

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

The complete transcript is available at

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**Mr. Oshima** (Japan): Japan welcomes the establishment of the Human Rights Council. We congratulate you, Mr. President, and your Co-Chairmen on that landmark achievement, and we thank you for your tireless efforts to bring it to fruition.

In order to create a truly effective human rights body, Japan proposed that the new Human Rights Council should be a principal organ, with its members elected by a two-thirds majority. My delegation regrets that those elements were not reflected in the final text. As you yourself admit, Mr. President, the text is not perfect. It does not satisfy everyone to the full, which is an impossibility. However, it does provide a good and viable basis upon which to strengthen the human rights machinery of the United Nations, machinery that is a clear and significant improvement over its predecessor. On that basis, Japan voted in favour of the resolution.

Member States now face a new task: to ensure that the newly established Human Rights Council will be a body that is effective and credible. To that end, the preparatory work to put the Council into operation will be of vital importance, and my delegation would like to appeal to all Member States to participate actively in that work.

During the course of preparation, Japan expects that practices and mechanisms will be established to enhance the credibility of the membership of the Human Rights Council. This could include, for example, the submission of a written pledge by candidates seeking membership in the Council well in advance of the election so that Member States could examine it and take it fully into account in casting their votes. Japan will also try to vigorously explore the possibilities of enhancing the credibility of the Human Rights Council as we discuss its new rules of procedure. In addition, we hope that the review of the Council's status within five years' time will commence at an earlier opportunity.

In elections of members of the Human Rights Council, Japan will give full consideration to the human rights situation and record of each candidate, in accordance with the language of the resolution. Like some Member States who have already made their intention clear, Japan will cast its votes for those candidates who are committed to and striving for the highest standards with regard to the protection and promotion of human rights. Japan will not vote for candidates that we believe are committing grave human rights violations, including those under the sanctions of the Security Council for reasons related to human rights.

Let us hope that today is a day of triumph in the history of the promotion of world human rights.