

TREATY BODY MONITOR

International Service for Human Rights



Human Rights Monitor Series

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ELECTION OF MEMBERS FOR FEBRUARY 2009 16 DECEMBER 2008

Introduction

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) met in New York on 16 December 2008 to elect nine Committee members by secret ballot. Election is for a four year term, starting Feb 2009 and ending Feb 2013.

Candidates

Up until the day of the election, a total of 22 candidates were competing for the nine seats. Of these, three were current members of the Committee whose term will expire in February 2009:

1. Ms Yanhee Lee (Chairperson) – Republic of Korea
2. Mr Jean Zermatten (Vice Chair) – Switzerland
3. Mr Awich Pollar – Uganda

The geographic spread of candidates was:

UN Regions	Number of candidates - country
Africa	4: Benin, Burkina Faso, Mauritius, Uganda
WEOG	4: Cyprus, Slovakia, Switzerland, Malta
Latin America and Caribbean	6: Haiti, Columbia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Suriname
Asia	7: Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Thailand, Rep.of Korea, Oman, Lebanon
Eastern Europe	1: Ukraine

On the day of the election, it was announced that Lebanon and Suriname had withdrawn their candidates – meaning only 20 candidates were competing for the nine seats.

Documentation

The CRC secretariat issued a document on 23 September 2008 containing the CVs of all candidates whose information was provided by their respective governments before 22 July 2008 (CRC/SP/40) – a total of 20

candidates. It issued a second document dated 10 November 2008 (CRC/SP/40/Add.1) containing the CVs of two additional candidates received after 22 August 2008 (Suriname and Oman).¹

Promotion of candidates in the lead up to the election

The task of promotion and lobbying was especially large in relation to the CRC, given the near universal ratification of the instrument.

The fact that the lead-up to the election also coincided with the main session of the GA and the annual session of the GA's Third Committee added another degree of difficulty, as Third Committee representatives usually shoulder most of the responsibility for promoting their country's candidate. This meant that some Missions were very stretched in terms of time and personnel they could dedicate to the CRC election.

Some States held cocktail functions to allow States Parties to meet their candidate in an informal setting.

To help promote their candidate, several States produced glossy brochures which were circulated in advance of the election and made available on the desks of each State Party on the day of the election. Other States had simple paper flyers outlining the expertise of their candidate or a one page document requesting States Parties to consider their candidate; these were also circulated in the conference room on the day of the election.

The election – Tuesday 16 December 2008

The conference room was well attended by 188 States Parties – a very strong turn-out. Many of the candidates were present in the room, seated at the side of the conference room. They had no speaking rights or formal role in the meeting. There did not appear to be a significant NGO presence in the room.

Thailand's Ambassador was elected Chairperson of the meeting by acclamation. The nominations for Vice Chairpersons (and tellers) were then announced and there were no objections to the appointment of: Ghana (African Group), Azerbaijan (EEG), Uruguay (GRULAC).

The Chair announced that the candidates for Lebanon and Suriname were withdrawn.

The Conference of the Parties did not discuss the candidates' credentials. Instead the meeting went straight into the voting process. This took most of the day as the counting of the votes was very time-consuming. The result of the election was not finalised until about 4pm.

Outcome of the first round of voting:

188 ballots were cast and all were valid. To be elected, a majority of 95 votes were required. Five candidates were successfully elected in the first round of voting:

Country	Vote
1. Switzerland (re-election of Vice Chair)	125
2. Republic of Korea (re-election of Chair)	121
3. Uganda (re-election of Committee member)	118
4. Thailand	106
5. Chile	98

Outcome of second round of voting:

188 ballots were cast and all deemed valid. Again, a majority of 95 was required to be elected. Two candidates were successfully elected in the second round of voting:

¹ All CRC documents relating to the election are available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/elections12th.htm>

Country	Vote
6. Syria	100
7. Slovakia	95

Next in line, but not acquiring the necessary 95 votes were: Peru (93), Mauritius (86), Malta (76), Haiti (72). These four countries went onto a third round of voting.

Cyprus (61), Columbia (65) and Oman (71) were eliminated.

Outcome of third round of voting:

This round of voting took place after the meeting had adjourned for lunch, and only 180 States Parties submitted ballots; all were valid, although two ballots were abstentions. The required majority of votes was 90. Two candidates were elected in the third and final round of voting:

Country	Vote
8. Peru	104
9. Mauritius	91

Next in line, but unsuccessful in the third round were Malta (72 votes) and Haiti (71).

The Conference of the Parties applauded the outcome of the election. There was no other business to be discussed and the meeting was adjourned. No announcement was made regarding the date for the next Conference of the Parties.

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ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

The *Treaty Body Monitor* forms part of the Human Rights Monitor Series produced by ISHR. It reports on each country reviewed by the six treaty bodies (all but the Committee on the Rights of the Child) and provides an overview of every treaty body session. It is currently an online publication that can be found at www.ishr.ch.

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