Continuing Session, Non-Governmental Organizations Committee Recommends Consultative Status for 58 Entities, Defers on 51

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Continuing its regular session for 2017, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations today recommended 58 organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, deferred action on the status of 51 others and postponed consideration of one request for status that had been submitted after the merger of two organizations.

The 19-member Committee considers applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification submitted by non-governmental organizations.  Once an application has been reviewed and approved by the Committee it is considered recommended for consultative status.  Organizations which were granted general and special status can attend meetings of the 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.

Action on several applications was postponed because Committee members requested further information from the candidates about, among other items, details of their respective organizations’ activities, partners, expenditures, sources of funding and relationship with United Nations system actors.

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations will meet again at 10 a.m. on Friday, 3 February, to continue its session.

Merger Request

At the opening, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) considered its agenda item on applications of NGOs in consultative status that had merged with those without such status.

The Committee postponed granting special consultative status to the Protestant Agency for Diakonie and Development (PADD), a new organization that had merged the Social Service Agency of the Protestant Church in Germany with the Protestant Development Service — as the representative of China asked the Protestant Agency for Diakonie and Development (PADD) to clarify its position on Tibet.

Consultative Status

The Committee then considered applications for consultative status and reclassification requests that had been deferred from previous sessions.

It considered deferred applications, recommending that special consultative status be granted to the following organizations:

“ECO-FAWN” (Environment Conservation Organization — Foundation for Afforestation Wild Animals and Nature) (India);

Adaamasunle Foundation (Nigeria);

Association of Youths with Vision (AOYWV) (Gambia);

Association pour le Développement Durable la Promotion des Droits Humains et la Lutte Contre la Pauvreté (Mauritania);

Association tunisienne de la santé de la reproduction (Tunisia);

Ballerina Management Institute (India);

Campanha Latino-Americana pelo Direito à Educação-CLADE Brasil (Brazil);

Caribbean Policy Development Centre Inc. (Barbados);

Centre for Convention on Democratic Integrity Ltd/Gte (Nigeria);

Centre for Corrections and Human Development (Nigeria);

Change Managers International Network Limited by Guarantee (Nigeria);

Disability Organisations Joint Front (Sri Lanka);

Entrepreneurship Development and Support Initiative (Nigeria);

Fondation Kalipa pour le Développement (Democratic Republic of the Congo);

Girls Education Mission International (Nigeria);

International Human Rights Protector’s Group (India);

International Movement for Advancement of Education Culture Social & Economic Development (India);

Kids & Teens Resource Centre (Nigeria);

Leadership Initiative for Transformation & Empowerment (Nigeria);

Legal Resources Centre (South Africa);

Lotus Initiative for the Blind (Nigeria);

New Era Educational and Charitable Support Initiative (Nigeria);

Prajachaitanya Yuvajana Sangam (India);

Réseau National des Organisations Féminines Pour la Démocratie, la Décentralisation, le Développement Durable et les Droits Humains du Mali ou Réseau Wassa (Mali);

Save the Earth Cambodia (Cambodia);

Society for Protection of Street & Working Children (Iran);

Society to Heighten Awareness of Women and Children Abuse (Nigeria);

Strategy for Mentoring Initiative and Leadership Empowerment (Nigeria);

Ugonma Foundation (Nigeria);

Women Educators Association of Nigeria (Nigeria);

Action Sécurité Ethique Républicaines (France);

Asistencia Legal por los Derechos Humanos, Asociación Civil (Mexico);

Child Soldiers International (United Kingdom);

Cities of Peace, Inc. (United States);

Europe Business Assembly Limited (United Kingdom);

European Network on Independent living limited (Ireland);

Forum Droghe Associazione Movimento per il Contenimento dei Danni (Italy);

Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (United States);

Global Institute for Water, Environment and Health (Switzerland);

Human Appeal International (UK) (United Kingdom);

International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc. (United States);

Jus Cogens (United States);

Kadın ve Demokrasi Derneği (Turkey);

Karlen Communications (Canada);

Landsrådet for Norges barne - og ungdomsorganisasjoner (Norway);

Le Monde des Possibles (Belgium).

Let’s Breakthrough, Inc. (United States);

Mouvement de la Paix (France);

Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (United States);

Novant Health, Inc. (United States);

P3 Foundation (New Zealand);

Results Educational Fund, Inc. (United States);

The Next Century Foundation (United Kingdom);

The Zahra Trust (United Kingdom);

Truth Foundation (Republic of Korea)

Women With Disabilities Australia Inc. (Australia);

Women of Africa (United Kingdom); and

World Forum for Ethics in Business (Belgium).

The Committee postponed consideration of the following organizations:

Akhil Bharatiya Human Rights Organisation (India) — as the representative of Pakistan requested details of activities along the India-Pakistan border.

Aleradah & Altageer National Society (Bahrain) — as the representative of Sudan asked how the organization was handling its current budget deficit.

Centre for Peace, Culture and Environmental Studies (Nigeria) — as the representative of South Africa requested details on countries the organization operated in.

Coordination Waï (Eveil) relative à l’unité nationale et la lutte contre l’esclavage (Mauritania) — as the representative of Mauritania asked for details of regional capital cities where the organization was planning activities, for clarification of its mention of “slave territories” and for budget details on a conference on slavery in Mauritania.

Creators Union of Arab (Egypt) — as the representative of South Africa asked for details on the mandate.

Danjuma Atta Eye Foundation (Nigeria) — as the representative of Azerbaijan asked for details on scholarships granted to persons with disabilities.

Eaglesworth Human Empowerment Foundation (Nigeria) — as the representative of South Africa asked for details on project implementation.

Femmes unies pour un avenir meilleur (Togo) — as the representative of Cuba asked for clarification of the organization’s involvement with United Nations conferences and entities.

Gestos Soropositividade Comunicação e Gênero (Brazil) — as the representative of Nicaragua requested details on partner organizations and networks.

Int’l Centre for Women Empowerment & Child Dev. (Nigeria) — as the representative of Nicaragua asked for financial details and the representative of South Africa requested information on Government partnerships.

Islamic African Relief Agency (IARA) (Sudan) — as the representative of the United States asked for details on the organization’s activities.

Pan African Institute for Entrepreneurship and Community Development (Ltd/Gte) (Nigeria) — as the representative of South Africa asked for details on the organization’s involvement in conferences.

Society for the Widows and Orphans (Nigeria) — as the representative of South Africa asked for a list of countries where the organization implemented projects.

Women & Community Livelihood Foundation (Nigeria) — as the representative of South Africa asked if the organization worked with the Department of Health.

Assyrian Aid Society of America Inc. (United States) — as the representative of Turkey asked for an updated financial statement.

Coptic Solidarity (United States) — as the representative of China pointed out that the organization’s website listed Taiwan as a country and requested a correction.

Droits de l’Homme sans Frontières-Human Rights Without Frontiers (Belgium) — as the representative of the Russian Federation, pointing out that one of the organization’s responses had referred to the Committee’s questions as “stupid”, asked whether that type of communication was appropriate.

European Network on Independent living limited (Ireland) — as the representative of Turkey requested more information on the organization’s activities regarding interventions that would or had been made to the Human Rights Council.

Fondation Alkarama (Switzerland) — as the representative of Pakistan asked how the organization functioned with regard to funding.

Fondazione Proclade Internazionale-Onlus (Italy) — as the representative of Cuba requested details on projects in regions.

Fundación Acción Pro Derechos Humanos (Spain) — as the representative of Cuba requested more detailed information about partner organizations and philanthropic contributions.

Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR) Limited (Ireland) — as the representative of Sudan asked how the organization dealt with information coming from conflict-affected countries such as Syria or Yemen.

ISKCON Communications International (United States) — as the representative of Venezuela requested details on projects in Latin America and Venezuela.

International Child Rights Center (Republic of Korea) — as the representative of Cuba requested for budget details, including on contracts.  The representative of the United States drew attention to financial information that had already been provided.

Jubilee USA Network Inc. (United States) — as the representative of Cuba asked for disaggregated data on budget information.  The representative of South Africa asked if the organization had relations with national Governments in Africa.

Korea Human Rights Foundation (Republic of Korea) — as the representative of Cuba asked for details on projects, including countries, targeted audiences and the impact.

Muslim Aid (United Kingdom) — as the representative of the United States asked if the organization had adopted a new plan given the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Stichting Samenwerkingsverband IKV-Pax Christi (Netherlands) — as the representative of South Africa requested a list of national department of governmental agencies it dealt with.  An observer from the Netherlands said civil society involvement was important, as all stood to gain from the sharing of views.  The organization aimed at bringing about peace and reconciliation was aligned with United Nations purpose and principles, he said, noting that it had been deferred five times.  He hoped that any remaining questions would be answered during the afternoon question-and-answer period.

Strong Hearted Native Women’s Coalition, Inc. (United States) — as the representative of Cuba requested further financial details.

The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty (United States) — as the representative of Cuba requested information on locations of projects.

The RINJ Foundation (Canada) — as the representative of Nicaragua asked for information on partners in Nicaragua.

The Simons Foundation (Canada) — as the representative of Turkey requested details about an award that was given by the organization.

The World Academy of Art and Science (United States) — as the representative of China requested clarification about its website and the incorrect reference to “Republic of China, Asia”.  The representative of the United States asked if the issue concerned Taiwan.  The representative of China said it should list “People’s Republic of China”.

US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (United States) — as the representative of China requested details on the organization’s activities.  The representative of the Russian Federation asked if it interacted with official or public bodies in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea or if attempts to do so had been made.

United States Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (United States) — as the representative of Cuba, noting that standards varied by country, requested a list of countries where the organization operated.

Women Enabled (United States) — as the representative of Nicaragua asked for more recent financial information and details on the organization’s activities.

Women Living under Muslim Laws-International Solidarity Network (WLUML) (United Kingdom) — as the representative of Iran requested financial information and details on the organization’s activities for 2016.

World Without Genocide (United States) — as the representative of Burundi asked for full answers to question 4 in the application.

urbaMonde-Suisse (Switzerland) — as the representative of Nicaragua asked for details on projects, including those in Nicaragua.

“SEG” Civil Society Support Center NGO (Armenia) — as the representative of Azerbaijan requested further information on recent projects and activities.

Al-Marsad, The Arab Centre for Human Rights in the Golan Heights (R.A.) (Occupied Syrian Golan) — as the representative of Israel asked for the organization’s relationship with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

Ambedkar Center for Justice and Peace (India) — as the representative of India requested details on branch offices in India.

Association Concerning Sexual Violence against Women (China) — as the representative of Pakistan asked for an update on progress regarding activities.

Cameroon League for Development (CAMLEAD) (Cameroon) — as the representative of China noted that the organization would implement a two-year-long campaign in 2013, asking for information on progress and impact of that activity.

Conglomeration of Bengal’s Hotel Owners (India) — as the representative of India asked whether or not the organization had international affiliations.

Dalit Welfare Organization (Nepal) — as the representative of India ask why there were no administrative expenditures in the financial information of the application and requested such expenditures with a breakdown of expenses.

Diplomatic Mission Peace And Prosperity (Albania) — as the representative of Greece asked for further financial information.

Education, Communication and Development Trust (EDUCATR) (India) — as the representative of India asked for details on new target areas and on fundraising efforts.

Closure

The Committee recommended closing the application of the following organization:

Hazar Strateji Enstitüsü Derneği (Turkey) — as the representative of Turkey noted the Committee’s prior discussion of the organization, requesting the closure of the application, as the group had been dissolved.  The representative of the United States had noted that the organization had not been given the right to reply, suggesting waiting until a response was received.  The representative of Turkey said that request did not apply to the case, as the organization had already been dissolved.  The representative of the United States expressed grave concern about the global crackdown on civil society and would like procedures to be followed.  As the organization held no offices in any State, she would join consensus on closing the application.

Interactive Discussion

During an afternoon question-and-answer session, NGO representatives responded to questions posed by the Committee.

The representative of the organization Coptic Solidarity said the group had led efforts to achieve equality of Coptic people in Egypt through advocacy with the West, including the United States.  Responding to a possible past misunderstanding, she said no projects operated in Egypt.

The representative of Pakistan asked how data was gathered and verified.

The representative of Coptic Solidarity said media reports were among sources.  Verification was done by, for instance, checking with sources in Egypt, including the Orthodox Church.

The representative of Pakistan asked if that meant primary sources were people in Egypt.

The representative of Coptic Solidarity said sources included the Church.

The representative of India asked if the organization supported other groups.

The representative of Coptic Solidarity said no financial aid was provided for people in Egypt.  Rather, the group focused on advocacy and awareness raising.

The representative of South Africa asked if there had been any policy impact.

The representative of Coptic Solidarity said one policy impact was a bill in the United States Congress that would designate the recognition of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization.  She said her group addressed the United States and the Egyptian Governments directly.

The representative of Nicaragua requested the responses to be submitted in writing.

The Committee postponed consideration of the application.

The representative of Stichting Samenwerkingsverband IKV-Pax Christi said the organization worked to build peace around the world.

The representative of South Africa asked for a list of Government departments it partnered with.

The representative of Stichting Samenwerkingsverband IKV-Pax Christi said cooperation varies depending on the location.  Her group had registered with local authorities in every place it operated.

The representative of the Russian Federation, noting that most of the group’s budget came from the Governments of Norway and the Netherlands, asked about projects in Ukraine, South Ossetia and the Caucasus and why the group had ignored pressing issues, including the situation in Aleppo.

The representative of Burundi asked about which projects had ended and if goals had been reached, requesting the responses in writing.

The representative of Cuba asked if the organization could provide information on projects in Cuba.

The Committee postponed consideration of the application.

The representative of the Global Forum for Media Development said his group focused on information sharing, with partners worldwide.  It had submitted a request in 2015 and had replied to all questions posed by the Committee.  Among the reasons behind its application was the group’s efforts related to the new Sustainable Development Goals.

The representative of Venezuela requested more information on projects in countries in Latin America and on the financing, particularly that 50 per cent of the budget was devoted to administrative costs.

The representative of the Global Forum for Media Development said as his organization acted like a steering committee, it recommended that donors supported member groups directly.  Partner organizations in Latin America included one founded by Gabriel García Márquez in Colombia and civil society organizations.

The representative of India asked for details on projects.

The representative of the Global Forum for Media Development said the organization partnered respected press freedoms.  Yet, his group aimed primarily on setting professional standards, including ensuring the free flow of information, he said, noting that Sustainable Development Goal 10 called for, among other things, ensuring public access to information.

The representative of Cuba asked for clarification of when the application had been submitted, as the Committee had only received the application in 2016.  He also asked for project details and a list of the number of countries it was involved with.  He also questioned the gap between projects and expenditure, noting that on a project in Ukraine, about $400 was spent, while in other cities, projects had cost $10,000.

The representative of the Global Forum for Media Development said that as a steering group, member groups fund some projects.  He said there was no member group in Cuba, but a member group in Colombia worked with Cuban journalists.

The representative of China asked for further information on members.

The representative of Cuba highlighted that two responses were missing, one on development and one on human rights, requesting further information.

The representative of Venezuela requested written responses.

The Committee postponed consideration of the application.