



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr. Gen  
GENERAL

A/CONF.32/PC/SR.23  
3 March 1967  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Second Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 10 February 1967, at 3.25 p.m..

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PRESENT:

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<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. BEEBY	New Zealand
<u>Members:</u>	Miss FLETCHER	Canada
	Mrs. PONCE de LEON	Colombia
	Mr. PAOLINI	France
	Mr. TEJA	India
	Mr. FARTASH	Iran
	Mr. RICHARDSON)	
	Miss MARTINEZ )	Jamaica
	Mr. NAWERA	Kenya
	Mr. CHAMMAS	Lebanon
	Mr. CHEIKH ABDALLAH	Mauritania
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	Mr. UY	Philippines
	Mr. WYZNER	Poland
	Mr. FARAH	Somalia
	Mr. BEN AISSA	Tunisia
	Mr. NASINOVSKY	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Miss RICHARDS	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. ELMENDORF	United States of America
	Mr. LAZAREVIC	Yugoslavia

Representatives of specialized agencies:

	Mr. SALSAMENDI	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
	Mrs. KALM	World Health Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. SCHREIBER	Director, Division of Human Rights
	Mr. ROMANOV	Secretary of the Committee

ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE IN 1967 (A/CONF.32/PC/3;  
Conference Room Papers Nos. 5 and 6) (continued)

Mr. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) said that, since the purpose of the meeting was to organize the future work of the Preparatory Committee, he had consulted the Committee's first progress report (A/6354) in order to see what remained to be examined. He had noted that consideration of two important items had not been completed: the agenda for the Conference, mentioned in paragraphs 12 and 31, and the studies the Secretariat had been asked to prepare. During the current series of meetings nothing had been done on those two items; in particular, Conference Room Papers Nos. 45 and 46 had not been discussed, although they contained information about the kind of document which the Committee might expect to have to consider during its forthcoming series of meetings and on which the Secretariat would wish to have the Committee's comments.

The representative of Kenya had said in his statement at an earlier meeting that it was not the Preparatory Committee's responsibility to evaluate the documents submitted. The Secretariat had faithfully followed the instructions in paragraph 43 of the Committee's report; but what was important for the Committee to do, since it was to offer guidance to the Conference, was to tackle the problems encountered in adopting measures and methods to secure the implementation of human rights.

He hoped that the Chairman, when he came to summarize the discussion, would make that point clear.

Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan) said that he had had operative paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 2081 (XX) in mind when he had made an informal suggestion at an earlier meeting that it would be useful for the Preparatory Committee to urge the Commission on Human Rights to complete at its forthcoming session its work on the Draft International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance, so that the Convention could be opened for signature in 1968. He had been gratified to note that that suggestion had been accepted unanimously. The Chairman had, however, pointed out that the Commission on Human Rights was to meet in the very near future at Geneva and that it would be better to raise the matter then. He had therefore decided not to press his proposal for the moment.

Mr. TEJA (India) associated himself with the welcome extended to the new members of the Committee and with the thanks expressed to the Government of Iran for its generous invitation. He supported the proposal made by Nigeria and other delegations that an official letter of thanks should be sent to the Iranian Government.

He believed that the documentation should not be unduly voluminous and that it was not the Committee's responsibility to study the substance of the documents, but merely to consider their nature and number and decide what should be done on that basis.

The date of 10 April for the Committee's forthcoming series of meetings would suit his delegation very well.

Miss RICHARDS (United Kingdom) thought that it would be best to fix a date during the first fortnight of April for the Committee's forthcoming series of meetings; she would prefer it to be 3 rather than 10 April. Although marked progress had been made, there were still many questions to be discussed, such as the arrangements for the participation in the Conference of regional inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field of human rights, the rules of procedure of the Conference, its financing - on which she hoped the Committee would receive further information - and the provisional agenda, which should be very carefully prepared. She thanked the Secretariat for the very useful information supplied in Conference Room Papers Nos. 5 and 6 and the Director of the Division of Human Rights for the details he had given earlier.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Jamaica) said that, since the Committee was meeting to organize its future work, it need not confine itself to its forthcoming series of meetings but could consider its programme for the whole of 1967. By taking decisions on that forthwith it would simplify matters, not only for other bodies when they fixed the dates of their sessions, but for all those who were to co-operate with the Committee, since they would know how much time they had to complete their work. Moreover, there should be a clear understanding of what questions the Committee was to deal with at its forthcoming series of meetings and at future sessions. The Committee might, for instance, decide to meet for two

(Mr. Richardson, Jamaica)

weeks, beginning 3 April, and then arrange for another session in early July and a third before the opening of the General Assembly.

With regard to the work of the forthcoming session, he hoped that the Committee would be able to consider the Secretariat studies and to decide whether and in what form they should be submitted to the Conference. The Committee should in the meantime have received the reports of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights, both of which would contain recommendations. It should certainly consider, in addition, the draft rules of procedure of the Conference which the Secretariat would have prepared and the arrangements for the participation in the Conference of regional inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Committee should ask the Organization of American States, UNESCO and the ILO to forward as soon as possible the documentation they intended to submit to the Conference. It might then have time to consider those documents at the April meetings and to see whether and in what form they could be included in the documentation for the Conference.

It was still rather early to fix the agenda for the July meetings, but the Committee might decide provisionally to consider the experts' reports at that time. The reports might not be ready, however, in which case the experts should be asked to come before the Committee to report on the progress of their work.

Mr. CHAMMAS (Lebanon) thanked the Committee for the cordial welcome it had extended to the new members. As a newcomer, he would consider it presumptuous to make detailed suggestions about the documentation. He wished, however, to comment on one of the points raised by Jamaica in connexion with the organization of work: the matter of a possible session in July. It was surely too early to make arrangements for such a session, the need for which was not apparent at the moment.

With regard to the United Kingdom representative's observation that the Committee should prepare the rules of procedure of the Conference, it was his opinion that that was a task for the Secretariat and that the Committee should confine itself to considering the draft rules of procedure submitted to it and to commenting on them, if necessary.



Mr. FARTASH (Iran) observed that it was gratifying to have six new members participating in the Committee's work. He thanked the Director of the Division of Human Rights for his clear and detailed statement of the previous day on the studies which his staff was preparing and their progress. He had read the Secretariat studies and had found them most interesting and useful.

Mr. Schreiber had said that the exact date of the Conference would be fixed after negotiations with the Government of Iran and the representative of Somalia had expressed the hope that the date would be announced fairly soon. He assured the Committee that every effort would be made to have the decision taken as soon as possible. The Government of Iran was most enthusiastic about the Conference and would endeavour to ensure its success. It was relying heavily on the Secretariat's help, because the organization of such a large meeting demanded an enormous amount of detailed preparatory work.

There was one point in connexion with the Committee's work at its forthcoming series of meetings to which Iran, as the host country, attached great importance: the arrangements for the participation of regional inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations (A/6354, para. 51), which had not yet been fully settled. He hoped that a decision on the matter would be made at the forthcoming meetings. His delegation had no firm preference concerning the date of the meetings and considered April acceptable.

Referring to the suggestion made by the Polish delegation at an earlier meeting about publicity for the Conference, he said that he had seen the circular which Mr. Wyzner had in mind, which had been issued by the Secretariat in connexion with the International Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and that he too believed that something of the kind could be done to draw attention to the International Conference on Human Rights.

Mr. NASINOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that in the 1967 calendar of meetings established by the United Nations only one six-day session (from 3 to 10 April) was scheduled for the Preparatory Committee. Clearly, in choosing that date the Secretariat had taken due account of the available financial resources and all other relevant considerations. It could therefore

(Mr. Nasinovsky, USSR)

justifiably be asked why the Jamaican representative should now propose that those arrangements should be changed and that the session should last two weeks. That seemed too long, since the Committee would be considering relatively simple questions such as the rules of procedure, the draft agenda and the documentation for the Conference. The Jamaican representative also proposed that the session should take place in July; however, many representatives and members of the Secretariat would certainly be absent at that time of the year, which would make for difficulties. Lastly, the financial resources might not suffice for a two-week session. For those reasons, his delegation could not agree to the Committee's meeting for two weeks in July. It considered that the time fixed by the Secretariat, i.e., 3 to 10 April, was best. The Committee would be able to hold ten to twelve meetings, and that should be quite enough for it to complete its work, which was to prepare and organize the Conference and not to draft and amend the documentation. The latter should in any case be short and concise, since the Conference would last only three weeks. The Preparatory Committee should therefore meet from 3 to 10 April and meet for the last time early in 1968, after the General Assembly. A July session was not necessary, since the questions to be considered were easy to settle, with the exception of the invitation to non-governmental organizations. In that connexion, he wondered why the Jamaican representative had mentioned only the Organization of American States. The fact that the Jamaican delegation might need information from OAS was of no concern to other States.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) agreed with the USSR representative regarding the July session. Such a session would be just as useless as a working group to evaluate the documentation. The questions of substance would be considered in April.

As to the United Kingdom representative's remark that the Committee should draw up the rules of procedure of the Conference, paragraph 54 of document A/6354 showed that the Secretariat had been asked to prepare the draft rules of procedure, which would then be considered by the Committee. He wished to make that point clear to the new members of the Committee, who might have been misled by the United Kingdom representative's remarks.

(Mr. Mohammed, Nigeria)

The suggestion made by the Director of the Division of Human Rights regarding the Committee's next session was quite acceptable. The Committee could meet during the week suggested by the Secretariat and could sit for an additional week if necessary.

The Committee should request the Organization of American States, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the European Commission of Human Rights, UNESCO, the ILO and other specialized agencies to submit their communications and studies as soon as possible. The Committee must have an idea of the volume of documentation it would have before it. The contribution of those organizations should not be overlooked if the Conference was to examine all questions relating to human rights.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Jamaica), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed the hope that the members of the Committee had realized that the USSR representative had apparently misunderstood his proposal.

The CHAIRMAN summed up the debate and made some suggestions concerning the work of the Committee's present session.

Reference had been made to the thanks which should be addressed to the Iranian Government for its generous offer, the organization of the work of the Committee's next session, the agenda and the documentation.

General agreement had been reached on the Nigerian representative's formal proposal that the Committee should adopt unanimously a resolution thanking the Iranian Government, a proposal which had been supported by the representatives of the USSR, Jamaica, Pakistan, Poland, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Tunisia, Kenya, the United States and India.

The proposal was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had noted with satisfaction the documents submitted to it by the Secretariat; speaking on his own behalf and on behalf of the members of the Committee, he congratulated the Director of the Division of Human Rights, his staff and the members of the Secretariat who had contributed to the preparation of those documents.

With regard to documentation, the Committee had considered it necessary to have the essential documents at its disposal as soon as possible before its next session. Some delegations felt it would be useful to engage many experts and



consultants to prepare a critical evaluation of the methods used by the United Nations in the sphere of human rights.

The Committee also thought it necessary to draw the attention of the Office of Public Information to the desirability of publicizing certain resolutions concerning the proposed Conference and of ensuring that the International Year for Human Rights received the requisite publicity. To that end, the Secretariat would be requested to contact the Office of Public Information. He suggested that the Committee should also stress that the Press and television services should issue pamphlets and organize special programmes.

Some delegations felt that the regional organizations and specialized agencies wishing to submit studies should be requested to do so as soon as possible.

Moreover, the wish had been expressed that the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women should expedite their work and submit documents to the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Jamaica) said that while he had indeed mentioned those two Commissions, he had not included them among the organizations which should expedite their work.

The CHAIRMAN replied that some members of the Preparatory Committee wished the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women to submit studies.

The desirability of establishing a liaison system between the Preparatory Committee and the Secretariat had been stressed. Some members of the Committee felt that that question was not urgent and could be considered at the Committee's next session.

The members of the Committee had taken a flexible attitude with regard to the date of that session. In general, they had favoured the month of April. He suggested that the session should open on 3 April, but that its duration, which could be a week or more, should not be specified.

Some members of the Committee had expressed the hope that the Commission on Human Rights would continue its work on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance. Some representatives wished that Convention to be opened for signature before the Conference met.

(The Chairman)

Various suggestions had been made concerning the agenda for the Preparatory Committee's next session, with a view to enabling the Committee to complete its work; namely, preparation of the agenda for the Conference, adoption of the rules of procedure for the Conference on the basis of a draft which the Secretariat would submit to the April session, consideration of the financial implications of the Conference and examination of documents submitted by the Secretariat.

He felt that the suggestions made at the present meeting by the Jamaican representative could not be discussed at the present stage; the Committee could decide at its April session whether or not an additional session was necessary.

Mr. NASINOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Chairman's conclusions were, generally speaking, acceptable. He would, however, like to know in what form the conclusions would be recorded; would they be part of the Preparatory Committee's report, or would they be embodied in a resolution adopted at the present session? On the assumption that the conclusions were to be part of the report, he wished to add a few comments to the Chairman's summing up.

Regarding the need for a large number of experts and consultants to evaluate United Nations methods of work in the field of human rights, he felt the report should mention that other delegations had doubted the necessity of recruiting outside experts and had been opposed to increasing the number to be recruited. His own delegation was firmly opposed to such an increase.

The Chairman had said also that some regional organizations should be asked to prepare and submit studies as soon as possible. The Soviet delegation felt that such a request should not be made; the invitation extended by the General Assembly in its resolution 2081 (XX) was quite sufficient.

The rest of the Chairman's conclusions were satisfactory.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had to decide whether it wished to endorse his conclusions. If it did so, they would be included in the report to be drafted by the Rapporteur and would be taken into account in the provisional agenda for the Committee's next session.

As to experts, he pointed out that he had used the words, "Some delegations felt". The representative of the Soviet Union was, of course, free to reiterate

his doubts and make reservations; however, the decision to recruit experts had already been taken. He himself had not specified what their number would be.

As to the question of requesting regional organizations to expedite their studies, what he had said was that "some delegations" had felt that such a request should be made.

Mr. CHAMMAS (Lebanon) said that his delegation was happy to support the conclusions formulated by the Chairman, subject to the comments of representatives, particularly the representative of the Soviet Union. The consensus of opinion which the Committee seemed to have reached should be recorded not as a resolution, but as part of the Preparatory Committee's report.

The USSR representative had argued that the Preparatory Committee should not send a request to the regional organizations. The Committee must indeed be careful not to exceed its terms of reference, as it might sometimes have been tempted to do: for instance, the representative of the Soviet Union had himself suggested that the Committee should hold a meeting after the General Assembly's session, although its task was to report to the Assembly and it was difficult to see how, that being so, it could decide to meet after the session. As to the regional inter-governmental organizations, the Preparatory Committee was certainly entitled under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 2081 (XX) to ask the Secretariat to communicate to it any documents it might receive from such organizations if they were not addressed direct to the Conference. It would in any event be preferable for them to be communicated to the Conference through the Committee, which should be informed of them.

He suggested that at its next session the Committee should consider only questions assigned to it which had not yet been disposed of.

As to the opening date of the International Conference on Human Rights, that was a matter for the General Assembly to decide.

Paragraph 3 of resolution 2217 (XXI) was quite explicit. The Committee could not overstep its terms without the prior consent of the General Assembly.

Mr. RIOS (Panama) felt that 3 April, the date suggested by the Chairman, was too early for convening the next session of the Preparatory Committee, for

(Mr. Rios, Panama)

members must without fail have the promised documents at least two, if not three, weeks before the Committee began its work. However, the Division of Human Rights had an extremely heavy workload to cope with. He therefore proposed that the opening of the Preparatory Committee's session should be postponed to 17 April.

In addition, he stressed the importance of the documents being available in all the working languages.

He felt that the 1968 International Conference should be given the greatest possible publicity, and pointed out that several organizations concerned with human rights had asked for more information on the objectives of the Conference and on the United Nations plans for it. He asked the Chairman to exert his influence to ensure that the Conference, which could be an important milestone in the history of the United Nations, should be given all possible publicity. Lastly, on behalf of the Republic of Panama, he thanked the Government of Iran for its generous invitation.

The CHAIRMAN assured the representative of Panama that the documents would be produced in time in all the working languages. The reason why the documents the Secretariat had communicated to the Committee at the present session were available in only one of the working languages was that they had been communicated only unofficially and by way of example, to show how the Secretariat proposed to carry out its task.

He did not think that the date of 3 April for the opening of the next session of the Preparatory Committee could now be changed, in view of all the considerations that had been advanced by representatives during the debate. The doubts expressed by the representative of Panama would, however, be recorded in the summary record.

Mr. BEEBY (New Zealand) thanked the Chairman for his clear summing up of the Preparatory Committee's debates, and supported his conclusions. He wished to refer to two minor matters.

He wondered whether the Committee intended to decide the order in which it would take up the various questions to be dealt with; it would be advisable for the draft agenda of the Conference to be considered at the end of the session.



(Mr. Beeby, New Zealand)

The Lebanese representative had referred to the participation of regional and non-governmental organizations in the International Conference on Human Rights. There appeared to be some differences of opinion on that point; but there had been fairly general agreement that it should be discussed at the next session of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN, replying to the New Zealand representative, said that his summing up had in no way been final. The Committee could make whatever changes it felt desirable, just as it could change the order of the items to be discussed at the next session. A draft agenda along the lines he had indicated could be published as a provisional document, with the addition of an item "Other business", which would, among other things, permit consideration of the possibility of holding additional sessions.

Mr. LAZAREVIC (Yugoslavia) said that he had two comments to make on the Chairman's summing up.

First, he thought that it should appear in the Rapporteur's report, for the Rapporteur ought not to be asked to prepare a special report on the meetings which had been devoted to the organization of the Committee's work. The Chairman's statement should also be reproduced in full in the summary record, so as to be available to members of the Committee before 3 April.

Secondly, he did not think that the Committee had authority to ask the regional and non-governmental organizations for documents. The Secretary-General had already communicated with those organizations in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2081 (XX), and his request need not be repeated. On the other hand, the representative of the Secretary-General could perhaps ask UNESCO and the ILO to send the reports they had promised as soon as possible.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Yugoslav representative's comments would be recorded in the report.

Mr. WYZNER (Poland) expressed agreement with the Chairman's excellent summing up. There was one point, however, which his delegation wished to stress, although it did not as a rule repeat statements of position which could already be found in the summary records. He was referring to the question of experts; as some

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(Mr. Wyzner, Poland)

delegations apparently wished to force the Secretary-General's hand, he felt bound to repeat that it had not been agreed by the Committee that the Secretariat should be authorized to increase the number of experts. The Director of the Division of Human Rights had himself stated that the number was adequate, and there seemed no reason for increasing it.

He agreed with the Lebanese representative that the Committee must avoid intervening in matters that had been decided by other organs. It would be remembered that Poland had not been entirely in favour of the General Assembly's decision to ask the regional organizations for documents; but that decision having nevertheless been taken it must be supposed that matters were proceeding normally, and there was no reason to address requests to the organizations concerned. By doing so, moreover, the Committee might be behaving unfairly towards organizations which it did not specifically mention. The matter was one in which it would be wise to abide by the general terms used by the General Assembly and avoid naming organizations. That would give the Secretariat greater freedom to approach one or other of the organizations without being specially instructed to do so.

As to the question of participation in the proposed International Conference on Human Rights, that too had been decided by the last General Assembly resolution, and there was no need to reopen it.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Jamaica) thanked the Chairman for his impartial and lucid summing up of the discussion.

He hoped that the agenda would include the question of participation in the Conference by regional inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field of human rights, referred to in paragraph 51 of the Committee's first report (A/6354). Consideration for the host Government demanded that a decision on participation in the Conference should be made as soon as possible, and he therefore proposed that a corresponding item should be added to the agenda of the Committee's next meeting.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it had been agreed that the agenda should be drawn up by the officers of the Committee in co-operation with the Division of Human Rights.

Mr. PAOLINI (France) thanked the Chairman for his summing up. The present session had been intended as an interim session, as it were, at which no important decisions would be taken and the main purpose of which would be to allow the new members to state their positions. Their presence had made a most constructive contribution to the Committee's work.

His delegation broadly agreed with the Chairman's conclusions. However, as the Chairman's summing up appeared to have reopened the discussion, there were several comments he would like to make.

With regard to the form in which the Chairman's conclusions should be recorded, he thought that they should be embodied in the Committee's report. The part of the report in which they appeared should be submitted to the Committee when it met on 3 April. The Committee would then make any corrections which the majority of its members thought necessary, the individual position of each delegation on particular points having already been stated in the summary records of the meetings.

His delegation agreed that the next session should open on 3 April.

With regard to the question of documents from inter-governmental organizations or specialized agencies, he reminded the Committee of the General Assembly's general decision on the matter, which the Committee had noted in paragraph 40 of its first report (A/6354). He hoped the various organizations and specialized agencies would submit their documents at an early enough date. The Committee would certainly not be exceeding its terms of reference if it approached certain bodies which had expressed a willingness to communicate information. His delegation thought such communications most valuable, and he had been surprised to hear the view expressed that the studies in question were of no interest whatever to other States; the speaker had perhaps gone farther than he really intended, for if that were so it would be hard to see the point of an International Conference on Human Rights the object of which would be, among other things, to sum up the general position and compare the ways in which human rights had been implemented in different regions, in conformity with the principle of universality on which the United Nations was based. Unlike the Polish representative, he thought that organizations which had shown interest in the Conference and expressed their willingness to provide documentation should be named. The Committee would not be overstepping its authority if it took note of communications transmitted to the

(Mr. Paolini, France)

Secretariat; the organizations should if necessary be informed that it would be desirable for the documentation to be transmitted at an earlier date than had been envisaged. Such a step was unlikely to prove invidious, for most of the organizations in question had representatives to the United Nations who could take any necessary action. The report should indicate that it was hoped that other inter-governmental organizations would participate in the Conference.

As to the experts, the Preparatory Committee's report on its present session contained a very clear form of words which left the Committee a free hand in the matter. The Chairman's wording was satisfactory. Mr. Schreiber had said that six or seven experts would be a reasonable number, and the Committee had already defined its position on such general questions.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) hoped that the Chairman's very full summing up would be reproduced in full in the summary record or would be distributed as a conference room paper, since his delegation attached considerable importance to it. He thanked his colleagues and the Secretariat for their co-operation.

Mr. FARTASH (Iran) thanked the Chairman for his excellent summing up. He supported the conclusions drawn in it and the clarificatory comments on them made by various delegations.

His delegation appreciated the very kind remarks addressed to it and to the Government of Iran by the majority of delegations. He thanked the Committee for its unanimous vote of thanks, which would greatly encourage his Government in its endeavours to ensure the complete success of the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN thanked all the members of the Committee and said that the discussions had been very useful. He also thanked the Secretariat. He reminded members that the Committee would meet again in April, and declared the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Human Rights closed.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.