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Draft report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review¹

Estonia

¹ The final document will be issued under the symbol A/HRC/17/17. The annex to the present report is circulated as received.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction.....	x-x	x
I Summary of the proceedings of the review process.....	x-x	x
A. Presentation by the State under review.....	x-x	x
B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review.....	x-x	x
II. Conclusions and/or recommendations	x-x	x
Annex		
Composition of the delegation		x

Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, held its tenth session from 24 January to 4 February 2011. The review of Estonia was held at the 15th meeting on 2 February 2011. The delegation of Estonia was headed by H.E. Mr. Alar Streimann, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At its 17th meeting held on 4 February 2011, the Working Group adopted the report on Estonia.
2. On 21 June 2010, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Estonia: Belgium, Ecuador, Zambia.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 5/1, the following documents were issued for the review of Estonia:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/10/EST/1);
 - (b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/10/EST/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/10/EST/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Estonia through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the UPR.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation indicated that Estonia had been a committed member of the international community by being a founding member of the League of Nations and a member of the United Nations after restoring its independence in 1991 as well as by participating in human rights activities of other international and regional organisations. Estonia had acceded to eleven UN human rights instruments even before the entry into force of its Constitution and had by now acceded to most of the major international and regional human rights agreements.
6. The delegation stated that the Manifest for All the Peoples of Estonia, which declared the independent Republic of Estonia in 1918 included a provision on the protection of ethnic minorities' rights, which was also recognized after the 1991 independence. It noted that a strong and engaged civil society was an essential part of Estonia's actions to protect and promote human rights for all and that freedom of expression was important to achieve that aim.
7. The delegation noted its close cooperation with the UN human rights treaty bodies, including by recognising the competence of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination to receive individual complaints. Estonia had issued a standing invitation to all human rights special procedure mandate holders and received visits from several special rapporteurs. Estonia had been working towards becoming a member of the Human Rights Council for the first time to contribute particularly in achieving gender equality, freedom of expression and the rule of law. The

