovenia

⁸ Supported by Nigeria, Italy, and Angola.

- Chile pointed to the UPR as the ‘heart of our new system’ but stressed that the Council must be extremely cautious and avoid any attempt of politicisation.⁹
- Switzerland expressed its regret that the independent expert section of the UPR was not integrated into the document, but highlighted that in practice this could change.
- Argentina noted with concern that civil society participation should have played more of a role in the UPR.¹⁰
- Singapore, in contrast, approved of the focus the UPR has on States.
- Ghana stressed that the UPR is an equal opportunity process for developed and developing nations alike.¹¹
- Iran made clear its interpretation that States are only accountable for implementing recommendations that have been agreed upon by consensus.
- Venezuela supported the compromise outcome of the implementation of UPR results.

The discussion of **special procedures** focused largely on country mandates, specifically the code of conduct and the mandates relating to Cuba and Belarus.

- Angola stressed that the special procedures mechanism is an essential instrument for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- The United Kingdom expressed concern that the mandates relating to Cuba and Belarus were not included in the text.¹² Argentina questioned whether the Belarusian mandate should have been deleted.
- Cuba celebrated the end of the "illegitimate anti-Cuban mandate" and expressed concern that other mandates had been maintained which were established on the basis of confrontation.
- Venezuela was glad to see the Belarusian and Cuban mandates terminated because they represented a history of politicisation at the former Commission on Human Rights.
- France was supportive of the inclusion of country-specific mandates¹³ and Japan stated that more country-specific mandates should have been extended.
- Israel strongly stressed its discontent with the process outlined for the review of mandates, calling it ‘incomprehensible’ that all but one mandate would be reviewed (mandate on the OPT).
- Iran reiterated that the OPT mandate will remain until the end of occupation.
- Discussing **the code of conduct**, the UK explained that it did not initially support the drafting, fearing it would hinder the independence of mandate holders¹⁴ but acknowledged that the final draft was an acceptable compromise.¹⁵
- Bangladesh highlighted its support for the code of conduct, stating that it will be valuable to both mandate holders and countries.¹⁶
- Both Malaysia and Pakistan expressed their thanks to China for its work on country mandates and they supported its flexibility in this regard.¹⁷
- South Africa expressed concern that the country-specific mandates played a substantial role in politicising the Council and that it would like to find a new way of working.
- The International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) in a joint statement¹⁸ looked forward to the publishing of the minimum qualifications for mandate holders on the OHCHR website and encouraged the nomination of only those individuals who meet the requirements.

⁹ Supported by Slovenia.

¹⁰ The Republic of Korea agreed, stating that all UPR recommendations should be given equal weight. ISHR encouraged States to elect independent experts to assist in their UPR review, supported by the Comité International pour le Respect et l’Application de la Charte.

¹¹ Supported by Iran

¹² Supported by Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic.

¹³ Supported by Switzerland.

¹⁴ Supported by France.

¹⁵ Supported by Argentina, Switzerland, and the Republic of Korea.

¹⁶ Supported by Malaysia, Pakistan, Morocco, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Slovenia, Singapore, Angola, Venezuela, and Zambia.

¹⁷ Supported by South Africa, Indonesia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka.

- The Indian Council of South America, in a joint statement, thanked Cuba for ensuring that the mandate for indigenous populations remained in effect.

Concerning the **agenda and program of work** of the Council, the majority of States commented on the desire for a balanced agenda and the inclusion of an item on the OPT.

- The United Kingdom welcomed the efforts of the Council to provide a holistic agenda¹⁹ and added that the Council must move away from the selectivity displayed at the Commission. While expressing concern for the violence in the OPT, the UK stressed its regret that one State (the OPT) was singled out over others.²⁰
- Cuba highlighted its support for the ‘just cause’ of the Palestinians and the resultant mandate on the area.²¹
- Discussing Item 3 of the Agenda, Pakistan expressed its hope that the important, bedrock right to self-determination would be provided for.²²
- Argentina stated its support for the new addition of ‘gender perspectives’ to the list of principles.
- South Africa noted that issues are still pending such as the alignment of the Council terms of office with those of other UN organisations.
- Iran supported the compromise proposal of the agenda as it relates to the inclusion of the mandate on race.
- Iran expressed concern that agenda item “Human Rights Situations” runs the risk of becoming politicised as was Item 9 of the old Commission.
- The International Federation of University Women was glad to see that gender balance was included in the final package, but disappointed that mainstreaming human rights for women was not mentioned²³ and requested it be placed in section ‘f’ of the agenda.

On the subject of the **complaints procedure** Bangladesh noted that State response time should only be indicative and that adequate time should be given for an adequate response. Iran stressed the importance of confidentiality throughout the whole complaint procedure process. Finally, the limited commentary on the **advisory committee** reinforces the general feeling that the best compromise possible was found. Venezuela emphasised that the member States nominate an expert for the advisory committee who is to be accepted by consensus. The Indian Council of South America wanted to see more flexibility given to the committee.

Nicaragua made a noteworthy contribution when it stated that, since its appointment to the Council, it has turned in the periodic reports relating to various treaty bodies which were previously 15 years in overdue.

Adoption of outstanding resolutions

After the completion of the second task of the organisational meeting, the Council moved on to the consideration of other resolutions. The President explained that three resolutions that originated in previous sessions and should have been treated at the 5th session had been postponed to the September session.²⁴ Three

¹⁸ The joint statement was made on the behalf of Amnesty International, Asian Legal Resource Centre, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Conectas Direitos Humanos, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network, Forum-Asia, Friends World Committee for Consultations (Quakers), Human Rights Council of Australia, Human Rights Watch and the International Service for Human Rights.

¹⁹ Supported by Italy.

²⁰ Supported by France.

²¹ Supported by Iran, Egypt (in great depth), and Lebanon.

²² Supported by Algeria, and Mouvement Contre le Rascisme et Pour l’Amitié.

²³ Supported by Mouvement Contre le Rascisme et Pour l’Amitié.

²⁴ These are A/HRC/2/L.19, The use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination; A/HRC/2/L.30, World Programme for Human Rights Education and A/HRC/4/L.3, Israeli violations of religious and cultural rights in Occupied East Jerusalem.

other resolutions were still on the table and accordingly dealt with within the framework of the organisational meeting.²⁵

Follow-up to the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lebanon²⁶

Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC) introduced the resolution, explaining that by adopting it, the Council would take note with satisfaction of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the subject of following-up to the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lebanon, established at the Council's second special session. The resolution also requests the High Commissioner to support the Government of Lebanon in its efforts to deal with the aftermath of the war last summer. Germany (on behalf of the EU) also welcomed the report by the High Commissioner, and supported continued cooperation of the OHCHR with Lebanon. The draft resolution was adopted without a vote, and no State exercised its right to explain the vote.

Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory²⁷

Again, Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC) as one of the two sponsors introduced the draft.²⁸ The Ambassador recalled that despite their inability to visit the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Professor Christine Chinkin and Archbishop Desmond Tutu had presented a report to the 5th session of the Council. She stressed that the recommendations by Professor Chinkin and Archbishop Tutu needed to be discussed and implemented. Likewise, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories occupied since 1967, Mr John Dugard had also been unable to carry out the visits necessary for his mission. The draft resolution requests the President and the High Commissioner to report to the Council at its 6th session on their efforts for the implementation of the decisions mandating Professor Chinkin and Archbishop Tutu, as well as Mr Dugard.

Israel as a concerned country took the floor, condemning the proceedings as absurd. It pointed out that it was the 10th resolution on Israel since the Council's creation, and in Israel's view the draft was not about ensuring the implementation of the Council's decisions, but more to "provide another tool to bash Israel." Palestine, also as a concerned country, highlighted that decisions of the Council needed to be followed-up to and implemented. The draft was adopted without a vote. In an explanation after the vote, Canada stressed that while it supports substantial follow-up to decisions of the Council, the Council should also assume responsibility to addresses situations of human rights violations in a fair and balanced manner. It added that Canada had not supported the initial decisions on which the resolution just adopted was based, and it therefore disassociated itself with the decision taken. Germany (on behalf of the EU) underlined that while it also did not support the initial decision, it was of the view that all States had an obligation to cooperate with decisions by the Council.

Follow-up to Darfur²⁹

Germany (on behalf of the EU) and Egypt (on behalf of the African Group) introduced the draft. Germany underlined that the work of the group of experts could contribute significantly to the situation of human rights on the ground, and therefore it proposed the extension of the expert group's mandate for another six months.

²⁵ A/HRC/5/L.4, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the follow-up to the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lebanon; A/HRC/5/L.5, Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: follow-up to Human Rights Council resolutions S-1/1 and S-3/1; A/HRC/5L.6, Follow-up to resolution 4/8 of 30 March 2007 adopted by the Human Rights Council at its fourth session entitled "Follow-up to decision S-4/101" of 13 December 2006 adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 4th special session entitled Situation of human rights in Darfur.

²⁶ See ISHR Daily Update of 13 June 2007, available at <http://ishr.ch/hrm/council/dailyupdates>, p.2.

²⁷ See ISHR Daily Update of 13 June 2007, available at <http://ishr.ch/hrm/council/dailyupdates>, p.6.

²⁸ The Sudan was also co-sponsoring this draft.

²⁹ See ISHR Daily Update of 13 June 2007, available at <http://ishr.ch/hrm/council/dailyupdates>, p.7.

Egypt said that it was important for the international community to assist the Government of the Sudan in its response to the challenges in Darfur. On behalf of the African Group, Egypt thanked the Sudan for its commitment and political will to cooperate with the Council and its mechanisms. The Sudan as a concerned country took the floor to thank the group of experts for their objectivity and reiterated its firm believe in the Council. It explained that the Sudan was undergoing important changes, in particular of an economic nature. While thanking the United Nations for its support, the Sudan urged the UN to designate a single focal point for its dealing with the Government. Finally, the Sudan said it would uphold its cooperation while at the same time appealing to the international community to ‘assist’. The text was then adopted without a vote. In an explanation after the vote, Canada expressed its deep concern about the grave situation in Darfur. It urged the Council to remain seized of the matter, and called on the Government of the Sudan to protect the people of Darfur including by implementing the recommendations of the group of experts, and by fully complying with international law.

Presentation of the report of the 5th session and other issues

President Costea opened the afternoon organisational meeting of 20 June by inviting the Mr Musa Barayzat, Ambassador of Jordan, to present his final report on the 5th session of the Council in his capacity as the Special Rapporteur of the session. The Jordanian Ambassador first thanked the outgoing President for his efforts and then emphasised the importance of operating on a basis of consensus. He also suggested that the Council must internalise the concept of reform, making it a hallmark of its work. He informed the Council that the draft report on the 5th session would be posted on the OHCHR Extranet, and that any comments or proposed corrections should be submitted within two weeks.³⁰

Canada responded to the Ambassador’s statements by asking for clarification on the use of the word ‘consensus’ in the report. Canada stated that there was no consensus of the proceedings of 18 June, that Canada was not in agreement with the package and that it did not see the final version of the text until 19 June. Canada argued that decisions could only be taken by consensus or majority vote on a particular issue and not on a procedural measure. Canada expressed its wishes that the report of the 5th session did not indicate a consensual decision. The Ambassador responded by stating that it was his understanding that the use of the word ‘consensus’ does not mean ‘unanimity’.

The President continued the meeting by informing the Council that any other decisions would be postponed until 22 June. In the interim, he informed that he would convene the Bureau and examine the ways in which the Council could prepare for the decisions that remained.

President Costea then informed the Council that, with the financial aid of the Government of Spain, Room XX in the Palais des Nations would be refurbished for the use of the Human Rights Council. He noted that the process was already underway and that the room would be modernised to extremely high standards. Spain articulated its pleasure at being able to provide a room that would become the house of human rights and serve as a place of significance and symbolism.

Ms. Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, concluded the meeting by briefly expressing her gratitude towards Ambassador de Alba for his efforts as well as appreciation to the States for being able to come to a consensual agreement. She also thanked Spain for helping to provide the Council with a room of its own.

³⁰ A/HRC/5/L10

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