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**Human Rights Council**

**Thirty-first session**

Agenda item 1

**Organizational and procedural matters**

Report of the Human Rights Council on its  
thirty-first session

*Vice-President and Rapporteur*: Bertrand **de Crombrugghe** (Belgium)

Part One  
Resolutions, decisions and President’s statement adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirty-first session

I. Resolutions

| *Resolution* | *Title* | *Date of adoption* |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| 31/1 | Composition of staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights | 23 March 2016 | |

II. Decisions

| *Decision* | *Title* | | *Date of adoption* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | |  |
| 31/102 | | Outcome of the universal periodic review: Lebanon | 16 March 2016 | |

III. President’s statement

| *President’s statement* | *Title* | *Date of adoption* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PRST/31/1 | Situation of human rights in Haiti | 24 March 2016 |

Part Two  
Summary of proceedings

I. Organizational and procedural matters

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Human Rights Council held its thirty-first session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 29 February to 24 March 2016. The President of the Council opened the session.

5. In accordance with rule 8 (b) of the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Council, as contained in part VII of the annex to Council resolution 5/1, the organizational meeting on the thirty-first session was held on 15 February 2016.

6. The thirty-first session consisted of 66 meetings over 19 days.

B. Attendance

7. The session was attended by representatives of States members of the Human Rights Council, observer States of the Council, observers for non-Member States of the United Nations and other observers, and observers for United Nations entities, specialized agencies and related organizations, intergovernmental organizations and other entities, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations (see annex I).

C. High-level segment

8. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, held on 29 February 2016, and its 5th to 10th meetings, held on 1 and 2 March, the Human Rights Council held a high-level segment, during which 96 dignitaries, including 2 heads of State, 2 vice-presidents, 7 deputy prime ministers, 51 ministers, 26 other dignitaries and 8 representatives of observer organizations, addressed the plenary.

9. The following dignitaries, listed in the order in which they spoke, addressed the Human Rights Council during the high-level segment:

(a) At the 1st meeting, on 29 February 2016: President of Togo, Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe.

10. At the 7th meeting, on 1 March 2016, the representatives of Armenia and Turkey made statements in exercise of the right of reply.

11. At the same meeting, the representatives of Armenia and Saudi Arabia made statements in exercise of a second right of reply.

High-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming

14. At its 3rd meeting, on 29 February 2016, the Human Rights Council held, pursuant to Council resolution 16/21, a high-level panel discussion to interact with heads of United Nations agencies within their respective mandates on specific human rights themes.

15. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President of the General Assembly and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made opening statements for the panel. The United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights moderated the discussion.

16. At the same meeting, the panellists Zamir Akram and Jan Beagle made statements. The Human Rights Council divided the panel discussion into two slots.

17. During the ensuing panel discussion for the first slot, at the same meeting, the following made statements and asked the panellists questions:

(a) Representatives of States members of the Human Rights Council: Botswana;

(b) Representatives of observer States: Denmark (also on behalf of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation);

(c) Observer for an intergovernmental organization: European Union;

(d) Observer for a national human rights institution: International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (by video message);

(e) Observers for non-governmental organizations: the International Federation of Social Workers.

18. At the end of the first slot, at the same meeting, the panellists answered questions and made comments.

D. General segment

28. At the 10th meeting, on 2 March 2016, a general segment was held, during which the following addressed the Human Rights Council:

(e) Invited members of civil society: Patrick Taran.

E. Agenda and programme of work

31. At its 12th meeting, on 3 March 2016, the Human Rights Council adopted the agenda and programme of work of the thirty-first session.

F. Organization of work

32. At the 3rd meeting, on 29 February 2016, the President outlined the modalities for the panel discussions, which were summarized in the concept notes. The speaking time limits would be two minutes for statements by States members of the Human Rights Council, observer States and other observers.

33. At the 10th meeting, on 2 March 2016, the President outlined the modalities for the general segment. The speaking time limits would be five minutes for statements by States members of the Human Rights Council and three minutes for statements by observer States and other observers.

34. At the 27th meeting, on 10 March 2016, the President outlined the modalities for the interactive dialogue on the annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

35. At the 10th meeting, on 2 March 2016, the Vice-President of the Human Rights Council outlined, pursuant to the practice introduced at the twenty-seventh session of the Council, the modalities for the clustered interactive dialogues with special procedure mandate holders under agenda item 3. The total duration of each clustered interactive dialogue would not exceed four hours. Each special procedure mandate holder in a cluster would introduce his or her reports within 15 minutes and respond to questions and make concluding remarks within 15 minutes. As soon as the list of speakers would be available following electronic registration, the secretariat would calculate the estimated time needed to complete the clustered interactive dialogue with the mandate holders. Should the total duration of a given interactive dialogue be estimated to last less than four hours, the speaking time limits would be five minutes for States members and three minutes for observer States and other observers. However, if it would be estimated to be more than four hours, the speaking time limits would be reduced to three minutes for States members and two minutes for observer States and other observers. Should this measure be deemed insufficient to ensure that the total duration not exceed four hours, the speaking time limit would be further reduced, but to no less than 1.5 minutes per speaker.

36. At the 31st meeting, on 11 March 2016, the President outlined the modalities for the general debates.

37. At the 34th meeting, on 14 March 2016, the President outlined the modalities for the individual interactive dialogues with special procedure mandate holders.

38. At the 42nd meeting, on 16 March 2016, the President outlined the modalities for the consideration of the outcomes of the universal periodic review under agenda item 6. The speaking time limits would be 20 minutes for the State concerned to present its views; where appropriate, 2 minutes for the national human rights institution with A status of the State concerned; up to 20 minutes for States members of the Human Rights Council, observer States and United Nations agencies to express their views on the outcome of the review, with varying speaking times according to the number of speakers in accordance with the modalities set out in the appendix to the annex to Council resolution 16/21; and up to 20 minutes for stakeholders to make general comments on the outcome of the review.

G. Meetings and documentation

39. The Human Rights Council held 66 fully serviced meetings during its thirty-first session.

40. The list of the resolutions, decisions and President’s statement adopted by the Human Rights Council is contained in part one of the present report.

H. Visits

41. At the 34th meeting, on 14 March 2016, the Minister for Justice of New Zealand, Amy Adams, delivered a statement to the Human Rights Council.

I. Selection and appointment of mandate holders

42. At its 66th meeting, on 24 March 2016, the Human Rights Council appointed, in accordance with Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21 and its decision 6/102, four special procedure mandate holders. At the same meeting, the President of the Human Rights Council made a statement on the selection and appointment of special procedure mandate holders.

J. Adoption of the report of the session

43. At the 66th meeting, on 24 March 2016, the representatives of Australia and the United States of America made statements on the adopted resolutions.

44. At the same meeting, the Vice-President and Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council made a statement on the draft report of the Council on its thirty-first session.

45. Also at the same meeting, the Human Rights Council adopted ad referendum the draft report on the session (A/HRC/31/2) and entrusted the Rapporteur with its finalization.

46. At the same meeting, the following made statements on the session:

(a) Representative of a State member of the Human Rights Council: Ghana;

(b) Representative of an observer State: Haiti;

(c) Observers for non-governmental organizations: Arab Commission for Human Rights.

47. Also at the same meeting, the President of the Human Rights Council made a closing statement.

II. Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

A. Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

A. Update by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

48. At the 27th meeting, on 10 March 2015, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made a statement on his annual report (A/HRC/31/3).

49. During the ensuing interactive dialogue, at the 27th, 28th and 29th meetings, on the same day, the following made statements and asked the High Commissioner questions:

(a) Representatives of States members of the Human Rights Council: India[[1]](#footnote-2) (on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries), Kuwait1 (on behalf of the Group of Arab States);

(b) Representatives of observer States:

(c) Observer for an intergovernmental organization: European Union;

(d) Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta;

(e) Observer for a national human rights institution: International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights;

(f) Observers for non-governmental organizations:

50. At the 28th meeting, on the same day, the High Commissioner answered questions and made comments.

51. At the 29th meeting, on the same day, the High Commissioner answered questions and made his concluding remarks.

52. At the 1st meeting, on 10 June 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made a statement providing an update of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner.

B. Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

54. At the 31st meeting, on 11 March 2016, the Director of the Research and Right to Development Division of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) presented thematic reports prepared by OHCHR and the Secretary-General under agenda items 2 and 3.

55. At its 31st meeting, on the same day, the Human Rights Council held a general debate on the thematic reports presented by the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.

56. At the 39th meeting, on 15 March 2016, the Deputy High Commissioner presented the reports prepared by OHCHR under agenda items 2 and 4.

60. During the ensuing interactive dialogue, at the 58th meeting, on 22 March 2016, and the 59th meeting, on 23 March, the following made statements and asked the Assistant Secretary-General questions:

61. At the 59th meeting, on 23 March 2016, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights answered questions and made his concluding remarks.

62. At the 60th meeting, on the same day, the Deputy High Commissioner introduced the country-specific reports submitted by the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner under agenda item 2.

63. At the same meeting, the representatives of Colombia and Cyprus made statements as the States concerned.

65. At the 61st meeting, on the same day, the representatives of Cyprus, South Sudan and Turkey made statements in exercise of the right of reply.

C. Consideration of and action on draft proposals

Composition of staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

66. At the 62nd meeting, on 23 March 2016, the representative of Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) introduced draft resolution A/HRC/31/L.25.

67. At the 62nd meeting, on 23 March 2016, the representative of Cuba introduced draft resolution A/HRC/31/L.15, sponsored by Cuba and co-sponsored by Ecuador and Egypt. Subsequently, Algeria and Uruguay joined the sponsors.

68. At the same meeting, the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela made a general comment on the draft resolution.

69. Also at the same meeting, the representatives of Mexico and the Netherlands (on behalf of States members of the European Union that are members of the Human Rights Council) made statements in explanation of vote before the vote in relation to the draft resolution.

70. At the same meeting, at the request of the representative of the Netherlands, a recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution. The voting was as follows:

*In favour*:

*Against*:

*Abstaining*:

71. The Human Rights Council adopted the draft resolution by 33 votes to 13, with 1 abstention (resolution 31/1).

The Human Rights Council rejected amendment A/HRC/26/L.34 by 17 votes to 23, with 6 abstentions.

III. Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

A. Panel discussions

Panel discussion on climate change and the right to health

72. At its 11th meeting, on 3 March 2016, the Human Rights Council held a panel discussion on the adverse impact of climate change on States’ efforts to progressively realize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and related policies, lessons learned and good practices.

73. The United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Director General of the World Health Organization made opening statements for the panel. The Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Trung Thanh Nguyen, moderated the discussion.

74. At the same meeting, the following panellists made statements. The Human Rights Council divided the panel discussion into two slots.

75. During the ensuing panel discussion for the first slot, at the same meeting, the following made statements and asked the panellists questions:

76. At the end of the first slot, at the same meeting, the panellists answered questions and made comments.

77. During the ensuing panel discussion for the second slot, at the same meeting, the following made statements and asked the panellists questions:

78. At the same meeting, the panellists answered questions and made their concluding remarks.

79. The ensuing panel discussion was divided into two speaking slots, which were held at the same meeting.

Annual interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities

Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child

B. Interactive dialogue with special procedure mandate holders

Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment

113. At the 12th meeting, on 3 March 2016, the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, John Knox, presented his reports.

114. During the ensuing interactive dialogue, at the same meeting, the following made statements and asked the Special Rapporteur questions:

(a) Representatives of States members of the Human Rights Council: Algeria[[2]](#footnote-3);

(b) Representatives of observer States:

(c) Observer for United Nations entities, specialized agencies and related organizations:

(d) Observer for an intergovernmental organization:

(e) Observers for non-governmental organizations:

115. Also at the same meeting, the Special Rapporteur answered questions and made his concluding remarks.

C. Interactive dialogue with special representatives of the Secretary-General

E. General debate on agenda item 3

F. Consideration of and action on draft proposals

192. At the same meeting, the Human Rights Council adopted the draft resolution without a vote (resolution 31/2).

193. At the 66th meeting, on 24 March 2016, the representative of India made a statement in explanation of vote after the vote.

194. In its statement, the representative of Pakistan disassociated the member State from the consensus on paragraph 7 of the draft resolution as orally revised. In their statements, the representatives of Egypt, Iraq, Nigeria, Qatar and Saudi Arabia disassociated the respective member States from the consensus on paragraph 10 (f) of the draft resolution.

195. At the same meeting, the representatives of Egypt, Mexico and Qatar (also on behalf of Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan and the Sudan) made general comments on the draft resolution. In its statement, the representative of Qatar disassociated the respective member States from the consensus on the twenty-second preambular paragraph and paragraphs 4, 16 and 22 of the draft resolution.

196. After adoption of the draft resolution, Costa Rica, the Netherlands and Spain joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

270. At the same meeting, the representative of Denmark orally revised the draft resolution.

271. Also at the same meeting, the President announced that amendment A/HRC/31/L.82 to draft resolution A/HRC/31/26/Rev.1 as orally revised had been withdrawn.

272. At the same meeting, the representatives of Algeria, the Netherlands (on behalf of States members of the European Union that are members of the Human Rights Council) and Switzerland made general comments on the draft resolution as orally revised.

273. In accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the attention of the Human Rights Council was drawn to the estimated administrative and programme budget implications of the draft resolution.

274. At the same meeting, the representative of Saudi Arabia (also on behalf of Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, the Sudan and the United Arab Emirates) made a statement in explanation of vote before the vote in relation to the draft resolution as orally revised.

275. At the same meeting, the Human Rights Council adopted the draft resolution as orally revised without a vote (resolution 31/31).

279. At the same meeting, the representative of the Russian Federation introduced amendment A/HRC/31/L.41 to draft resolution A/HRC/31/L.28 as orally revised.

280. Amendment A/HRC/31/L.41 was sponsored by China, Cuba, Egypt, Pakistan and the Russian Federation, and co-sponsored by the Islamic Republic of Iran. Subsequently, Cuba withdrew its original co-sponsorship of the draft resolution. Subsequently, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates joined the sponsors.

281. At the same meeting, the representatives of Belgium and Panama) made general comments on draft resolution A/HRC/31/L.28 as orally revised and on the proposed amendments.

282. Also at the same meeting, the Human Rights Council took action on amendments A/HRC/31/L.41, A/HRC/31/L.43, A/HRC/31/L.46 and A/HRC/31/L.58 (see also paras. 283–285 below).

285. The Human Rights Council rejected amendments A/HRC/31/L.41, A/HRC/31/L.43, A/HRC/31/L.46 and A/HRC/31/L.58 by 14 votes to 22, with 10 abstentions.

IV. Human rights situations that require the Council’s attention

A. Interactive dialogue with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

B. Interactive dialogue with special procedure mandate holders

Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea

404. At the 34th meeting, on 14 March 2016, the Human Rights Council heard an oral update of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea, Sheila B. Keetharuth.

405. At the same meeting, the representative of Eritrea made a statement as the State concerned.

406. During the ensuing interactive dialogue, also at the same meeting, the following made statements and asked the Special Rapporteur questions:

407. At the same meeting, the representative of Eritrea made final remarks as the State concerned.

408. Also at the same meeting, the Special Rapporteur answered questions and made her concluding remarks.

V. Human rights bodies and mechanisms

A. Forum on Minority Issues

B. Special procedures

C. General debate on agenda item 5

VI. Universal periodic review

464. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251, Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, Council decision 17/119 and President’s statements PRST/8/1 and PRST/9/2 on modalities and practices for the universal periodic review process, the Council considered the outcome of the reviews conducted during the twenty-third session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, held from 2 to 13 November 2015.

465. In accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, the President stated that all recommendations must be part of the final outcome of the universal periodic review and accordingly, the State under review should clearly communicate its position on all the recommendations by indicating that it either “supported” or “noted” each recommendation.

A. Consideration of the universal periodic review outcomes

466. The section below contains, in accordance with paragraph 4.3 of President’s statement 8/1, a summary of the views expressed on the outcome by States under review, and by member and observer States of the Human Rights Council, and general comments made by other stakeholders before the adoption of the outcome by the Council in plenary session.

Federated States of Micronesia

467. The review of the Federated States of Micronesia was held on 2 November 2015 in conformity with all the relevant provisions contained in relevant Human Rights Council resolutions and decisions, and was based on the following documents:

(a) The national report submitted by the Federated States of Micronesia in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) of the annex to Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21 (A/HRC/WG.6/23/FSM/1);

(a) The national report submitted by New Zealand in accordance with the annex to Council resolution 5/1, paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/18/NZL/1);

(b) The compilation prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) of the annex to Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21 (A/HRC/WG.6/23/FSM/2);

(b) The compilation prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/18/NZL/2);

(c) The summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) of the annex to Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21 (A/HRC/WG.6/23/FSM/3).

(c) The summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/18/NZL/3).

468. At its 42nd meeting, on 16 March 2016, the Human Rights Council considered and adopted the outcome of the review of the Federated States of Micronesia (see sect. C below).

469. The outcome of the review of the Federated States of Micronesia comprises the report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (A/HRC/31/4), the views of the State under review concerning the recommendations and/or conclusions, and its voluntary commitments and replies presented before the adoption of the outcome by the plenary to questions or issues that were not sufficiently addressed during the interactive dialogue in the Working Group (see also A/HRC/31/4/Add.1).

1. Views expressed by the State under review on the recommendations and/or conclusions, its voluntary commitments and the outcome

2. Views expressed by member and observer States of the Human Rights Council on the review outcome

475. During the adoption of the outcome of the review of the Federated States of Micronesia, eight delegations made statements.

3. General comments made by other stakeholders

484. During the adoption of the outcome of the review of the Federated States of Micronesia, two other stakeholders made statements. [[3]](#footnote-4)

4. Concluding remarks of the State under review

487. The President stated that, based on the information provided, out of the 95 recommendations received, 63 had enjoyed the support of the Federated States of Micronesia and 32 had been noted.

528. The President stated that, based on the information provided, out of 221 recommendations received, 128 had enjoyed the support of Lebanon and 91 had been noted. Additional clarification had been provided on another 2 recommendations, indicating which part of the recommendation had been supported and which part had been noted.

B. General debate on agenda item 6

C. Consideration of and action on draft proposals

Lebanon

1072. At its 43rd meeting, on 16 March 2016, the Human Rights Council adopted draft decision 31/102 without a vote.

Commencement of the third cycle of the universal periodic review

1085. At the 63rd meeting, on 23 March 2016, the President of the Human Rights Council introduced draft decision A/HRC/31/L.4, sponsored by the President of the Council.

1086. At the same meeting, the Human Rights Council adopted the draft decision without a vote (decision 31/116).

VII. Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

VIII. Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

IX. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

X. Technical assistance and capacity-building

1. Observer of the Human Rights Council speaking on behalf of member and observer States. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Observer of the Human Rights Council speaking on behalf of member and observer States. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The statements of the stakeholders that were unable to deliver them owing to time constraints are posted, if available, on the extranet of the Human Rights Council at https://extranet.ohchr.org/sites/hrc/HRCSessions/RegularSessions/31stSession/Pages/default.aspx. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)