

Minutes Bureau meeting 22 April

I. Budgetary issues with relation to the functioning of the HRC (in particular UPR WG)

The Bureau met with the Deputy DG of the UNOG Ms. Jan Beagle, the Deputy High-Commissioner, Ms. Kyung-wha Kang and the Chief of the Management of Conference Services Mr. Vladimir Gratchev as well as other officials from the UNOG and the OHCHR. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the budgetary situation of the Human Rights Council and take a decision on the necessary steps to address the critical budgetary crisis affecting the work of the Council.

The meeting recalled that the UPR WGs were severely constrained by budget shortages. This affects processing of the UPR documentation which negatively impacts on follow-ups on UPR WGs. The situation threatens the holding of the 5th UPR and 6th UPR WGs scheduled for May and December 2009, unless drastic and immediate remedial action was taken.

For his part, the President briefed the Bureau on the actions that he has taken to find a solution to the budgetary crisis. In this connexion, he informed that he had made demarches, including addressing a letter to the Secretary-General of the UN, to the President of the General Assembly and to the Controller on the grave financial situation faced in the Human Rights Council. As a follow-up to these letters, the President met briefly with the SG on 20 April 2009, on the wings of the Durban Review Conference, to elicit response to the Council's financial constraints.

The 5th Committee of the General Assembly is expected to meet early in May 2009 to discuss the budgetary issues of the Human Rights Council. The Bureau was encouraged to explore ways to send appropriate political message to the 5th Committee that would help address the budgetary crisis of the Council.

Last but not least, with relation to the functioning of the Human Rights Council, the President warmly thanked the UNOG administration for the new permanent offices received for the use of the Presidency (i.e. **E3065 and E3067**, close behind the room XX).

II. Forthcoming UPR session and Programme of Work of the 11th session of the Human Rights Council

The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the situation on submission of documents for the forthcoming UPR session. All the reports have been submitted (except for one country). However translation in some languages is still behind schedule, due to lack of resources.

With regard to the list of speakers and the waiting time to inscribe on list for the UPR debate, the President recalled that despite the various proposals put forward, the general opinion is not to change the rules and practices midway. However, as a response to the concerns expressed, the Secretariat will open the list of speakers 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the meetings –as per the timetable circulated with the Note verbale of 2 April 2009. In addition, and if the situation that prevailed during the 4th session were to happen again, the Secretariat could consider replicating the

practice put in place for the March plenary session of the Council, i.e when the number of States queuing to inscribe on the list is beyond the number that could, in all likelihood, be absorbed for the interactive dialogue, the Secretariat would pre-inscribe the persons in the order of the queue.

As for the Programme of Work of the 11th session of the Human Rights Council (2 to 18 June, 2009), the draft has been made available on the Extranet. The Bureau endorsed the revised Programme of Work which would be available on Extranet shortly as well.

In addition, the President suggested that the organizational meeting of the 11th session be held **in the morning of Friday 15 May, instead of 18 May**. A Note Verbale would be sent to all delegations and stakeholders informing them of this change of date.

III. Social forum: nominations for Chairperson

The President informed the Bureau that though the Note Verbale by the Secretariat and a letter from himself respectively were sent to Regional Coordinators seeking nomination of Chairperson of the Social forum, in accordance with the HRC resolution A/HRC/RES/6/13, no nomination has been received yet to date. The Social Forum, a subsidiary body of the Human Rights Council, has scheduled to hold its next session from 31 August to 2 September 2009. Since the previous chairmanship was from the Asia Group, it was suggested that the rule of regional rotation would apply to the appointment.

The President considers the present Minutes of the Bureau meeting as an official appeal to all regional coordinators to nominate candidates for such position.

IV. Received correspondence:

1. Letters from Member States, to be brought to the attention of the Bureau:

1. Letter received by German parliamentarists in support of the work of the Council;
2. Correspondence related to the appointment of the High-level fact-finding mission on Gaza, pursuant to Council resolution S-9/1;
3. Correspondence related to facts and events which occurred during the 10th session of the Human Rights Council and were dealt with accordingly, and other matters.

The President informed that he had also received invitations for official visits and attendance of seminars. He informed the Bureau that, at the invitation of the Brazilian government through H.E. Mr. Paulo Vannuchi, the Brazilian Minister for Human Rights, he would undertake an official visit to Brazil from 25 to 30 April, in his capacity of President of the Human Rights Council. In his view, the visit would contribute to raise the visibility and understanding of the work of the Council. Bahrain and Qatar have also officially invited the President for visit in the coming weeks.

2. Letters from Secretariat and Special procedures, to be brought to the attention of the Bureau:

4. Letter from the Chairperson of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures, in relation to the death of two human rights defenders in Kenya, which was duly brought to the attention of the Kenyan government. The latter committed that full and timely investigations would be done and brought to the Council attention.
5. Letter from Mr. Arjun Sendupta, Chairperson of the Working group on the Right to development, in relation to the new composition of the High Level Task Force on the Right to Development.

The President have also received numerous correspondences from NGOs, some of these letters indicated the support of the appointment of the High-level fact-finding mission on Gaza and candidates for Special procedures mandate holders; while others related to the work of the Human Rights Council and the UPR mechanism.