23 May 2014

Economic and Social Council

ECOSOC/6614

NGO/792

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Committee on NGOs

24th & 25th Meetings (AM & PM)

COMMITTEE GRANTS SPECIAL CONSULTATIVE STATUS TO 15 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS,

WHILE DEFERRING ACTION ON APPLICATIONS OF 38 OTHERS

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations today recommended 15 organizations for special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and deferred action on 38 others.

Action on many applications was postponed as Committee members requested additional information about, among other things, details of their respective organizations’ projects, partners, expenditures and sources of funding.

Tasked with vetting applications submitted by non-governmental organizations, the 19-member Committee recommends general, special or roster status on the basis of such criteria as the applicant’s mandate, governance and financial regime. Non-governmental organizations enjoying general and special status can attend meetings of the Economic and Social Council and issue statements, while those with general status can also speak during meetings and propose agenda items. Organizations with roster status can only attend meetings.

The Committee will meet again at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 27 May, to continue its session.

Special Consultative Status

The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council grant special consultative status to the following organizations:

- Casa Generalizia della Societa del Sacro Cuore ( Italy);

- Center for Global Nonkilling ( United States);

- Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association ( United States);

- Dialogue Interreligieux Monastique;

- International Federation of Liberal Youth ( Belgium);

- International Justice Resource Center, Inc. ( United States);

- International Mediation Institute Stichting (Netherland);

- International Partnership for Human Rights ( Belgium);

- International Prison Chaplains’ Association ( Sweden);

- International Women’s Forum, Inc. ( United States);

- Jewish Voice Ministries International ( United States);

- The Arab Association for Human Rights ( Israel);

- Women’s Division of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church ( United States);

- Zala briviba ( Latvia)

- Zoological Society of London ( United Kingdom)

Action Postponed

The Committee postponed consideration of applications submitted by the following organizations:

Assyrian National Congress ( United States) — as Nicaragua’s delegate sought more information on its projects and requested its website address;

Avocats Sans Frontières ( Belgium) — as Cuba’s delegate sought information on its contribution to the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council;

Bureau international pour le respect des droits de l’homme au Sahara Occidental (Switzerland) — as Morocco’s delegate pointed out that, instead of focusing on the promotion and protection of human rights, the non-governmental organization was engaging in controversial issues beyond the purview of the Economic and Social Council, and was not in compliance with resolution 1996/31. It was listed as a regional organization but focused on Morocco, he noted, requesting a decision to close the application.

Algeria’s delegate, speaking in her capacity as an observer, said Morocco’s representative was politicizing the Committee.

Morocco’s delegate said he always promoted non-politicization of the Committee.

The representative of the United States said the organization met a broad range of criteria set by the Council and did not take a political stance on the question of Western Sahara.

Morocco’s delegate said the non-governmental organization was interfering in his country’s the internal affairs by raising an issue with Morocco’s constitution, and requested that the Committee reflect one delegation’s opposition to consensus on closing the application.

The representative of the United States said that in the absence of consensus, the report should say as much on the Committee’s behalf.

Morocco’s delegate then posed questions about the organization’s moderating role in a panel discussion held as a side event of the Human Rights Council, and its “one-sided” focus regarding refugees.

Senegal’s delegate asked whether the non-governmental organization also highlighted progress in Morocco, and not just critical aspects.

Algeria’s delegate said the Committee was departing from its standard practice, arguing that Western Sahara had never been part of Morocco.

Morocco’s delegate asked the Chair to ensure that observers could make only general comments or pose procedural questions on a point of order, and should not be allowed to provide a historical background on Western Sahara.

Algeria’s delegate requested that the Committee’s report reflect her view that her counterpart from Morocco was politicizing its work.

Morocco’s delegate said he had never mentioned the names of other countries.

Other non-governmental organizations that faced deferred action were:

Center for Constitutional Rights Inc. ( United States) — as Israel’s delegation asked how it managed deficits since its expenditure exceeded its income;

Child Rights Information Network–CRIN ( United Kingdom) — as China’s delegate asked that it review “inappropriate” articles on its website.

The representative of the United States asked his counterpart from China to be more specific about where on the website his concerns lay.

Also facing postponement of its application was the Christian Solidarity Worldwide ( United Kingdom) — as Venezuela’s delegate sought more information on its activities in Latin America.

Sudan’s delegate pointed out that its answer about its activities in his country was incorrect, adding that he had information that it engaged in activities inside Sudan before it had split in two. He also requested additional information on its activities in South Sudan;

Collectif des Familles de Disparu(e)s en Algerie (France) — as Sudan’s delegate sought more information on its cooperation with the authorities in Algeria.

China’s delegate requested details of a joint communiqué signed on 25 March with another non-governmental organization;

Committee to Protect Journalists, Inc. ( United States) — as Cuba’s delegate asked whether the non-governmental organization had participated in the Universal Periodic Review, and if so, for which country. She also sought more information on its activities in Latin America.

The representative of the Russian Federation asked how the organization protected Russian journalists in the United States;

Congrès National des Arméniens Occidentaux ( France) — as Turkey’s delegation pointed that the non-governmental organization’s website provided a map that showed a portion of Turkey as belonging to another country. He asked the group to respect the principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly those of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Armenia’s delegate, speaking as an observer, said it was regrettable that the Committee was often selective and discriminatory against diaspora non-governmental organizations;

ECCO2 Corp ( United States) — as Israel’s delegate said she had discovered an organization with the same name in Jamaica and asked whether the two were related;

Freedom from Hunger ( United States) — as China’s delegate asked that it correct terminology regarding Taiwan, which is listed as a country under the “Donate” section of its website;

Geneva Institute for Human Rights ( Switzerland) — as China’s delegate asked about the Asian countries to which it planned to expand its activities.

Sudan’s delegate sought details about funding because the non-governmental organization claimed to be a not-for-profit organization;

Global Institute for Water, Environment and Health ( United States) — as Israel’s delegate asked whether it carried out any projects since its financial chart listed only administrative costs;

Global Network for Rights and Development ( Norway) — as Israel’s delegate said that it had organized a round-table discussion on the abuse of migrant workers in Qatar, and asked whether it had held, or planned to organize, similar events in other countries.

Sudan’s delegate supported the granting of special consultative status and requested clarification of Israel’s question.

Morocco’s delegate said the Committee should determine whether the answers to the previous questions were satisfactory before adding questions, and urged Committee members not to ask questions in order to delay review of the applications.

Sudan’s delegate said he did not feel comfortable about the additional questions posed by Israel on behalf of the Committee.

Morocco’s delegate asked that the questions be reformulated prior to being sent;

Institut de Drets Humans de Catalunya (Spain) — as Morocco’s delegate asked how the organization carried out its activities in a number of countries, and sought details of its contacts and networks in Morocco;

International Dalit Solidarity Network ( Denmark) — as India’s delegate sought more information on activities undertaken in conjunction with the United Nations, European Union and private sector programmes.

Belgium’s delegate expressed hope that there would be agreement on its application, which had been submitted in January 2008;

Internationale Vrije Vrouwen Stichting (Netherland) — as Turkey’s delegate sought clarification as to whether it undertook activities in Asia and the Middle East;

Iran Human Rights Documentation Center ( United States) — as Cuba’s delegate said she was still not sure how the non-governmental organization obtained information on Iran’s human rights situation since it did not operate inside that country;

James Madison University (United States) — as China’s delegate asked about the countries in which it carried out its activities and why it had chosen them;

Mother Helpage ( United Kingdom) — as India’s delegate requested clarification on the discrepancy shown in its financial statement and its answer to question number 13. He also asked about the status of its registration in India;

Muslim Aid ( United Kingdom) — as China’s delegation pointed out that the organization said it had 15 trustees in its answer, but the supporting document did not show.

Muslim Hands ( United Kingdom) — as Israel’s delegate asked the non-governmental organization to elaborate on how it achieved the objective of empowering women.

The representative of the Russian Federation pointed out that its annex listed two regions of his country as independent States and requested that corrections reflect United Nations terminology.

National Center for Civil and Human Rights, Inc. ( United States) — as China’s delegate asked how it maintained its independence since its budget was provided largely by the Government;

National Secular Society (United Kingdom) — as China’s delegate said that its financial statement showed a substantial deficit, and asked what kind of activities had it undertaken, given the previous year’s surplus;

Population Matters ( United Kingdom) — as China’s delegate sought details on the expenditure listed in the “general” category.

Morocco’s delegate asked questions about population growth.

Profesionales por la Ética (Spain) — as Israel’s delegation said the non-governmental organization was listed as a regional organization and asked about the countries in which it undertook its activities;

Scandinavian Institute for Human Rights (SIHR) Norway ( Norway) — as Israel’s delegate asked when its website would be available again;

Segretariato Permanente dei Premi Nobel per la Pace ( Italy) — as China’s delegate asked about the organization’s position on Tibet;

Stichting Global Human Rights Defence ( Netherlands) — as China’s delegate asked about its position on Tibet;

The Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention, Inc. ( United States) — as Turkey’s delegate asked whether it planned any activities this year in countries other than India and Haiti;

The Jewish Renaissance Foundation ( United States) — as Cuba’s delegate requested information on its activities in her country and its relationship with the Jewish community there;

The Palestinian Return Centre Ltd. ( United Kingdom) — as Israel’s delegate sought more information about its membership;

The Simons Foundation ( Canada)—– as Turkey’s delegate sought updates on its recent activities;

United Sikhs ( United States) — as India’s delegate asked about the areas of the Economic and Social Council to which it intended to contribute;

Virtual Activism Incorporated ( United States) — as China’s delegate asked how it chose its partners in Asia;

Women’s Information Center (Georgia) — as China’s delegate pointed out that the organization’s website listed Taiwan as a country, stressing that it was a province of China, and that the non-governmental organization must correct its information;

Young Women’s Christian Association of the United States of America ( United States) — as China’s delegate requested corrections to information on its website about Hong Kong;

Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights ( Canada) — as Morocco’s delegation sought more information on financial transactions regarding trades in stocks and bonds.

Belgium’s delegation expressed regret that the Committee had blocked special consultative status to non-governmental organizations promoting sexual and reproductive rights by asking repetitive questions. It should take the full diversity of non-governmental organizations into account, she said, adding that the organization met the necessary criteria and calling for a roll call vote.

Morocco’s delegate said that question had been asked for the first time.

Sudan’s delegate said Morocco’s question was reasonable.

Canada’s delegate, speaking as an observer, said the application should proceed.

Morocco’s delegate said the non-governmental organization would issue a financial statement in June 2014, and the Committee should take a look at it.

Israel’s delegate said the Committee should proceed with a vote, as per Belgium’s request.

Sudan’s delegate asked what would happen if, after having granted the non-governmental organization special consultative status, it discovered that it had profited from transactions in the financial markets.

Pakistan’s delegate said he would vote against the application.

The Committee then held a vote, the result of which was 7 in favour (Belgium, Bulgaria, India, Israel, Peru, Turkey, United States) to 7 against (China, Morocco, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sudan), with 1 abstention (Kyrgyzstan).

As a result of the vote, the organization was not granted special consultative status, which requires a majority of votes by members present.

The Committee on Non-governmental Organization s will reconvene on Tuesday, 27 May, to continue its work.