

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. D'Alotto (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Argentina voted in favour of draft resolution A/60/L.48, which lays the groundwork for the functioning of the Human Rights Council, whose creation was decided on by our heads of State and Government at the summit held last September.

While the text could have contained certain elements of importance to my country and does not, such as giving the Council the standing of a principal organ of the United Nations, at the same level as the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, the manner in which the discussions were held and the topics under consideration nonetheless led us to approve the creation of the new Council, despite the fact that efforts to accord it the standing of a principal organ were unsuccessful.

We also agreed that a two-thirds majority vote would be required for States to become members. However, that was not possible. Argentina consistently acted in a constructive spirit, seeking agreements and compromises and averting dissent. The objective was the establishment of the Human Rights Council; we support its creation and the work of Ambassadors Kumalo and Arias as facilitators.

The Human Rights Council replaces the Commission on Human Rights, which registered some major achievements. But Argentina itself was a witness to the Commission's shortcomings due to the political objectives of its members, resulting, for instance, in my country's never being condemned despite the terrible tragedy involving human rights violations that occurred 30 years ago.

We intend for the Human Rights Council to become a strong enough body to avert the recurrence of similar episodes anywhere on earth. Should these, unfortunately, occur once again, it could take an unequivocal stand against them, pressuring the Governments responsible to safeguard the fundamental rights of persons.

Argentina will strive to ensure that the Human Rights Council is a forum open to the claims not of States but of the victims of acts of suppression and the claims of all those who have been denied their rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, regardless of where such acts took place. Cooperation among States must be to the benefit, not the detriment, of the victims.

Finally, we would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the work that you have done. We are proud to have you at the helm, and we are convinced that you will continue with the efforts you made towards the Council's creation — efforts made also by my delegation — so that we may continue to work to achieve reform in areas of the Organization requiring it, such as the development of, and changes in, the Economic and Social Council.