



General Assembly

Sixty-sixth session

110th plenary meeting
Thursday, 24 May 2012, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Al-Nasser. (Qatar)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 114 (continued)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(a) Election of twenty members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General (A/66/316/Rev.1/Add.1)

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450, of 17 December 1987, and upon nomination by the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Members will recall that, at its 59th plenary meeting, held on 17 November 2011, the General Assembly elected 15 members to the Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2012. Members will also recall that, by its decision 2011/201 D, of 6 October 2011, the Economic and Social Council postponed the nomination of one member from the Asia-Pacific States and four members from the Western European and other States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2012 and expiring on 31 December 2014.

In that connection, the Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/66/316/Rev.1/Add.1. As indicated in that document, at its 10th plenary meeting, on 26 April 2012, the Economic and Social Council nominated the following members to fill the outstanding vacancies on the Committee for

terms beginning on the date of election by the Assembly: Japan, for a term expiring on 31 December 2013, and Kazakhstan, for a term expiring on 31 December 2014.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare Japan elected a member of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, for a term of office beginning on 24 May 2012 and expiring on 31 December 2013, and to declare Kazakhstan elected a member of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, for a term of office beginning on 24 May 2012 and expiring on 31 December 2014?

It was so decided.

The President: Members are reminded that the Economic and Social Council postponed the nomination of four members from Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election by the General Assembly and expiring on 31 December 2014.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 114.

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12-35019 (E)



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Agenda item 115 (continued)**Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments****(h) Approval of the appointment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights****Note by the Secretary-General (A/66/802)**

The President: By its resolution 48/141, of 20 December 1993, the General Assembly decided to create the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Members will recall that, by its decision 62/420, of 28 July 2008, the General Assembly approved the proposal of the Secretary-General that Ms. Navanethem Pillay of South Africa be appointed United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a fixed term of four years. Ms. Pillay's term of office will expire on 31 August 2012.

The Secretary-General proposes, in the light of the provisions of resolution 48/141 set out in his note, to extend the appointment of Ms. Pillay as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a period of two years beginning on 1 September 2012 and expiring on 31 August 2014.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to approve the proposal of the Secretary-General to extend the appointment of Ms. Navanethem Pillay of South Africa as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a period of two years beginning on 1 September 2012 and expiring on 31 August 2014?

It was so decided.

The President: It is a great pleasure for me to announce the renewal of the appointment of Ms. Navanethem Pillay as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and to congratulate her thereon. As High Commissioner and in previous posts, such as that of President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and a judge of the High Court of her native South Africa, Ms. Pillay has worked tirelessly to promote and to defend human rights around the globe.

In directly addressing the most sensitive and vital human rights issues of our time and by ensuring that the role of the United Nations with regard to such rights is visible and palpable, she has expanded the range and reach of human rights. She has been an advocate in many countries and communities, defending the rights of women, children, detainees and victims of terror and

domestic violence. She has also been on the front lines in the fight against hate crimes and discrimination in all their forms.

On behalf of the General Assembly and its members, I extend to her our congratulations and good wishes for success in her renewed mandate.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Ms. Alsaleh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to make the following statement to explain its position regarding the note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/66/802.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights has taken hostile positions towards Syria on the basis of completely fabricated information and suspect sources, all of which were directed against my country. The High Commissioner has rejected any information submitted by Syria to shed light on the situation and to provide necessary facts, and persists in ignoring any such information, regardless of its source. The High Commissioner has also refused to condemn the terrorist acts against Syria and supported the positions of the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Council. She has preferred to exceed her mandate by becoming a prosecutor-general in condemning Syria and in presenting its case to the International Criminal Court.

Despite that, and although the High Commissioner is from the friendly country of South Africa, with which we have friendly and cooperative relations of trust and which is known for its support of human rights and its rejection of slander and discriminatory treatment, Syria supports the consensus to extend her mandate in the hope that she will review her anti-Syria position. We hope that she will closely examine the situation and listen to the voices of justice and of the victims of violations of human rights perpetrated against the Syrian people by armed terrorist groups, of whose defeat everyone — except, it seems, the High Commissioner — is conscious.

The violations of human rights through the imposition by certain countries of unilateral economic measures on Syria that run counter to international law should be covered by the High Commissioner's mandate. It is our hope that the High Commissioner will take a clear stand on this issue in order to halt the damage caused by the sanctions imposed on the Syrian people.

In conclusion, we wish the High Commissioner every success and hope that she will discharge her mandate within the framework of her competence as described in resolution 48/141; that she will work within the framework of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments that address human rights and humanitarian law; and that she will respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. We hope that the High Commissioner will adhere to the provisions of the Charter rather than listen to unfounded reports, and that this appeal for respect

for human rights will be addressed to all countries in a professional, impartial and non-discriminatory manner, in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 115?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.