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COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE

Thirty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 762nd MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Friday, 4 May 2007, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. MAVROMMATIS

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 19 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 5) (continued)

Fifth periodic report of Luxembourg (continued) (CAT/C/81/Add.5; CAT/C/LUX/Q/5/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Luxembourg resumed their places at the Committee table.

2. Mr. REITER (Luxembourg), replying to the questions posed to his delegation, said that it was very exceptional for asylum-seekers to be the subject of custodial measures. Usually, all asylum-seekers were entitled to social assistance and non-custodial housing, or else to lodging in a hotel or hostel, and they could move freely throughout the country. The law made no provision for custodial placement of such persons, except in four specific cases: if the asylum-seeker had applied solely for the sole purpose of preventing removal from the territory (only one such case had arisen); if the asylum-seeker refused to cooperate in establishing his or her identity or itinerary (no such case had arisen); during certain accelerated procedures (that case had not arisen either); if it proved necessary pending transfer to the State competent to consider the asylum request, in accordance with the so-called Dublin II Regulation of the European Union (58 out of a total of 523 applications for asylum in 2006). The jurisprudence cited by one member of the Committee was no longer in effect, because it predated the establishment of the holding centre. The Administrative Court, which had ruled that a prison was not suitable for the placement of asylum-seekers, had suggested a number of alternatives, and it had been decided to set aside an area within the prison for illegal aliens, pending the construction of the holding centre, where they would be kept completely separate from prisoners.

3. The expression “safe third country” used in the Luxembourg report was misleading; articles 16 and 21 of the Act on international protection of May 2006 employed terminology that was in conformity with the relevant European Directive and spoke of “safe third countries and safe countries of origin”. A safe third country was one in which the asylum-seeker had spent time and could have applied for asylum (the Luxembourg authorities had not yet applied that provision). A safe country of origin was the country which the asylum-seeker came from and of which he or she was a national. An asylum-seeker from such a country would automatically be the subject of an accelerated procedure, albeit with a careful individual examination, the presumption being rebuttable. A list of safe countries of origin was being prepared. The procedures for the processing of asylum-seekers had in fact been accelerated, but were subject to specific rules: the Minister had two months to decide whether to apply the accelerated procedure, and the Administrative Court also had two months to rule on the application in an accelerated procedure. There was also a suspensor effect, and every case was given a careful and thorough examination.

4. The Act of 31 May 1999 on Trafficking in Human Beings had authorized the issuance of special visas to night club performers, but the practice had been abolished in 2003. It had also been asked whether the assessment criteria for subsidiary protection under asylum law lent themselves to discretionary use. Needless to say, that was not the case, and the criteria were

those of the relevant European Directive: to grant such protection, there must be substantial grounds for fearing that the foreigner incurred a real risk of serious injury if he or she was returned (death penalty, torture, inhuman treatment etc.). Thus, the degree of discretion was very limited. The case to which reference had been made in that connection had nothing to do with subsidiary protection: the rejected asylum-seeker, who had had two serious illnesses, had asserted that Luxembourg had refused to provide him with basic treatment, an allegation which the authorities had denied. The case was pending before the European Court of Human Rights.

5. Between 2003 and 2005, statistics on asylum-seekers had not contained any information on the country of origin, because it had not been required. In 2006, six Albanians, one Azerbaijani, five persons from Bosnia and Herzegovina, one person from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one Ethiopian, one Guinean, five Iranians, one Rwandan, 12 Kosovo Serbs, one Somali, one Togolese and two Turks (including children of refugees born in Luxembourg) had been granted refugee status. He pointed out that the wording of article 6, paragraph 12, of the new Act on asylum authorizing extradition in certain specific cases had been taken verbatim from the European Union Directives. The provision, which aimed to prevent, inter alia, any attempt to circumvent an arrest warrant emanating from an international criminal tribunal, had never been applied.

6. Another question had concerned access to the Ombudsman. By law, "any physical person or legal entity", whether a Luxembourg citizen or a foreigner, a man or a woman, a resident or a non-resident, could lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman. Reference had also been made to the Biarim case, one with which he was personally familiar. Mr. Biarim had applied for asylum upon arrival in Luxembourg on 13 December 2006. The police officers responsible for registering asylum requests had been informed by the German authorities that he had already submitted an application in Germany, which had been rejected, although his presence had been tolerated. The police had also been informed that he was HIV-positive and had a violent disposition. Mr. Biarim had then been told that, pursuant to the Dublin Regulation, he had to return to Germany, where he would receive medical care. Refusing to comply, Mr. Biarim had attacked one of the police officers and had attempted to bite him in the face; his colleagues had come to his assistance, and a fight had ensued in which everyone had been injured. Mr. Biarim had been subdued and had been taken to the hospital, where he had been declared fit for detention and travel. Not until the end of a long and difficult procedure had he been sent back to Germany, in February 2007. In the meantime, a report on the attempted murder had been sent to the prosecuting authorities. Thus, a criminal investigation was under way, which explained why there had not been an internal investigation. Notwithstanding his allegations, Mr. Biarim was not a victim, and the police officers had acted in self-defence. Indeed, they had had to undergo extensive preventive anti-HIV treatment lasting four months. Although he had had the assistance of a lawyer, Mr. Biarim had not lodged a complaint in Luxembourg, but had applied directly in writing to the European Court of Human Rights. The Court had asked for an immediate clarification from the Luxembourg authorities, which they had provided even before Mr. Biarim had been transferred to Germany. As the Court had not replied since then, the case had perhaps been dismissed.

7. Mr. THEIS (Luxembourg), referring to the allegations by a Luxembourg non-governmental organization (NGO) concerning arbitrary and racist behaviour at the prison facility, pointed out that such allegations had rarely been brought to the attention of the authorities in recent years and that none of the internal investigations had ever produced

conclusive results. In some cases, the allegations had even been found to be exaggerated. It was true that in 2003-2004 the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) had judged the atmosphere at the prison to be somewhat tense, but the situation had improved following the recruitment of additional staff. On the recommendation of the CPT, it had been made clear to the prison staff that racist behaviour was an offence. It should be noted that, upon entering the prison, inmates were informed of their right to lodge complaints and of the various means of recourse open to them (articles 211 to 216 of the Prison Regulations).

It had been asked whether solitary confinement was subject to judicial review. Solitary confinement was the most severe disciplinary measure under article 197 of the Prison Regulations and, unlike other sanctions, it was not ordered by the prison director but by the Chief Public Prosecutor, who was the head administrator of the country's prisons and was responsible for the enforcement of sentences. Thus, the decision to place a detainee in solitary confinement was taken by a law officer, albeit in the performance of an administrative duty. The detainee could lodge an appeal against the decision with a commission composed of three judges. The Administrative Court had ruled that it was competent to hear appeals to set aside decisions for placement in solitary confinement, because administrative decisions were concerned, even if they were taken by judges. Detainees thus punished could also lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman. It was planned to incorporate all disciplinary measures and all means of recourse in a future prison code currently being elaborated by the Ministry of Justice.

8. Mr. HEISBOURG (Luxembourg) stressed that the definition of torture enunciated in the Convention was duly reflected in the Criminal Code, and more specifically in article 260-1, which had adopted its exact wording. As for universal jurisdiction, article 5 of the Criminal Investigation Code clearly established that any Luxembourg citizen who outside the territory of the Grand Duchy was guilty of a crime punishable under Luxembourg law, a category which included acts of torture, could be prosecuted and tried in Luxembourg. Article 7 of the Criminal Investigation Code strengthened that provision by instituting active universal jurisdiction, which made it possible to prosecute and try in Luxembourg anyone who was guilty abroad of any of a number of offences covered by the Criminal Code, including acts of torture.

9. Seeking to dispel any doubt about the compatibility of the principle of discretionary prosecution with articles 6, 7 and 12 of the Convention against Torture, he reaffirmed that it was not a blank cheque for dismissing complaints, especially when such serious violations as acts of torture were concerned. It would not occur to any sensible prosecutor to dismiss such a serious case, which in any event he would not be free to do without first referring the matter to his hierarchical superior. In case of doubt as to the seriousness of a complaint alleging acts of torture, the prosecutor called for the opening of a preliminary investigation and decided on the basis of its conclusions whether or not to begin prosecution.

10. Mr. WAGNER (Luxembourg), replying to the question asked by Ms. Belmir on the use of handcuffs, said that any recourse to that means of restraint in the framework of an arrest must be the subject of a report setting out the circumstances of the arrest and the reasons why handcuffs had been used; the report was sent to the public prosecutor's office. Like a police record, the report incurred the criminal, administrative and disciplinary responsibility of the police officer or officers concerned. Consequently, if it was ascertained that an offence under the Criminal Code had been committed, the prosecutor's office requested the opening of a preliminary investigation. For violations of police regulations, the prosecutor's office referred the case to the

Inspectorate General and to the General Police Inspection Department. If the person arrested had been injured during the arrest, the police officers were required to have the person examined by a physician and to produce a report which they sent the prosecutor's office, together with the medical certificate issued by the physician.

11. With regard to the question as to whether, pursuant to the new Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence of 2003, the sentence was increased if the perpetrator was a civil servant, he said that the sanctions envisaged under the Act were applicable in the same way to all offenders, even if they were civil servants. On the other hand, the Criminal Code provided for aggravating circumstances for civil servants guilty of an offence, but only when committed in the performance of their duties. Since, by definition, domestic violence took place in the private sphere, it did not fall under the scope of that provision.

12. As to communication with the consular authorities, Luxembourg applied article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, pursuant to which all foreign nationals placed in detention were free to communicate with the consulate of their country of origin. In cases in which it was deemed necessary for the purpose of a smooth investigation, the prosecuting authorities might refuse to allow the person concerned to communicate directly with his or her consulate, in which case a police officer entered into contact with the latter.

13. Ms. SCHAACK (Luxembourg), returning to the question of the treatment of young offenders, said that Luxembourg's position in that regard was that young offenders must not be regarded as criminals but as persons whose acts were symptomatic of psychological, family or other problems that must be dealt with case by case. In keeping with that objective, minors were placed in socio-educational facilities, but only if all other measures (warnings, mediation with the family etc.) had failed. Concern had been expressed that those facilities took in both young offenders and children who were simply in difficulty. That was not entirely correct: although placed in the same facility, persons in the two categories were kept separate and were subject to different rules. It should be borne in mind, however, that in spite of the offences which they had committed, young offenders were often and above all victims and must be treated as such. Thus, the facilities focused on methods such as mediation between youths rather than on disciplinary measures.

14. Corporal punishment within the family was not regulated by Luxembourg legislation. Aware of the need to ensure legal protection for the victims, the Ministry of the Family had recently submitted a bill to prohibit all forms of domestic violence, including physical and sexual violence, inhuman and degrading treatment and genital mutilation.

15. With regard to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, she regretted that the wording on the subject in paragraph 181 of the written replies had implied that Luxembourg did not attach any importance to its ratification. In stating that ratification was not a matter of priority, the delegation had wanted to say that, owing to the very heavy workload associated with transposing European Union Directives, consideration of the ratification of the Protocol had had to be postponed. Concerning the direct application of the Convention by Luxembourg courts, she confirmed that international treaties took precedence over national legislation and that consequently, the provisions of the Convention against Torture, including article 14, could be invoked in domestic courts.

16. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the delegation for its replies and gave the floor to the members of the Committee.

17. Mr. CAMARA (Country Rapporteur) said that he considered the delegation's replies to be satisfactory and did not have any other questions.

18. Ms. BELMIR (Alternate Country Rapporteur) thanked the delegation for the additional information provided in response to the earlier questions. With regard to the treatment of young offenders, she took note of the State party's praiseworthy efforts to adopt a socio-educational rather than a punitive approach, but said that the reality was not always consistent with the discourse. Cases had been reported of minors being placed in solitary confinement for an indefinite period, and no solution seemed to have been found to the problem of the detention of minors in prisons for adults, concerning which the Committee had recommended that special facilities be built. The State party must continue its efforts in that area. She also reiterated her concern that the modalities for placing persons in solitary confinement were open to abuse.

19. Mr. MARIÑO MENÉNDEZ, noting that suspects had the right to the services of a lawyer starting with the second questioning, asked why they could not do so as soon as the initial questioning began and how the police reacted if, during the initial questioning, a suspect refused to make a statement in the absence of a lawyer.

20. Referring to the last sentence of paragraph 53 in the written replies, he asked whether a suspected torturer present on Luxembourg territory and not subject to an extradition request could be prosecuted ex officio by the State party.

21. Ms. SVEAASS welcomed the announcement by the delegation that a bill prohibiting female genital mutilation would soon be submitted to the Parliament. She would like to know whether, pending passage of the bill, the State party had taken the necessary measures to punish physicians who performed clandestine excisions and whether any investigations had been conducted to ascertain whether any young girls had been subjected to such a procedure in Luxembourg or had been sent to another country for that purpose.

22. The CHAIRPERSON, speaking in his capacity as member of the Committee, said that when the Committee considered the report of a developed country, it was particularly interested in its policy in two crucial areas: the fight against terrorism, and immigration. It was very encouraging that, in both those domains, Luxembourg had a more humane attitude than other European Union countries.

23. With regard to the case of the national of the Democratic Republic of the Congo referred to earlier, the Luxembourg authorities should confine themselves to strictly implementing the provisions of articles 12 and 13 of the Convention; the case did not require an investigation.

24. Ms. SCHAACK (Luxembourg), replying to the comments by Ms. Belmir, stressed that Luxembourg had always allowed the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture to conduct inspection visits to its prisons and its socio-educational facilities for minors, and she noted that, as indicated in the report (paras. 154 to 156 and 163 ff.), and contrary to the assertion of the Alternate Country Rapporteur, the Government had planned to create a security unit (UNISEC) for young offenders, scheduled for 2008. Article 26 of the Act of 1992 on the protection of young people (report, para. 166), which authorized the incarceration of minors, was

rarely applied, and only in cases in which the minor exhibited serious behavioural disorders. Lastly, it was not true that the duration of placement in solitary confinement was indefinite: it could not exceed ten days, and in practice, it lasted two days at most.

25. Mr. THEIS (Luxembourg) explained that the provisions allowing placement in solitary confinement were very rarely applied and that such action required prior authorization by a juvenile magistrate. Young persons who were the subject of those measures were closely monitored by the detention centre's psychosocial and educational counselling staff. In describing the situation in detention centres for minors as disastrous, the delegation had had in mind the period up to the late 1990s. Thereafter, conditions for minors in detention had improved considerably thanks to efforts to recruit personnel specialized in working with juvenile delinquents. Minors whose behaviour was extremely disturbed were placed in therapeutic centres located in neighbouring countries and were monitored at a distance by the staff of the Luxembourg prison. On the other hand, the most difficult cases, including very aggressive minors, were dealt with at the Luxembourg prison.

26. While recognizing that any restriction on individual rights must be the subject of a court decision, he said that in Luxembourg law, solitary confinement was only one of the modalities of enforcement of a sentence. Given that the Criminal Code did not contain any provision specifying the type of confinement to apply, it was up to the administrative courts to decide, in keeping with the Council of Europe's recommendations in that regard, but their decisions could be appealed in a higher administrative jurisdiction.

27. Mr. HEISBOURG (Luxembourg) said that, until the bill prohibiting female genital mutilation was passed, persons suspected of having performed that procedure were prosecuted under the provisions of the Criminal Code, including article 400, which punished bodily harm leading to serious mutilation. Moreover, such acts were usually premeditated, which was an aggravating circumstance and was punishable by five to ten years' imprisonment. When the public prosecutor learned of a case in which such an act had been performed by a physician, he informed the national medical association, which could impose sanctions, including withdrawal of the offender's licence to practice medicine.

28. With regard to active universal jurisdiction, he said that Luxembourg courts could try any individual suspected of having committed acts of torture, regardless of whether extradition had been requested. To do so, it sufficed for the suspect to have been apprehended on the national territory.

The right of suspects to avail themselves of the services of a lawyer as from the initial questioning was guaranteed at all stages of the proceedings, both during police questioning and at the time of the initial hearing by the investigating magistrate. If necessary, a lawyer was appointed to defend the suspect.

29. Ms. SCHAACK (Luxembourg) was pleased at the constructive dialogue which the delegation had had with the Committee. The discussion had shown that the domestic judicial system and the position of the Luxembourg Government were not always clear to the Committee. Accordingly, when it introduced the sixth periodic report, the delegation would ensure that those points were clarified.

30. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the delegation of Luxembourg for its comprehensive replies to the Committee's questions.

31. The delegation of Luxembourg withdrew.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

STATEMENT BY MR. MAGAZZENI, COORDINATOR, NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS UNIT, OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

32. Mr. MAGAZZENI (Coordinator, National Institutions Unit, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the High Commissioner attached great importance to the development and strengthening of national human rights institutions, because they were the best relay mechanism at country level to ensure the application of international human rights norms, notably by monitoring the State's follow-up to recommendations of the treaty bodies. Thus, during their discussions with State parties, treaty parties should emphasize the need to have national institutions that were based on the Principles relating to the status and functioning of national institutions for protection and promotion of human rights (Paris Principles) and should stress that such institutions must be completely independent so that they could play an effective role, in particular in combating torture.

33. As pointed out in May 2007 by the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Mehr Khan Williams, at a seminar held in Copenhagen, Denmark, national human rights institutions were expected to become even more visible, particularly in the area of torture prevention, with the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. In accordance with the Paris Principles, to which the Optional Protocol made explicit reference, national institutions could consider complaints, visit places of detention, submit recommendations to the Government, the Parliament or other bodies and disseminate the findings of their work through their annual report.

34. The activities of the National Institutions Unit were grouped around four strategic objectives. Firstly, the National Institutions Unit supported efforts by States to establish or strengthen national human rights institutions so as to better promote the application of international human rights norms at national level. Secondly, it closely monitored compliance by national institutions with the Paris Principles. To that end, in 2005 it had launched the "Actors for Change" Project, which had been implemented in partnership with NGOs and in the framework of which distance and regional training courses had been held on torture prevention. Thirdly, the National Institutions Unit worked to enhance synergies between national human rights institutions and the United Nations system in order to close critical gaps in the implementation of human rights norms. The national institutions provided regular information to special procedures mandate-holders and monitored action taken at country level on recommendations formulated by the treaty bodies. They also had a vital role to play in promoting the ratification of international instruments and elaborating the periodic reports submitted to the treaty bodies, and he drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the conclusions of the International Roundtable on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions and Treaty Bodies, held in Berlin in November 2006 (HRI/MC/2007/3), a document which had been

circulated and in which a common approach was proposed for treaty body engagement with national human rights institutions established in accordance with the Paris Principles. The document would be discussed at the nineteenth meeting of chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies, to be held in June 2007. Fourthly, the National Institutions Unit was working to further develop its partnership with national institutions on torture prevention. To that end, in late March 2007 a thematic dialogue had been organized on the question as a side event to the nineteenth meeting of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. At the request of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, a questionnaire had been sent to national institutions that would make it possible to map their current activities in the area of torture prevention. The 35 institutions which had replied so far had indicated that they had access to information, that they were empowered to receive complaints and to visit detention centres and that they could submit recommendations to the authorities. Most of them had been able to make their findings public and had observed the confidentiality of information obtained from detainees.

35. In closing, he said that the National Institutions Unit looked forward to continuing its close cooperation with the Subcommittee on Prevention and the Committee against Torture, and it encouraged the Committee to accept supplementary reports prepared by national institutions and to provide opportunities for national institutions to make oral presentations at its meetings as often as possible.

36. The CHAIRPERSON thanked Mr. Magazzeni for his statement and invited any members of the Committee who wished to make comments to take the floor. He noted that at its three previous sessions, the Committee had held briefings with representatives of national human rights institutions prior to considering the reports of three States parties (France, Mexico and the Republic of Korea). Held in the course of the public meetings, the briefings had proved particularly useful, and the practice should be continued in the future.

37. Mr. MARIÑO MENÉNDEZ said that unfortunately he had not had time to study document under consideration (HRI/MC/2007/3) in depth. However, he shared the view that national human rights institutions had a key role to play in the establishment of a genuine international system for the promotion and protection of human rights. As a representative of a Spanish NGO, he had taken part in negotiations on the setting up of a national human rights institution in his country. Regrettably, for lack of an agreement between the Spanish authorities and representatives of civil society on the question of the scope of competence of the future body, and in particular its power to denounce human rights violations, negotiations were currently deadlocked.

38. As to the implementation by States parties of their obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention, he said that writing to them to encourage the creation of a national torture prevention mechanism seemed to be an appropriate measure. In the case of Spain, a general blueprint had been drawn up for the structure of the future national torture prevention mechanism, although the question of which body would be mandated to conduct visits to detention centres had not yet been settled. However, the genuine interest shown by the representatives of civil society and by Government officials with regard to both the creation of a national human rights institution and the establishment of a national torture prevention mechanism suggested that questions still pending would be resolved in the near future.

39. Mr. GROSSMAN said that the document under consideration had been circulated late, and thus he had not had an opportunity to study it in depth either. Nevertheless, he thought it would be useful for it also to include concrete information on what might be regarded as best practices in the establishment of national human rights institutions. Some information on the experience of institutions which were already operational would also be very valuable.

40. Mr. MAGAZZENI (Coordinator, National Institutions Unit, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) took note of the need to produce a compilation of best practices concerning the establishment of national human rights institutions. He urged the members of the Committee to give priority consideration to the question of what role those institutions might play in following up the concluding observations and recommendations of the treaty bodies and in disseminating information on international human rights instruments among United Nations member States. It was important for the Committee to make its point of view on those key questions clear at the next meeting of chairpersons of the treaty bodies established in accordance with international human rights instruments.

41. Ms. SVEAASS said that the briefings held by the Committee with representatives of national human rights institutions had been particularly valuable. It was therefore unfortunate that no such meeting had been placed on the agenda of the future sessions of the Committee, despite the standing invitation to national human rights institutions. Surely those institutions should be encouraged to contribute to the work of the treaty bodies, not only with regard to the consideration of the reports of States parties but also during the examination of individual communications.

42. She also noted that the structure and modalities for the operation of national human rights institutions differed considerably from one country to another, which could create an obstacle to productive interaction with the treaty bodies. She enquired whether measures were planned to harmonize the rules governing the operation of those bodies, in particular for dealing with complaints of human rights violations.

43. Mr. MAGAZZENI (Coordinator, National Institutions Unit, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the structure and modalities for the operation of national human rights institutions could in fact exhibit considerable differences from one country to another. Aware of that phenomenon, the National Institutions Unit had set up a subcommittee responsible for accrediting national human rights institutions in order to promote respect for the common rules (i.e. the Paris Principles) when those institutions were established. The Committee could make its contribution to that edifice by inviting national human rights institutions that had not yet done so to submit an application for accreditation to the Subcommittee.

44. Ms. BELMIR noted that in paragraph 8 of the document under consideration, it was indicated that national human rights institutions should support the capacity-building of State bodies responsible for drafting the periodic reports. She asked what was meant by “support” and drew Mr. Magazzeni’s attention to the fact that national human rights institutions in developing countries did not always have the resources needed to carry out such a task.

45. Mr. MAGAZZENI (Coordinator, National Institutions Unit, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) recognized that in general, the capacity of national human rights institutions to support the drafting of periodic reports was closely dependent on the resources available to them. In that connection, they might envisage reinforcing their cooperation

with organizations of civil society active in the area of human rights and requesting assistance from United Nations bodies, such as the United Nations Development Programme. Those questions had been debated at length at the latest meeting of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions, during which the participants had agreed that better cooperation between organizations of civil society and national human rights institutions, and between those institutions and the United Nations specialized agencies, was of vital importance in establishing effective national infrastructures for the promotion and protection of human rights.

46. The CHAIRPERSON invited the members of the Committee to study the document under consideration in greater depth so that they could give their views on its various elements at the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.
