

**The following is an excerpt from the official meeting records of the General Assembly on March 15, 2006.**

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**Mr. Zhang Yishan** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to make an explanatory statement on draft resolution A/60/L.48 after its adoption.

The outcome document of the World Summit, adopted last September, requested us to establish a Human Rights Council as soon as possible. After more than 30 rounds of consultations over the past five months, the General Assembly has finally adopted the resolution on the Human Rights Council today, officially announcing the creation of the Council.

It has been a difficult process, full of disputes and challenges. In order to fulfil the noble task entrusted to us by the heads of State and Government, various delegations made tremendous and tireless efforts during the consultations. They demonstrated a genuine spirit of mutual respect in seeking common ground, while setting aside differences. The Chinese delegation also took an active part in the consultations and made its own positive contributions. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I wish to extend my gratitude and congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to your two Co-Chairs — the ambassadors of South Africa and Panama — as well as all other delegations.

The creation of the Human Rights Council marks an historic moment. From now on, the Commission on Human Rights will be replaced by the Human Rights Council. The United Nations human rights body will be upgraded from a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council to a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. The status of human rights will be further elevated within the United Nations system.

The international community and people all over the world place great expectations on the Council. They all hope the Council will play its due role and more effectively promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms at the global level.

The Chinese delegation appreciates the fact that the resolution has reaffirmed important human rights principles — namely, that in promoting and protecting human rights, it is necessary to respect historical, cultural and religious backgrounds of different countries and regions, and promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions. The resolution also emphasizes that civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development are indivisible and equally important. In particular, it should be noted that, in its preambular and operative paragraphs, the resolution indicates repeatedly that the human rights issue should be dealt with in an impartial and non-selective manner in order to avoid double standards and politicization, and promote genuine interactive dialogue and cooperation. The Chinese delegation believes that the aforementioned principles should be the guidelines for the future work of the Council so as to avoid the recurrence of political confrontation prevalent in the Commission on Human Rights.

In addition, resolution 60/251 has solved the longstanding problem of the under-representation of Asian countries in the Commission on Human Rights by redistributing regional seats based on the principle of equitable geographic distribution. Pursuant to the resolution, the Council will guide the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as decided in General Assembly resolution 48/141. Resolution 60/251 points out that the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Council shall be arranged in accordance with resolution 1996/31 of the Economic and Social Council. The Chinese delegation supports and appreciates the aforementioned elements.

The Chinese delegation also wishes to indicate that the resolution fails fully to reflect the concerns of many developing countries, including China, over some issues. First, it does not provide effective guarantees against political confrontation caused by country-specific resolutions, which have become a chronic disease of the Commission on Human Rights. Secondly, the universal periodic review mechanism to be developed by the Council may overlap with the work of other human rights treaty bodies and special mechanisms, thus increasing the reporting burdens for developing countries. Thirdly, in our understanding, the recommendations of the Council are limited to the General Assembly, with no implications for other United Nations bodies. China will make further comment regarding those concerns during further consultations once the Council is established.

The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to the issue of human rights. While enhancing and protecting the human rights of its own people, China has taken an active part in and supported international human rights cooperation and dialogue. We are in favour of a greater United Nations role in the field of human rights. China therefore supports the creation of the Human Rights Council based on the outcome document and the elevation of the status of human rights in the work of our Organization.

In the future, with the closing of the Commission on Human Rights and the establishment of the Human Rights Council, United Nations reform in the field of human rights will continue. China is ready to adopt an active and open attitude, cooperate closely with all other parties, and play an active role in the work of the Council so as to ensure that the human rights body will truly end confrontation and promote dialogue and cooperation, thus achieving fairly rapid and healthy progress in the field of human rights, a noble cause ardently advocated by people of all countries.