

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

The complete transcript is available at
http://www.hrw.org/un/elections/pdfs/ga_mtg_en.pdf (English)
http://www.hrw.org/un/elections/pdfs/ga_mtg_fr.pdf (French)
http://www.hrw.org/un/elections/pdfs/ga_mtg_ar.pdf (Arabic)

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation voted in favour of draft resolution A/60/L.48. We believe that the draft resolution, although far from perfect, is the outcome of an extremely difficult search for compromise, which is necessary to ensure that we establish the basis for qualitative improvement in the Organization's human rights efforts and that we eliminate any double standards, selectivity and politicization in that area.

We view this resolution as merely a basis, or starting point, for the activities of the new human rights body. Here, we should recall paragraph 100 of Annex V of the General Assembly's rules of procedure, which states that "new organs should be set up only after mature consideration".

We have already pointed out on many occasions and in various forums that many provisions in the draft resolution on the Human Rights Council are ambiguous and of doubtful value. That is particularly the case with operative paragraph 7, which states that membership on the Council shall be limited to two consecutive terms. This provision clearly contradicts the principle set out in the Charter concerning the universal membership of the Organization, according to which each Member State can submit its candidacy for election to any body in the United Nations system. The Russian Federation will be guided by that principle during elections of candidates for the Human Rights Council and hopes that other States will establish their positions on Council candidatures on the basis of each specific situation and the nature of the candidate countries in question.

In addition, the resolution is not fully clear concerning Council membership, which "shall be open to all Member States of the United Nations" but, at the same time, is contingent on certain criteria. We hope that the Council itself — particularly when it is establishing its organizational and procedural relationship with the General Assembly — will correct the resolution's most ambiguous provisions to the extent possible.