

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.6/SR.599-612*
13 May 1974

ENGLISH

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH, FRENCH
AND SPANISH

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Twenty-fifth Session

Volume I**

SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINTH
TO SIX HUNDRED AND TWELFTH MEETINGS*

Held at Headquarters, New York,
from 14 to 22 January 1974

Acting Chairman:

Mrs. STEVENSON

Liberia

Chairman:

Mrs. SHAHANI

Philippines

Rapporteur:

Mrs. MOHAMMED

Nigeria

The list of representatives attending the session is contained in the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council (E/5451) (see Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 4).

* No summary records were issued for the 603rd to 605th meetings.

** Volume II contains the summary records of the 613th to 628th meetings, held from 23 January to 1 February 1974.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>599th (opening) meeting</u>	3
Opening of the session	
Election of officers (item 1 of the provisional agenda)	
Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs	
<u>600th meeting</u>	14
Adoption of the agenda (item 2 of the provisional agenda)	
Organization of work	
Statement by the representative of China	
<u>601st and 602nd meetings</u>	29
International Women's Year (agenda item 3)	
<u>606th-608th meetings</u>	62
Study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning (agenda item 6)	
<u>609th and 610th meetings</u>	101
Programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and their integration in development (agenda item 7):	
(a) Implementation of a programme of concerted international action	
(b) Status of rural women, especially agricultural workers	
<u>611th meeting</u>	129
Programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and their integration in development (agenda item 7) (continued):	
(a) Implementation of a programme of concerted international action (continued)	
(b) Status of rural women, especially agricultural workers (continued)	
(c) Technical co-operation activities for the advancement of women	
<u>612th meeting</u>	144
Programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and their integration in development (agenda item 7) (continued):	
(c) Technical co-operation activities for the advancement of women (concluded)	
(d) Activities of the specialized agencies to promote the advancement of women	

599th (opening) meeting

Monday, 14 January 1974,
at 11.35 a.m.

Acting Chairman: Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia)

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The ACTING CHAIRMAN declared open the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

She noted that significant developments were taking place in the world. At a time of intense international negotiations, flagrant violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms continued unabated. Without universal respect for the human person, however, there could be no real peace. Despite its limitations, the United Nations, which had been working tirelessly since its inception for the universal recognition of human rights, was the greatest medium for achieving international co-operation, understanding and goodwill. Its effective role in the favourable trend in international affairs could not be over-emphasized.

Never had there been a more urgent need to improve the climate for men and women to adapt to the needs, problems and responsibilities of a changing society. While most countries of the world had accorded women political rights, women were confronted with the problem of unequal opportunities and invisible barriers to participation in the political, economic, social and cultural development of their countries.

The year 1975 seemed an appropriate time to evaluate the extent to which plans outlined a decade earlier had been implemented and to determine a new course of action for the effective realization of the goals of the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

The Commission's contribution to promoting the equality of men and women throughout the world could not be over-emphasized. But, despite substantial progress, there was still much to be done.

Concerted efforts should be made by the international community to identify the discriminatory practices which prevented men and women from becoming partners in the promotion of human rights and in the development of a wholesome society. It was the obligation of the entire world community to be committed to the concept of the dignity and worth of each person and to accept the responsibilities that accompanied the full partnership of men and women working together to create a world of economic, social, political and cultural progress, dedicated to the principles of freedom,

/...

(The Acting Chairman)

justice and peace. The time had come for collective reflection and purposeful action.

She hoped that the work of the twenty-fifth session would culminate in the formulation of measures to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the implementation of universally recognized principles. The Commission's deliberations would help to build a partnership based on freedom, dignity, justice and equality.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (item 1 of the provisional agenda)

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) nominated Mrs. Shahani (Philippines) for the office of Chairman.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway), Miss CHATON (France), Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic), Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mrs. SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) and Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) seconded the nomination.

Mrs. Shahani (Philippines) was elected Chairman and took the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission had done pioneering work and made a substantial contribution to the advancement of women throughout the world. Its accomplishments had far-reaching implications not yet fully realized and appreciated. The Commission had been instrumental in obtaining recognition by many Member States of the need to grant political rights to women; its conventions and recommendations had helped to commit Member States to the principle of granting women their basic human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal footing with men. The Commission had pointed the way to the contribution women could make to the socio-economic development of their countries.

She welcomed the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs who was attending the session in her capacity as the highest ranking woman official in the United Nations Secretariat.

She hoped that a spirit of understanding and tolerance would prevail, in which the Commission would help to advance the status of women all over the world and help them to realize their worth and dignity as human beings. The Commission existed

(The Chairman)

for the sake of all the women of the world, whose rights provided a broad area for co-operation in a way unmatched by any other issue before the United Nations. She urged the Commission to respond to the challenge with dedication and sincerity.

Mrs. SAARINEN (Finland) nominated Mrs. Kolstad (Norway) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

Mrs. CISSE (Guinea) seconded the nomination.

Mrs. MARINKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) nominated Mrs. Bokor (Hungary) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

Miss TYABJI (India) seconded the nomination.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) nominated Mrs. Marte de Barrios (Dominican Republic) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

Mrs. SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Mrs. STABILE (Argentina), Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) and Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) seconded the nomination. Mrs. Kolstad (Norway), Mrs. Bokor (Hungary) and Mrs. Marte de Barrios (Dominican Republic) were elected Vice-Chairmen.

Mrs. ASIYO (Kenya) nominated Mrs. Mohammed (Nigeria) for the office of Rapporteur.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary), Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), Mrs. CISSE (Guinea), Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) and Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) seconded the nomination.

Mrs. Mohammed (Nigeria) was elected Rapporteur.

STATEMENT BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the twenty-fifth session of the Commission coincided with the twenty-eighth anniversary of the Commission's foundation. Furthermore, it followed the year dedicated to observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and coincided with the beginning of World Population Year. Those anniversaries, and the recent review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy, provided an appropriate background for an

/...

evaluation of the Commission's achievements and for the formulation of guidelines for its future work.

Promotion of equal human rights for all was one of the main purposes of the United Nations; the principle of the equality of all human beings had been set forth in the Preamble and Article 1 of the Charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Work towards the achievement of such equality had begun in 1946 when the Commission on Human Rights, with a Sub-Commission on the Status of Women, had been established and when later that year, the Sub-Commission had been given independent status as the Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission had been instrumental in developing international law in various fields: the Convention on the Political Rights of Women had been adopted in 1952, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women in 1957 and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages in 1962. The Recommendation on the last-named Convention had been adopted in 1965. The Commission had also participated in the drafting of UNESCO's 1960 Declaration and Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination in the field of education and various ILO Conventions, including the crucially important 1951 Convention on Equal Remuneration for Work of Equal Value and 1958 Convention against Discrimination in the Field of Employment and Occupation. The most recent great achievement had been the adoption by the General Assembly in 1967 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which the Commission had drafted. That Declaration was comparable to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. But, whereas the Declaration on Racial Discrimination had been complemented by a Convention within two years, the question of the advisability of a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women was only now on the Commission's agenda. The entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination had given new impetus to implementation of the principles of the Declaration. The same could not be said about progress in securing equality between men and women. Such an important field as private law - including equal rights during marriage, inheritance and guardianship laws, as well as various laws related to legal capacity, income and property rights - had not yet

/...

(Mrs. Sipila)

been dealt with in conventions. Further, there was no international reporting system comparable to the one existing in the field of racial discrimination. Until similar arrangements were adopted, the degree of implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women would depend primarily on the priorities of each State. In the absence of pressure by women themselves and their organizations, the importance attached to implementation of existing measures was often quite limited. The answers received to the Secretary-General's inquiries on implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women provided a very incomplete picture; only 31 States had replied and the answers to most of the questions had been incomplete. That might be attributable to the lack of information within the countries; partly, however, it was attributable to the low priority given to the subject.

Nevertheless, some progress had been made towards realization of some of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. One of the greatest achievements was the fact that there was now only a handful of countries in which women did not have political rights. However, there were very few countries in which women participated significantly in political decision-making at the local, national or regional level. Women had accounted for only about 7 per cent of representatives to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session. Their status within delegations was low and only a very few of them participated in the Main Committees dealing with political and economic questions. Similarly, the number of women participating in the work of the regional economic commissions, the specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies and in international meetings not dealing specifically with questions of concern to women was very small. While there were countries which had adopted the principle of equal rights for men and women in their private law, the great majority of States Members of the United Nations still had written or customary laws denying women a number of rights enjoyed by men.

Some 500 million of the 800 million illiterates in the world were women. In most countries of the third world, the percentages of girls and women enrolled in schools and educational institutes were different from those of boys and men.

(Mrs. Sipila)

There seemed to be a universal trend not to consider women's contribution to the production of human resources as participation in economic life. Their work as mothers and wives was completely disregarded, as was their role as consumers and decision-makers in so far as consumer goods were concerned. In both the developed and the developing countries, women as a group had a lower level of vocational training, belonged mostly to the lowest income groups and held the lowest ranking positions in both the public and the private sector. Very few of them participated at the policy-making level in any country's administration or economic life.

In most countries, maternity and child health services were still inadequate. Studies concerning the protection of women and children in emergencies and in time of war, as well as studies on clandestine and illicit traffic in human beings, had revealed that women suffered from cruelty to which men were not subjected. That fact was not always taken into account when protective measures were drawn up and adopted.

Lastly, it was still the general attitude, often nourished by the mass media, to support the existence of stereotyped sex roles and treat women in a way which undermined their dignity as human beings.

The status of women and the question of the equality of human beings must be considered against a background of past developments and prospects for the future. She saw reasons for new optimism in the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade, the activities of the World Population Year and the proposed World Population Plan of Action and, finally, in the preparations for and implementation of the programme for the International Women's Year.

While the Strategy had emphasized economic progress, paragraph 18 had contained a number of important social goals and objectives, including integration of women and youth in the development effort as well as the fostering of the well-being of children. A number of General Assembly resolutions had addressed themselves to the achievement of those goals, and resolution 2716 (XXV) had proposed a programme of concerted international action for the advancement of

(Mrs. Sipila)

women and should be used as a guideline for integrating women in the development effort. It should be borne in mind by developing as well as developed countries and taken into consideration in the formulation of multilateral and bilateral assistance projects.

In accordance with the new unified approach to social and economic development, everyone should participate in the development effort and everyone should benefit from it. Everyone must mean every human being, both men and women, young and old. The importance of the word "everyone" as compared with a "group" should be underscored. Unless the question of equality was studied from the viewpoint of the individual, including individual members of the family unit, the real reasons for the existence of continuing illiteracy, mass poverty, unemployment and unbalanced economic situations might be overlooked.

The Strategy had also contained a number of statements on population policies. Since its adoption, an increasing number of countries had come to believe that there was an urgent need to adopt population policies and measures to moderate the growth rate of the population. The education and employment of women were among the measures contemplated in that connexion. The advancement of women had not previously been considered significant in that respect, perhaps due to the lack of knowledge of the interrelationship between the status of women and the size of the family. The study on that subject to be considered by the Commission at the current session clarified various aspects of that relationship. The study, which was based on information supplied by nearly 50 Governments, in-depth studies carried out by research institutes in various parts of the world, the findings of interregional and regional seminars, as well as other material, clearly showed an interrelationship between the mother's education, employment, status in private law and participation in the life of society, on the one hand, and the number of her children, on the other. The basic human right of couples to determine freely

(Mrs. Sipila)

and responsibly the number and spacing of their children had been recognized. It was obvious that the woman's capacity to make free and responsible decisions in that respect grew with increasing education, economic independence, equal status with men in private law and in marriage and with alternative roles in society to that of mother.

At the regional conferences and the World Population Conference to be held in Bucharest in August, the relationship between the status of women and family planning must be considered and the resulting enhanced awareness of the importance of the advancement of women for society as a whole made widely known.

The World Food Conference might also have an impact on the advancement of women. According to statistics, women formed between 60 and 80 per cent of the agricultural labour force in Africa, but little had been done to train them and improve their productive capacity. The same might be true in other parts of the world, where agricultural production could be increased by improving the techniques used by farmers, including women farmers.

International Women's Year, proclaimed for 1975 by the General Assembly following a recommendation by the Commission, was to be devoted to intensified action to promote equality between men and women, to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort, and to recognize the importance of women's increasing contribution to the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States and to the strengthening of world peace. If well planned and implemented at the local, national, regional and international levels, the Year could be of decisive importance in all those aspects and its programme had already aroused much interest throughout the world. The Commission had a very important role to play in ensuring that its recommendations helped to bring about maximum benefits for women, as well as for men and society as a whole.

(Mrs. Sipila)

During the next few months, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs would be undertaking a number of new or expanded activities aimed at improving the status of women and promoting their integration in the development effort. An International Forum on the Role of Women in Population and Development would be held at United Nations Headquarters on 25 February 1974. The Government of each Member State had been invited to nominate a woman occupying a policy-making position to participate in that Forum.

In order to assist Governments and the regional economic commissions in formulating guidelines for activities integrated into over-all development efforts which would enhance the position of women and increase their contribution to development and, at the same time, have an impact on population growth and change, regional seminars would be held in the ECAFE region in May 1974, in the ECA region in June 1974 and possibly in the ECLA and ECWA regions in 1975. Each seminar would provide a regional forum for higher-level representatives of Governments and recognized leaders of NGOs responsible for planning, policy-making and programme implementation in their respective countries to exchange experience and to discuss important issues relating to women's participation in and contribution to national development.

The transfer of the former Section on the Status of Women to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, had highlighted the important interrelationship between crucial issues of human rights and those of socio-economic development. The work of the Centre was based largely on the implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy, as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

However, despite all the efforts made by the United Nations and certain Governments, and despite the existing international standards, discrimination based on sex still continued. One of the reasons might lie in the over-generalization of the problem, the view that women formed a homogeneous group, irrespective of their own status and of the status of the society in which they lived. Second, the differences between men and women were often either exaggerated

(Mrs. Sipila)

or ignored, usually to the detriment of women. Third, as a consequence of those attitudes, there was a lack of recognition of the problem and low priority was given to its elimination.

However, there were great opportunities at the present time to promote equality between men and women and to create a true partnership between them in the development of the world. Women of all ages and from all walks of life had a particular responsibility in helping to reach those goals. The implementation of most of the existing standards required action at the local and national levels; women and their organizations should study the situation, identify the problems and help to eliminate them. Thus far, that work had often been done by pressure groups instead of by means of direct participation in political or other decision-making. In her view, the time had come for women to consider their political rights not only as a privilege but also as a responsibility.

In an increasingly interdependent world, women should not limit their participation and contribution to local and national action. They were also needed for the formulation of policies at the regional level, within the framework of the regional economic commissions, and at the international level, in the various intergovernmental bodies and especially within the organizations in the United Nations system. There was no reason why women should participate only in the work of intergovernmental bodies specifically concerned with questions of equality or integration of women within the development effort. The participation of women in activities at the local, national, regional and international levels would speed up the achievement of equality in every field and make them true participants in the development effort.

The World Population Year could also be a time to stimulate new initiatives and develop or set in motion dynamic national, regional and international programmes involving women.

It was equally important that International Women's Year should be viewed as an event in which both men and women would participate. The Year should demonstrate the value of a unified approach to human rights, development and peace. When elaborating national, regional and international programmes for the advancement of women, the different needs in different countries should be kept

(Mrs. Sipila)

in mind. Activities undertaken in countries where women already had an opportunity to achieve equality should be aimed primarily at changing the attitudes of both men and women. In countries where prevailing conditions did not permit educational or vocational training for all, whose legislation contained direct or indirect discrimination against women, and where opportunities for women to participate in policy-making were still very limited, much had to be done in order to create prerequisites for equality and equal participation.

Questions of development assistance needed to be studied from the point of view of women in the recipient countries. Much more could be done, if more were known about the special needs of women as citizens, workers and prospective mothers, and if assistance could be geared to improving the quality of life of those who were lagging farthest behind.

The Commission was of the greatest importance, since it dealt directly or indirectly with a wide range of questions which were vitally important for the development of the world. Its importance in that respect must be recognized by the Commission itself and by all organs to which it reported and on whose work it should have a marked influence. In order to achieve the best possible results, it should be borne in mind that the work of the Commission was only a part, but a very important part, of the activities of the United Nations, and it was therefore imperative to take into consideration existing realities and adopt resolutions and recommendations attuned to the present and future needs of the entire world.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

/...

Monday, 14 January 1974,
at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 2 of the provisional agenda) (E/CN.6/570 and Corr.1)

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) doubted whether the Commission had the time to study all the items included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-fifth session (E/CN.6/570) and therefore suggested that it should take up those which could be considered the most important, namely, items 3, 4 and 8.

Her delegation proposed that item 4 (b) should be a separate item owing to its importance; item 4 (d) should be deleted since under Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) on procedure for dealing with communications relating to violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had appointed a working group to consider all communications received by the Secretary-General.

The present item 4, with the deletion of subitems (b) and (d), would become item 6.

Mrs. COCKCROFT (United Kingdom) felt that item 5 on the study of the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning, for whose consideration copious documentation had been prepared, should have priority over item 4, which was also very important, but for which the documentation would not be ready before the end of the following week.

Miss TYABJI (India), supported by Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines), proposed that items 3 and 6 should be combined since they were very logically complementary.

Mrs. HOOGSTOEL-FABRI (Belgium) supported the suggestion by the Soviet delegation that item 4 (b) should be a separate item; she did not, however, believe that item 8 should have priority over items 5 and 6.

Mrs. CISSE (Guinea) concurred in the suggestion of the Soviet delegation on item 8 and with that of India that items 3 and 6 should be combined.

Her delegation proposed that, in case the documentation on item 4 was not ready, item 4 (b) should be considered as item 5.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina), supporting the proposal by India, said that her delegation also attached great importance to item 5, the more so since a special body had been established in Argentina to study all matters concerning the status of women and family planning with a view to promoting the active participation of

/...

(Mrs. Stabile, Argentina)

women in Argentina's cultural, economic and social development. Her delegation believed that the Commission should devote, to item 5, all the time necessary for its consideration.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) associated herself with the remarks made by the Soviet delegation. She pointed out that the various subitems of item 4 were not of equal importance and, consequently, it would be justified to make item 4 (b) a separate item. The deletion of item 4 (d) would be in accordance with the Commission's standing practice not to take up questions already considered by other United Nations bodies.

Mrs. MARINKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) felt that items 3, 4 and 8 of the provisional agenda should have priority over the other items because they dealt with the most vital aspects of the work of the United Nations concerning the status of women.

Logic would suggest that, after consideration of the international instruments and national standards relating to the status of women (item 4), the Commission should take up the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict (item 8).

Her delegation supported the proposal for the deletion of item 4 (d).

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) agreed that item 4 (b) should become a separate item and that item 4 (d) should be deleted. Item 8 could be considered after item 4.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) was in favour of the proposals concerning items 4 (b) and (d). Item 5 on the study of the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning was extremely important and it should not be forgotten that a World Population Conference was soon to be held.

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) said that she would prefer no change in the provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session. It would, however, be advisable to await the distribution of the relevant documentation on item 4.

Her delegation felt that items 6 and 7 should be considered in the order suggested.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) reminded the members of the Commission that the

/...

(Mrs. Kolstad, Norway)

Preparation of the agenda for the twenty-fifth session had required much work. Since the Commission always succeeded in completing the consideration of items on its agenda, it hardly seemed justified to alter that which had been proposed for the present session since all the items included were of great importance. It was always possible to take into account any relationships which might exist between given items.

Her delegation therefore urged the Commission to adopt the provisional agenda as submitted.

Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) said that her delegation had no major objection. It did, however, support the suggestion of the Soviet Union concerning item 4 (b) and that of India; she would prefer item 8 to take the place of item 5.

Miss CHATON (France) was in favour of adopting the agenda as it has been proposed to the Commission. With respect to the suggestions by the Soviet delegation, she would be opposed to the deletion of certain agenda items which were within the competence of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Mrs. ROMO ROMAN (Chile) had no objections regarding the provisional agenda and pointed out the special importance of item 3 on the International Women's Year.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) unreservedly supported the Norwegian delegation, while indicating that she approved the proposal concerning item 4 (b) and that she would prefer that item 8 be taken up before item 7.

Mrs. DAES (Greece) said she approved of the provisional agenda. There was a close relationship between items 3 and 6, but they should not be combined. The deletion of item 4 (d) seemed particularly justified to her delegation which, furthermore, proposed that item 4 should replace item 7.

Mrs. ASIYO (Kenya) agreed with the Indian proposal concerning items 3 and 6. In her opinion, there was no reason to change the position of items 4 and 5.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) wished to provide some precise information on the provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session of the Commission. She pointed out that item 3 on International Women's Year was related not only to item 6, but to all items on the

(Mrs. Bruce)

agenda. After the general debate, which would be of short duration, the Commission could establish a working group to study items 4 and 6 and subsequently report to it. With respect to item 4 (b), she stipulated that the working group on the question was to meet once again before adopting its draft report. That question could then be considered as soon as the necessary documentation was ready.

Referring to item 4 (d), she recalled that the Commission, at its twenty-fourth session, had decided to include that question in the programme of work of its following session on the basis of Economic and Social Council resolution 76 (V), as amended by resolution 304 (XI) [E/5109, para. 99 (e)]. Under those resolutions, the Commission had to take up two lists of communications. Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) did not refer to resolution 76 (V).

Item 7 would probably have to be placed lower in the agenda since the relevant documentation was not yet available.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said, after having listened carefully to the representative of the Secretary-General, that resolution 76 (V), cited in the annotations to the provisional agenda, had been adopted more than 20 years before, while resolution 1503 (XLVIII), on which the Soviet delegation based its proposal, was dated 27 May 1970.

Mrs. DAES (Greece) noted that, under the terms of resolution 1503 (XLVIII), the Commission on Human Rights was authorized to appoint an ad hoc committee to conduct investigations into the questions referred to in item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda. She felt, however, that another body could be entrusted with the consideration of all communications.

The CHAIRMAN summed up the various proposals made thus far concerning the provisional agenda: item 4 (b) should be made a separate item; item 4 (d) should be deleted; items 3 and 6 should be combined and given higher priority than item 8 and, in the opinion of some delegations, lower priority than item 5. Proceeding item by item, she asked the members of the Commission whether there was a consensus in regard to making item 4 (b) a separate item and deleting item 4 (d).

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) suggested that the Commission should wait until it had heard

/...

(Mrs. Bruce)

the expected clarification by the Director of the Division of Human Rights before taking a decision as to whether item 4 (d) should be retained or deleted.

The CHAIRMAN said that some delegations had suggested that item 8 should be given higher priority; however, since the members of the Commission were not agreed as to where items 5 and 8 should appear on the agenda, she wondered whether the Commission wished to vote on the matter, or whether a simple consensus would suffice.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) said that, if items 3 and 6 were taken together, it would be easier for the Commission to consider item 6 without deleting it.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that item 5 should remain where it stood.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that a vote should be taken on the priority to be given to items 5 and 8.

Mrs. CISSE (Guinea) proposed a vote on the priority to be given to item 8 which, in her view, was extremely important and deserved a higher priority. Nevertheless, in a spirit of compromise, she proposed that item 8 should become item 6: that change would be all the easier to make since the Deputy Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had suggested that the Working Group on item 3 should consider the item bearing in mind item 6.

Item 5 could remain as it was.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) pointed out that item 4 (d) bore no relation to item 4, which was entitled "International Instruments and National Standards Relating to the Status of Women". Accordingly, she suggested that item 4 (d) should be replaced by item 8 on the provisional agenda, which dealt with the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence. That question was already covered in conventions and would thus be more appropriate than the present item 4 (d).

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) felt that item 5 should remain where it was. If the documents for item 7 were not ready, item 7 could replace item 8.

/....

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) thought that the order of items set out in the provisional agenda was excellent, and that items 5 and 6 should be considered in sequence.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) clarified the proposal she had made concerning items 3 and 6. Since item 3 - International Women's Year - was in fact linked with all the items on the Commission's provisional agenda, the consideration of it could not be completed until the Commission had dealt with items 4, 5, 6 and 8.

Accordingly, she proposed that, after a brief debate on the draft programme for International Women's Year, the Commission should appoint a working group - which would not meet at the same time as the Commission - to consider the programme in document E/CN.6/576.

Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights), referring to the question of a possible link between item 4 (d) and the procedures established by the Economic and Social Council over the years for dealing with communications received by the Organization, both from groups and from individuals, pointed out that, under the various resolutions, and particularly Council resolution 76 (V), as amended by resolution 304 (XI), which had not been formally rescinded and by virtue of which item 4 (d) appeared on the Commission's agenda, the Secretary-General was requested to compile and distribute to members of the Commission on the Status of Women a non-confidential list containing a brief indication of the substance of each communication which dealt with the principles relating to the promotion of women's rights in the political, economic, civil, social and educational fields, and to divulge the identity of the authors of such communications, unless they indicated that they wished their names to remain confidential; to compile, before each session of the Commission, a confidential list containing a brief indication of the substance of other communications concerning the status of women, and to furnish that list to members of the Commission in private meeting without divulging the identity of the authors of communications, except in cases where the authors stated that they had already divulged or intended to divulge their names or that they had no objection to their names being divulged; and to furnish each Member State concerned with a copy of any communication concerning the status of women which referred explicitly

(Mr. Schreiber)

to that State. The provisions of resolutions 76 (V) and 304 (XI) complemented those of resolution 728 F (XXVIII) which dealt with communications concerning human rights in general and, in particular, the role of the Commission on Human Rights in that regard.

After considering the "question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including policies of racial discrimination and segregation and of apartheid, in all countries, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories", the Council had, inter alia, authorized the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to examine the relevant information in the communications referred to in the list compiled by the Secretary-General in pursuance of resolution 728 F (XXVIII). The Commission on Human Rights was responsible for preparing a thorough study of situations revealing a consistent pattern of violations of human rights, and to submit a report and recommendations thereon to the Economic and Social Council.

Subsequently, the Council, on the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights, had adopted resolution 1503 (XLVIII) concerning the procedure for dealing with communications relating to violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In the resolution, the Council authorized the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to appoint a working group consisting of not more than five of its members, to examine, in the light of certain rules concerning the admissibility of communications, all communications received by the Organization in order to determine whether any of them appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The members of the group had access to the originals of communications listed by the Secretary-General. The group reported to the Sub-Commission and brought before it communications which, in its view, met the above criteria. The Sub-Commission, in turn, considered in private meetings the communications brought before it by the working group with a view to determining whether to refer to the Commission on Human Rights particular situations which appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights requiring consideration by the Commission.

/...

(Mr. Schreiber)

Subsequently, the Commission on Human Rights determined whether the cases referred to it required thorough study or whether they might be the subject of an investigation by an ad hoc committee to be appointed by the Commission; the investigation was undertaken only with the express consent of the State concerned and conducted in constant co-operation with that State and under conditions determined by agreement with it. The Commission then submitted reports to the Council and suggested measures to be taken. The entire procedure remained confidential until that point.

That was an outline of the procedure for dealing with communications relating to human rights. He believed that the procedure set out in Council resolutions 76 (V) and 304 (XI) dealt basically with certain methods whereby the substance of communications concerning the status of women which were received by the Organization was brought to the attention of the Commission. The procedures dealt with in Council resolutions 1235 (XLII) and 1503 (XLVIII), while they might on certain points amend resolutions 76 (V) and 304 (XI), related essentially to the consideration of communications relating to violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and covered all communications received.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, following the clarification provided by the Director of the Division of Human Rights, the Commission should decide to delete item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda, in view of the fact that the Council had established new arrangements for dealing with the complaints to which that item referred.

The CHAIRMAN noted, firstly, that resolution 76 (V), as amended by resolution 304 (XI), was still in force and, secondly, that resolution 1503 (XLVIII) dealt with communications relating to human rights which appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, but did not cover women's rights in particular. Accordingly, she suggested that item 4 (d) should be retained on the Commission's agenda.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that item 8 should become item 7, since the documentation concerning the latter was not yet ready and various delegations had expressed the wish that the Commission should give higher priority to item 8.

/...

Miss TYABJI (India) wondered if the Commission could consider part of item 6 together with item 3, which would make it possible to replace item 6 by 8.

The CHAIRMAN replied that it was impossible to discuss item 3 as a whole before the Commission had considered the other items - such as items 4 and 5 - which were connected with it.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) endorsed the view expressed by the Chairman.

Mrs. CISSE (Guinea) proposed, in the light of the remarks just made, that the Commission should first consider items 5, 6 and 8, and then take up item 3.

The CHAIRMAN thought that stressing the need to consider various other items before proceeding to a thorough examination of item 3 did not imply that consideration of the latter should be postponed; it merely meant that the Working Group, which was responsible for dealing with that item, would submit specific recommendations only after the Commission had examined items 4, 5, 7 and 8.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the delegations which had requested that item 8 should become item 6.

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) repeated her proposal that the position of item 6 - in view of its importance - and of all the items preceding it should remain unchanged.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the members of the Commission should vote on the proposal to replace item 6 by item 8.

Mrs. CISSE (Guinea) recalled that she had proposed combining items 3 and 6, thereby removing the latter from its current position and making possible its replacement by item 8.

The CHAIRMAN said that it was not possible to combine items 3 and 6, because they dealt with entirely different matters. That was why she had asked the Commission to agree to the proposal of the Deputy Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) said that item 6 had always been a matter of major importance in the work of the Commission, and it could not be merged with another item. However, in order to satisfy those delegations that wished to give higher priority to item 8, she proposed that it should be placed seventh on the agenda.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission had two proposals before it, one from the Soviet delegation calling for the replacement of item 6 by item 8, whereby the former would move into seventh place while item 7 became item 8, and another proposal, put forward by the delegation of Argentina, to invert the order of items 7 and 8. She wondered whether the delegation of the Soviet Union would be prepared to accept the latter proposal.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that since a large number of delegations had supported her proposal, she could not withdraw it. She suggested that the Commission should vote on the matter.

Mrs. ROMO ROMAN (Chile) said that a considerable number of delegations was prepared to adopt the provisional agenda as contained in document E/CN.6/570. On the other hand, the various modifications proposed were far from winning unanimous approval. She therefore suggested that the Commission should first vote on the proposal to adopt the provisional agenda, on the understanding that item 4 (b) constituted a separate item since the Commission had agreed on that point, and that it should then decide on the other proposals.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) supported the position of those delegations that wished to adopt the provisional agenda proposed by the Secretariat (E/CN.6/570), as amended, and withdrew her proposal.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines) felt that it served no useful purpose to place item 8 higher up in the agenda because, in her opinion, the questions that were considered last were generally examined in greater depth.

Mrs. CISSE (Guinea), supported by Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) and Mrs. DAES (Greece) requested a brief suspension of the meeting to enable delegations to reach agreement.

The meeting was suspended at 5.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.40 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN said she was pleased to announce that, in a spirit of co-operation, the various delegations which had proposed alterations had reached agreement on a definitive agenda. The former item 3 became item 1, the former item 4 (b) became item 2, the former item 4 (a) (c) (d) became item 3, the former item 5 became item 4, the former item 6 became item 5, the former item 8 became item 6, the former item 9 became item 7, the former 7 became item 8, the former item 10 became item 9 and the former item 11 became item 10.

If she heard no objections, she would take it that the Commission wished to adopt the agenda she had just read out.

It was so decided.

The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the Commission should next select the items which would be given summary record coverage. She wished to recall, before the Commission took a decision, that it would not be possible to have minutes of meetings for which there were no summary records.

Mrs. KASTALSKAYA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that her delegation would like summary records to be prepared for the discussions on item 6, namely the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) proposed that the discussions relating to items 1, 2, 4, 8 and 6 should be given summary record coverage, if possible. She asked the representative of the Secretary-General if that procedure was applied in the case of all United Nations bodies, for she had the impression that the Commission on the Status of Women was being subjected to discriminatory treatment in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN said that with the exception of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women, United Nations bodies rarely had summary records.

Mrs. DAES (Greece) proposed that there should be summary records for items 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9.

The CHAIRMAN, after pointing out that it would be preferable if the list were as short as possible, and taking into account the statements just made, suggested that summary records should be prepared for items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9.

If she heard no objections, she would take it that the Commission accepted her suggestion.

It was so decided.

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF CHINA

Mrs. LI Su-wen (China) said that women's emancipation was a question of great importance, particularly in view of the fact that women constituted one half of mankind. Over a long period, women of many countries had made persistent efforts and endeavours to oppose the discrimination and oppression against them and to play a full role in all spheres of life and in promoting human progress. However, despite the existence of legal provisions, in some countries women's rights had not been guaranteed in practice. In other countries, women still suffered from feudal bondage and were deprived of their rights. In still other cases, women were subjected to aggression, domination and racial discrimination by imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Therefore, it was necessary to solve the question of how to achieve complete emancipation of women, in order to enable them to be masters of their own life.

Experience had shown Chinese women that it was not easy to lead women onto the path of genuine emancipation. In the past, the broad masses of Chinese women had been reduced to slavery, under the sway of the political authority, clan authority, religious authority and the authority of the husband. After some isolated efforts, Chinese women had become aware that the women's movement was an integral part of the revolutionary movement and that to win women's emancipation, it was imperative first of all to fight for national independence and liberation and socialism. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Communist Party of China, they had actively plunged into the revolutionary struggle. At the same time, they had come to realize that it was necessary to mobilize the masses of women themselves, to evoke their latent enthusiasm for liberation through intensive ideological work

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

and turn it into an inexhaustible source. Precisely because millions of women, together with the entire population, had taken an active part in the Chinese people's struggle for liberation, the dark rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism had finally been overthrown.

In socialist new China, the working people were masters of their country. Women enjoyed equal status with men in all spheres of life - political, economic, cultural and social, as well as in the family. They were taking an active part in the socialist revolution and socialist construction and commanded high respect on the part of the people. Their mental outlook had undergone profound changes as a result of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and they were now showing concern for State and world affairs. Their work was linked with the building of socialism, the struggle against imperialism and hegemonism and the cause of human progress.

In China, labour was a glorious and magnificent undertaking. Women enjoyed their right to work in various posts. In industry and communications, women were to be found among the skilled technical workers, the architects, the geologists and the oil-drilling teams. In agriculture, bright and brave, they were engaged in transforming nature with their own hands, harnessing rivers and mountains, so as to wrest an ever bigger harvest from the vast Chinese land. In education, art and culture, health and the sciences, women were also working hard for socialism. In recent years, a sizable contingent of "bare-foot" women doctors had come to the fore. That new emerging force was bringing drastic changes to the backward medical and health work in the rural areas. All those examples showed that today men and women were equal. Whatever men could accomplish women could too.

The Chinese Communist Party and Government attached great importance to training and promoting cadres from among women, particularly from among women workers and peasants. Since liberation, and particularly since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, many outstanding women workers and peasants had been promoted to leading posts at various levels, from the highest leading organs of the Party and Government to the people's communes. They were playing an increasingly prominent role by keeping in close contact with the masses and serving the people diligently and whole-heartedly.

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

The Chinese Communist Party and Government also paid great attention to the protection of women. Laws had been enforced and various measures adopted to give women special labour protection, and the principle of equal pay for equal work was applied. Furthermore, canteens, nurseries, kindergartens, maternity and health centres had been set up everywhere, planned parenthood was promoted, and men as well as women were encouraged to share domestic chores. All that had not only ensured the good health of women but had also enabled them to play a better part in political activities and productive work.

However, the remnants of the feudal ideas and old customs could not be eliminated at one fell swoop, and it was necessary to continue the protracted struggle against the old idea of looking down on women. Since the Chinese economy was still comparatively backward, material facilities provided for women still needed to be improved, as did also the cultural conditions of women peasants in the rural areas. It was necessary further to mobilize women ideologically and organizationally to play a better part in the socialist revolution and construction.

At the same time, Chinese women were closely following the struggles waged by women of other countries of the world. They were glad to see that more and more women were taking a part in the struggle against imperialism and hegemonism and for women's rights and emancipation. Women of the third world, in particular, were carrying on unremitting struggles for national independence, State sovereignty and the development of their national economies. The women of China congratulated them on the victories they had won so far.

Aggression and domination by imperialism and colonialism were continuing, however, to bring disasters to the women of some countries. In the Middle East, with the support of the super-Powers, the Israeli Zionists had repeatedly launched aggressive wars, thus displacing many Palestinian and Arab women and subjecting them to persecution. In southern Africa, under racist oppression, the broad masses of women were even deprived of fundamental human rights and freedoms. Moreover, in order to contend for world hegemony, the two super-Powers were stepping up their armaments race and engaging in all kinds of destructive activities which posed a serious threat to the peace and security of the peoples and women of various countries. To win their rights and emancipation, it was imperative for the women of various countries to fight against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism.

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

The struggles of women and peoples of different countries always supported each other. The Chinese women resolutely supported women and peoples of various countries in their struggles against imperialism and super-Power hegemonism and for national independence, democracy and peace. They resolutely supported the women of various countries in their struggles to oppose discrimination against women and to win equal rights between men and women in the political, economic, cultural and social fields, as well as in the family. Her delegation firmly believed that the desire for independence and liberation was an irresistible historical trend and that the just cause of the peoples of the world was bound to triumph. Women of all countries would continuously advance the cause of women's emancipation.

In conclusion, she wished to express the hope that the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women would reflect adequately the ardent desire of women of various countries, especially those of the third world, to conduct an exchange of views on important questions concerning women, so as to learn from each other and to contribute to the promotion of the cause of women's emancipation throughout the world.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

601st meeting

Tuesday, 15 January 1974,
at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR (agenda item 3) (E/CN.6/576)

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) informed the Commission that following the previous session in 1972, when the Economic and Social Council had considered the Commission's report, some members of the Council had criticized the large number of resolutions approved by the Commission and had felt that some of those resolutions could have been combined. As a result of the review and appraisal of the Council's work, certain recommendations had been made which should be taken into account. In the first place, all resolutions of the functional commissions and the subsidiary organs should be drafted for approval by the Council. Secondly, in recent years the United Nations had adopted a new system of programme budgeting which it was difficult to understand and to prepare. When the document on the programme of work (E/CN.6/588) was submitted to the Commission, it would be very different from previous ones since it would be based on the new system of budgeting. Members of the Commission should study it very carefully and ask for any clarification they felt necessary.

On the recommendation of the Commission, the General Assembly, in resolution 3010 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, had proclaimed 1975 International Women's Year and requested the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with Member States, specialized agencies and interested non-governmental organizations within the limits of existing resources, a draft programme for the Year, to be submitted to the Commission at its twenty-fifth session in 1974. The Secretariat had prepared preliminary suggestions which had been sent to Member States and the report was based on the replies received from them. At the time the report had been issued, only 20 States, 5 specialized agencies and 23 non-governmental organizations had replied. Since the report had been issued replies had been received from other countries, including the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Cyprus and Pakistan. The International Council of Women and the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession had also sent their comments. The document did not include information on specific programmes which were being prepared, but she would provide any relevant details which were requested.

/...

(Mrs. Bruce)

International Women's Year was to be devoted to intensified action to promote equality between men and women, to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort, and to recognize the importance of women's increasing contribution to the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States and to the strengthening of world peace.

As stated in paragraph 3, the Year was a time to review and evaluate progress made in those three areas and a time to stimulate new initiatives and develop or set in motion national, regional and international action programmes. As indicated in paragraph 4, publicity and promotional efforts would be needed in specific areas so that both men and women would be involved equally in those areas. In paragraph 7, more specific objectives were set out and in section III suggestions were made regarding activities at the national level, in respect of which differences between countries should be borne in mind. Section IV contained suggestions regarding activities at the regional and interregional levels, parallel to those suggested at the national level. In section III mention was made of the possibility of establishing national commissions, in connexion with which it was hoped to organize seminars for the exchange of experience between countries in which such commissions already existed and countries which wished to establish them.

With regard to regional meetings on the integration of women in development with special reference to demographic factors, mentioned by Mrs. Sipila at a previous meeting, she said that the first such meeting would be organized in ECAFE in May 1974 and the second in Africa the same year, and that others would follow in 1975.

All those activities would be carried out within the limits of existing resources. The Commission's share under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights would enable one or two seminars a year to be held, although if two were held the budget would be exhausted. There was also the possibility of obtaining fellowships, a question which the Commission would deal with later. The resources available to the Commission were limited unless more were obtained. Members of the Commission might make suggestions as to how that might be done.

Personnel resources were also limited. It was proposed to use the staff of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, although the Centre also had its own tasks to carry out.

/...

(Mrs. Bruce)

(Mrs. Bruce)

International Women's Year should be a memorable and significant event, both for women and for society as a whole, since the new trends did not only benefit women. It was important to strengthen the programme and to try to obtain the resources necessary for its implementation.

Mrs. DAES (Greece) said she thought that document E/CN.6/576 contained important suggestions and recommendations, although it needed further elaboration. Accordingly, she recalled the proposal made at the previous meeting by Mrs. Bruce that an informal working group be established to prepare a more comprehensive and detailed draft report.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) said that she was prepared to support the suggestion made by Greece regarding the establishment of a working group, although it would be advisable first to consider the document in general and then go into the question of the formation of the group, in which her delegation would like to participate.

Miss TYABJI (India) said that the fact that India had not taken part in recent years in the Commission on the Status of Women did not mean that it had been indifferent to problems which concerned women. Many distinguished Indian women had played an active part in the Indian independence movement and the All India Women's Conference, the largest women's organization and a watchdog against discrimination against women, had been founded in 1931. Since then, the Government had commissioned a series of reports on various problems facing women, culminating in the report of India's own Commission on the Status of Women.

Equal rights and opportunities for men and women were embodied in India's Constitution and the fact that women held high public positions showed that that was not empty promise. However, it was one thing to provide equal opportunities for a few women and quite another to deal with the masses. The rights which were recognized to women on paper were of no avail unless women themselves enjoyed economic independence and had the self-confidence to be able to exercise those rights.

/...

(Miss Tyabji, India)

Her delegation wished to make two main suggestions. In addition to trying to achieve universal literacy and to encourage girls to go to school, it was important to start a large-scale programme of training girls who had completed their schooling to run day-care centres and kindergartens. Not only would the girls themselves benefit from such a measure, by finding immediate employment, but, by relieving many mothers from the chores of constantly looking after their children, they would enable them to seek their own emancipation. The second suggestion was even more important, not only for India but for all developing countries. Those countries were suffering acutely from unemployment and it was therefore essential to give special help to women in finding jobs. Efforts should therefore be made to create non-profit-making decentralized industries which would provide employment for women. Such industries could manufacture handicrafts and ready-made garments, as well as food-stuffs. Various large voluntary organizations in the West had already realized the importance of the assistance they could give to the developing countries by helping them to export such articles. If the United Nations, with its resources and experience, could get the co-operation of the various women's organizations throughout the world to establish such industries, it would really be doing something memorable for International Women's Year.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) felt that the report in document E/CN.6/576 had been very well prepared and mentioned a number of activities to commemorate International Women's Year. In her opinion, the idea of involving men in order to avoid discrimination was an excellent one. Emphasis should be placed on programmes which created in women an awareness of the fact that sex was no obstacle to having equal opportunities with men. Similarly, it was important to destroy the large number of absurd myths regarding women which persisted even in the middle of the twentieth century and which made women in fact act as if they were inferior to men. For that reason, women in the twentieth century were responsible for the dependent status they were given. Many women still thought that their mission in life was to look after the home and to bring children into the world. The concept of women had admittedly changed in recent years, but there was still much to be done if women were to avail themselves of the free time and technology which were now at their disposal. It was to be hoped that the number of thinking and well-educated women would constantly increase because the family, society and the world would gain thereby.

Mrs. HOOGSTOEL-FABRI (Belgium) agreed with the Deputy Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs that there was no reason to be discouraged by the lack of resources for activities concerning the improvement of the status of women. The current period was one of austerity and all policy-making bodies had been asked to bear that fact in mind when considering the financial implications of their proposals. That concern was highlighted in document E/5329 concerning the work programme and budget for 1974-1975 and the medium-term plan for 1974-1977 relating to economic, social and human rights activities. Nevertheless, she was surprised at the huge difference between the funds allocated for the elaboration and implementation of the programme for International Women's Year in 1975 (E/5329, p. 45), for which there was not even any provision for extrabudgetary funds, and the allocation for population activities, particularly the 1974 World Population Conference and the World Population Year (pages 51 and 52). The latter allocation would be 80 times larger than the allocation for International Women's Year. The difference was so enormous that, in her view, some explanation should be given.

Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) announced that her Government would submit its observations on the item under consideration at a later date. International Women's Year would provide an opportunity for promoting in practice respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The theme - equality, development and peace - eloquently described its objectives. The time had come for immediate and effective action to eliminate discrimination against women. In the context of the Second Development Decade, attention should be focused on the obstacles still preventing the full integration of one half of the world's total population in the development effort, and the changes in attitude which were required in all sectors should be encouraged. In that connexion, it was important to study the effect of tradition and customs on the role of men and women in society. Despite the commendable work done by the Commission on the Status of Women over the past 27 years, there was still no universal recognition of the principle of the de jure and de facto equality of men and women. The celebration of International Women's Year would provide an opportunity for Governments, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to make an appraisal of their laws, programmes and activities relating to the advancement of women.

(Mrs. Stevenson, Liberia).

The series of suggestions made in the draft programme for the celebration of the Year adequately covered the three principal objectives sought. In a world of increasing awareness of the vital role which women played in development, concerted efforts by the international community would be required in order to achieve the objectives of International Women's Year and thereby maximize the role of women in modern society.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) warmly supported the proclamation of 1975 as International Women's Year and endorsed the objectives stated in General Assembly resolution 3010 (XXVII): to promote equality between men and women, to ensure the integration of women in the development effort and to recognize women's contribution to the development of peaceful relations among peoples. The Year would provide an opportunity to evaluate the progress made in those three areas. The evaluation should be based on actual conditions in the various countries and would involve a real mobilization of all the sectors in each community with the aim of studying the economic, political, social and cultural issues affecting women. The second stage should be an evaluation relating to geo-political regions, which would strengthen ties and promote an awareness of the reasons preventing women's participation, particularly in countries undergoing far-reaching transformations. The third stage should be a world-wide exchange of data at an international meeting.

In Argentina, there was no de facto or de jure discrimination; her country had ratified all the conventions elaborated by the Commission and other specialized bodies. Argentina was engaged in removing the barriers of any possible discrimination. The country had a woman Vice-President and women were encouraged to occupy posts of the highest level and importance. In connexion with International Women's Year, Argentina planned to organize a regional seminar, which it would in principle host at Buenos Aires. Lastly, she thanked the Belgian representative for her remarks on the dwindling resources available to the Commission for its activities.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said she was glad that the initiative of proclaiming International Women's Year had come from the Commission. In the reply which it had sent to the Secretary-General, the USSR

/...

(Mrs. Nikolaeva, USSR)

had stated that the Year should be an important milestone on the road to eliminating the discrimination against women which still existed in many parts of the world. It was urgent to eliminate illiteracy and unemployment, to improve working conditions, to introduce equal remuneration for equal work and, in particular, to improve the situation of working mothers.

The programme for the celebration of International Women's Year should place emphasis on freedoms and rights of a social and economic nature and encourage the adoption of specific measures to promote the equality of men and women and particularly equality before the law, since in many cases the laws on the status of women were retrograde and antiquated. It was also important to encourage the participation of all women in social development and, in a broader context, in the struggle for international détente and the liberation and independence of the oppressed peoples.

A noteworthy example, demonstrating the importance of the contribution of women, was the World Congress of Peace Forces held in Moscow in October 1973, at which 97 women's organizations from 31 countries and nine international women's organizations had been represented. The discussions had covered many problems of considerable interest to international women's movements and, undoubtedly, to women all over the world. One of the most important activities of the world forces for peace was the struggle for equal rights for women, the necessity and importance of which had been reaffirmed in the appeal issued by the Congress. The women's organizations represented at the Congress had also expressed their views on important problems of international concern, including the struggle against apartheid and the subject of international security. On that occasion, the representatives of the women's organizations had held a special meeting to discuss ways of implementing the recommendations of the Congress and preparing for the celebration of International Women's Year in 1975.

Lastly, referring to conditions in her own country, she said that women played an active part in all aspects of national life and made a significant contribution to the development of the Soviet economy. In the years to come, an attempt would be made to concentrate on the creation of even better opportunities and even better working conditions for women.

/...

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) fully endorsed the draft programme for International Women's Year, whose significance was eloquently expressed in its central theme of equality, development and peace. The Year would provide an opportunity to prove that women were asking for their rights in order to contribute to the development of society and not in order to take revenge for past injustices, since it was clear that certain ills of society stemmed from practices and measures discriminating against women. In that respect, she very much favoured the involvement of both men and women in the celebration of the Year. There would also be an opportunity to review the progress made in the three areas mentioned in the period since the basic goals of the Charter had been formulated in 1945.

The draft programme contained excellent suggestions concerning both specific objectives and activities at the national, regional and international levels. The suggested topics for study and research were relevant to the issues facing women all over the world. They undoubtedly provided excellent guidelines for any country, regardless of its stage of development. They would certainly be of great assistance to women everywhere in their efforts to give a scientific basis to their activities for the advancement of women and for their equality and participation in development.

It was important to differentiate between the publicity and promotional activities likely to focus attention on the central theme of the Year and those activities designed to have a profound impact in the years to come, in the field of education for example. She welcomed in particular the suggestion that colleges and universities should be encouraged to establish departments or programmes for teaching and research in questions related to the promotion of equality of men and women.

Due account had been taken in the draft programme of the role non-governmental organizations could play. The guidelines laid down could also be useful for countries' national commissions and even in cases where such commissions did not yet exist or had not been properly organized. Programmes for the exchange of information were a particularly suitable means of fostering understanding and co-operation. Referring specifically to the situation in her country, she expressed the hope that International Women's Year would provide Egypt's non-governmental organizations with the opportunity to organize and reactivate

(Mrs. Hussein, Egypt)

their campaign to improve the status of women and, in particular, amend family law. At the regional level, there was already an Arab Women's Commission, which would welcome an opportunity to co-operate in organizing a conference in which non-governmental organizations could participate.

One of the objectives for International Women's Year should be co-ordination with activities for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Apart from the fact that women could not remain aloof from the struggle against racism, paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 3057 (XXVIII) invited United Nations organs to participate in the observance of the Decade, and the Programme for the Decade referred specifically to the participation of women. Referring to the Belgian representative's significant comment comparing the budget figures for International Women's Year with those for other activities, she said that women should be integrated in all development activities. Through participation in the Family Planning Association, women's collaboration and participation in that important subject which was of direct concern to them could be increased.

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) agreed with the representative of Egypt that women should participate in other activities, and cited as an example the important part which the representative of Greece to the current session of the Commission on the Status of Women had played in the General Assembly in the debate on resolution 3010 (XXVII). As to the inclusion in International Women's Year of matters relating to action to combat racial discrimination, she pointed out that it had been a woman who had inserted the phrases on the participation of women in General Assembly resolution 3057 (XXVIII). She echoed the Egyptian representative's statement that World Population Year provided an opportunity to create awareness of women's role in all sectors.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that it was regrettable that, perhaps for lack of time, so few countries had replied to the Secretary-General's questionnaire. In Norway, projects and plans were being prepared, but slowly. Referring to document E/CN.6/576, she said that she attached particular importance to paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 on page 6. International Women's Year would provide the opportunity to give widespread publicity to efforts to improve the status of women,

/...

(Mrs. Kolstad, Norway)

and it was important to emphasize the joint participation of men and women in such efforts. She entertained some doubt about the last sentence of paragraph 6, which she interpreted as meaning that preparations for and activities during International Women's Year would provide women with the opportunity to participate in them; possibly, however, the intention had not been that women should develop such activities on their own, using their own means, but that they should press the authorities and the politicians to produce the necessary funds. The establishment of a working group would be a good way of furthering the work of the Commission; the group could take the ideas advanced during the meetings, combine them with other ideas and lay a good basis for the Commission's work.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the meaning of paragraph 6 was precisely that International Women's Year should provide an opportunity for women to become aware in some cases of the role they could play in activities for the Year. It was not the intention that women should develop and finance such activities on their own. They must have the support of Governments and men.

Miss CHATON (France) said that her Government had not yet replied to the Secretary-General's questionnaire but it attached great importance to International Women's Year. Various governmental departments had been asked to examine the Secretary-General's programme and the first meeting had been held on 8 January 1974. The next meeting would take place on 15 March and at it an official International Women's Year committee would be set up. Activities for the Year should be planned in good time on the basis of budgetary appropriations for 1975. France's non-governmental organizations had met in order to urge all women, particularly members of trade unions, to participate. The last meeting had been held in October 1973 and a general programme of activities had been adopted. Referring to a UNITAR publication on the participation of women in the United Nations, she said that the work should be extended to other fields in order to draw attention to obstacles in the way of women's advancement.

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the representative of France had raised a very important point. There was no time to lose in bringing the financial implications of activities for International Women's Year to the attention of Governments and organizations, which must already be starting to prepare their budgets for 1975.

(Mrs. Sipila)

As to the French representative's reference to the role of women in the United Nations, her own presence in the Commission as an Assistant Secretary-General was largely attributable to the Commission's work. The UNITAR publication dealt with the role of women in the United Nations and the specialized agencies; the previous year, another document supplementing it had been submitted to the General Assembly and the Secretary-General had again examined the status of women in the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Unfortunately, women held only 2 per cent of the posts at the level of Director (two D-2 and some 6 D-1); even at the P-1 to P-5 level, the number of women tapered off in the higher posts. To a large extent the situation reflected what happened in the Governments of Member States. Very few Governments had replied to the relevant question in the questionnaire. The United Nations could not improve the status of women if Governments did not do so. It was easier for a woman to work in her own country than in the United Nations, for in the latter case a post had to be available, the woman had to move to another country, be prepared to work in another language and move her family with her.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) presented her Government's apologies for not having sent the suggestions requested. Its failure to do so was attributable to the fact that Indonesia's National Commission on the Status of Women, which was responsible for preparing reports and suggestions for the Commission, had been busy with a special meeting at which programmes for International Women's Year had been examined. The National Commission had also been busy examining a marriage law which had eventually been approved in December 1973 and was very important for the status of women in Indonesia.

As to International Women's Year, her delegation suggested that men and women should participate jointly and equally in seminars and other similar activities. For example, each Government could send a man and a woman as its representatives. Governments should also invite non-governmental organizations to participate in all programmes for the Year. Further, the programmes should be so planned as to reach the mass of women, not merely a select minority. Her delegation further recommended that UNDP resident representatives should work more closely with the community; that was important in developing countries, where non-governmental organizations played a significant role. UNDP resident

/...

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

representatives should communicate directly with such organizations. Lastly, to enact new laws such as the marriage law was not sufficient; it was also necessary to educate women in the application of such laws.

The problem of the budget was certainly an important one. Governments should be requested to establish a special budget for the programmes to be carried out in observance of International Women's Year.

Finally, she requested Mrs. Sipila to explain what were actually her functions as Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and how she could assist women throughout the world.

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that she was not in a position at that time to give a full reply; but, since she had been asked the same question the previous year in the Commission for Social Development, she had prepared an explanatory document and would have it distributed to the members of the Commission.

With reference to the suggestion concerning the UNDP resident representatives, she communicated with them whenever possible in order to ascertain the situation of women in the various countries and to find out what could be done about it. The UNDP resident representatives constituted a link between the United Nations and Governments, and had demonstrated their readiness to work with non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, it was for Governments to include the suggestions, recommendations and programmes of those organizations in their national plans.

Much could be accomplished if women in the developing countries worked for the adoption of measures to improve the status of women and for the allocation of sufficient funds for that purpose.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines), after expressing her satisfaction at the election of a representative of her country as Chairman of the Commission, commended the draft programme prepared by the working group for the celebration of International Women's Year (E/CN.6/576). The suggestions relating to activities at the national level (pages 7 et seq.) were especially useful. President Marcos of the Philippines was in favour of the participation of women in all aspects of national life and promoted such participation in practice, as was shown by his recent appointment of a woman to the Supreme Court.

/...

(Mrs. Alday, Philippines)

She would be grateful if the working group could suggest practical ways in which the proposed programme could be implemented. The Philippines had opted for a multisectoral approach in the implementation of the various programmes, and there would undoubtedly be many opportunities for the participation of women. Finally, she proposed the promotion of exchanges of information on the experience acquired by the various countries in the implementation of their respective programmes, which would certainly be to the advantage of all concerned, and would give added significance to the observance of International Women's Year.

The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 76 of the rules of procedure, three non-governmental organizations, namely, the Women's International Democratic Federation, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, had requested permission to participate in the Commission's debate.

If she heard no objections, those representatives would be allowed to address the Commission.

It was so decided.

Miss von ROEMER (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), referring to the preparations undertaken by her organization for the observance of International Women's Year, said that in November 1972 the Executive Board of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) had approved a proposal to organize in 1975 a world conference on equal rights and the integration of women in the economic, social and trade union fields. The conference would deal with questions such as the humanization of the working environment and the employment of women and the effects of education and training on the integration of women in economic and social life. A revision of the ICFTU Charter of the Rights of Working Women would also be undertaken.

In addition, the Executive Board had adopted a programme of concerted action on equal pay, and had appealed to all affiliated organizations to strive to attain concrete results in 1975 in their efforts to combat discrimination against women. As part of that programme, trade unions would endeavour to include in all collective agreements provisions on the method of implementing the equal pay principle, as well as the procedures to be followed should difficulties arise. Studies would

/...

(Miss von Roemer, ICFTU)

also be carried out on the criteria on which the concepts of light and heavy work were based. Efforts would be continued at an international level to achieve equal pay in the industrial or professional sectors, with particular attention to multinational companies. The Confederation and its affiliated organizations would continue their action for the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention No. 100 and for the employment of women by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and it would co-ordinate and support all measures aimed at achieving equal pay for equal work.

It should be pointed out also that the Governing Body of the International Labour Office had recently approved, at the proposal of ICFTU, the inclusion in the agenda of the 1975 International Labour Conference of the question of equal treatment for women workers.

Finally, she welcomed the objectives outlined in paragraph 8 of document E/CN.6/576, and in particular the fact that they included the promotion of equality of rights and responsibilities in the family, since ICFTU was firmly convinced that the sharing of responsibilities by men and women in the home and in the family was an essential prerequisite for the achievement of equality in the labour market.

Mrs. BROWN (Women's International Democratic Federation) said that the Women's International Democratic Federation and its 110 affiliated national organizations welcomed the proclamation of 1975 as International Women's Year by the United Nations General Assembly. She hoped that the preparations for the Year would help to intensify action to promote equality and advance the participation of women in all fields under the theme of "equality, development and peace". That was the only condition under which the programme could be implemented. The theme of the programme should also cover questions relating to children, a subject which the working group might consider incorporating as one of the essential elements. With reference to document E/CN.6/576, she expressed appreciation at the fact that it included many of the suggestions of the Women's International Democratic Federation. The United Nations proposal for the establishment of national preparatory committees for International Women's Year required urgent consideration. The Federation had received reports from its national organizations,

/...

(Mrs. Brown, WIDF)

including that of her own country, Australia, to the effect that committees had been established in which women's and other interested organizations, such as trade unions and other social organizations including men among their members, were participating. The Federation had forwarded to Mrs. Bruce and to UNESCO documents containing its proposals. It had drawn up its programme for 1975, which included plans for seminars, leadership courses, international meetings and practical training schemes for child care. The Federation was considering the possibility of initiating consultations with other women's organizations and with United Nations specialized agencies with a view to holding a world congress of women. The Federation had given wide publicity to the declarations, conventions and resolutions of the United Nations so as to make women aware of them. Document E/CN.6/576 contained many valuable proposals, but it should perhaps give greater attention to the needs of working mothers. It was incumbent upon society to understand the special needs of the working mother, since she made a double contribution to the economic and social life of her country. That was of special concern to women, but it was also of importance to the whole family and to society. The working group might consider giving that question more attention.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

/...

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/576)

Mrs. OBA (Japan) said that, without due recognition of the importance of the role of women in achieving world peace, the integration of women in national development and equality of men and women at the national level could not always improve the status of women and their welfare. As long as there was any country in the world where exploitation of and discrimination against women persisted, the peace of the world would be menaced and the dignity of women would be debased. Her delegation hoped that the International Women's Year would inaugurate the first world-wide campaign for recognition of the meaning of women's rights and responsibilities in achieving world peace, through national and international co-operation between men and women.

Her Government was preparing a number of projects to commemorate International Women's Year. In 1975, the women of Japan would celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the achievement of women's suffrage. Budgetary appropriations had already been allocated by the Government for a joint project with the International Labour Organisation for the benefit of women workers. The project would strengthen policy measures affecting women workers and improve administrative arrangements within the Ministries of Labour of Asian countries for dealing with the problems of women workers.

In 1964, the International Labour Conference had adopted a resolution concerning women workers in a changing world, which had requested all member States to consider the establishment of a central unit for co-ordinating research, planning, programming and action on women worker's opportunities, needs and problems. With that end in view, a project for international co-operation had been developed out of the seminars for women leaders held regularly by the Japanese Government since 1969. Since the project was to be a permanent one, her Government hoped to welcome women leaders from Asian and African countries to future seminars.

Moreover, budgetary appropriations would be earmarked for a study of national and regional machinery designed to ensure equality in employment opportunities and wages between men and women. Although equality had been guaranteed by law since 1955, it had not always been achieved. The study would present the results of a

(Mrs. Oba, Japan)

national survey on the status of women carried out by the Government with the co-operation of experts in various non-governmental organizations, labour and employer organizations, and other professional persons.

In conclusion, her delegation hoped to learn about other projects from other countries at the current session and looked forward to welcoming participants and observers from Asian, African and other countries to the ILO seminar in Tokyo.

Mrs. DAES (Greece) recalled that the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations reaffirmed faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. That fundamental concept had already been adopted in a number of countries and endorsed by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and more specifically by the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. However, the gap between principle and practice remained enormous. For example, the Commission had been told that, despite a provision in the United Nations Charter to the effect that no restrictions should be placed on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in the principal and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, in practice there was considerable discrimination. The 1958 Treaty of Rome had provided that each member State of the European Economic Community should apply the principle of equal remuneration for equal work as between men and women workers, but in 1971 the European Parliament had concluded that the principle remained largely unimplemented. There were thousands of other examples of discriminatory treatment meted out to women.

Much work remained to be done to eliminate discrimination in countries in which it still existed and to overcome major obstacles, such as customs and traditions, religious doctrines or other social and economic considerations. Her delegation supported the proclamation of 1975 as International Women's Year, and felt that efforts must be made to ensure that women were ready and determined to make an increasing contribution in the confrontation and solution of the important problems of a changing society in the modern world. Those problems included the consolidation of world peace, the elimination of racial discrimination and apartheid, the development of friendly relations among States in accordance with

/...

(Mr. Daes, Greece)

the Charter of the United Nations, the elimination of poverty and illiteracy, and economic, social, cultural and political development.

The main objectives of International Women's Year, as proclaimed in General Assembly resolution 3010 (XXVII), were equality, development and peace. The vital principle of equality included the concept of equal rights and equal obligations. The objective of development was the full integration of women in the total development effort in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1684 (LII), which recommended that the objectives and targets set forth in the annex to General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) should be realized in such a way as to benefit women at all levels of development. In planning and implementing their programmes, Governments should promote the advancement of women, taking into account their different needs, with a view to enabling them to achieve their maximum potential not only as wives and mothers, but also as full participants in the development of their countries. During International Women's Year, it was important for women to form a clear idea of their rights and obligations as citizens and of the heavy responsibilities they must assume in order to play an important role in their communities and countries.

The report in document E/CN.6/576 constituted an excellent working paper for use by the working group which would prepare a more complete programme. The new draft programme should have a better structure; for example, the suggested activities at the national, regional, international and United Nations levels should be separated. The objectives should be expanded to include the adoption of new national legislation and the ratification of existing international instruments, and so on. Furthermore, the annex which contained the topics suggested for research, study, seminars and similar types of meetings should be supplemented to contain comparative studies on family law, international private law and the like. She was confident that the Commission would be able to produce a more comprehensive draft programme to ensure the success of International Women's Year.

Mrs. MARINKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that her delegation's position had been stated in the reply to the Secretary-General's questionnaire. Her country, which had secured full equality for men and women in all walks of life, agreed that both should participate in activities connected with

/...

(Mrs. Marinkevich, Byelorussian SSR)

International Women's Year, which would then be celebrated in a spirit of defence of fundamental human rights and would be an additional stimulus to improve the living conditions of all members of society.

Her delegation could support the main lines of approach set out in the draft programme and welcomed the reference to the need to publicize international instruments relating to human rights. There were a number of points that should be added to the draft. The attention of the international community should be drawn once more to the fact that in many countries women were still discriminated against, despite the provisions of many international instruments. The draft programme should include at least some general measures to be taken at the national level to eliminate female unemployment and discrimination against women in vocational and technical training, employment, and pay levels. The draft should also include separate recommendations on ways to improve the working conditions and daily life of working women, particularly mothers.

There were a number of specific measures her delegation wished to suggest for action at the international level: the preparation and adoption of a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women; the adoption of a declaration on the protection of women and children in emergency or in time of war or of struggle for peace, national liberation and independence; the inclusion in the agenda of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly of an item concerning the status of women in the modern world; the strengthening of the links between the United Nations and its specialized agencies and more active efforts by the latter on questions relating to the status of women and children; the establishment of closer links and contacts between the appropriate United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations, which should work together on preparing the programme for International Women's Year and on carrying it through successfully.

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) said that her delegation strongly and enthusiastically supported the principles embodied in the observance of International Women's Year. It also considered that document E/CN.6/576 was most impressive. Her Government had already begun to implement a number of national plans for the Year, including the establishment of a special interdepartmental committee to assist with the preparations for the observance of the Year. It had

/...

(Mrs. Hutar, United States)

also opened a centre for International Women's Year; its Director was a member of her country's delegation to the Commission, who looked forward to discussing the Year with other representatives. Consideration was being given to the idea of a Presidential proclamation and an Executive Order for the observance of International Women's Year and to the appointment of an advisory body and task forces to study areas of concern to women. International Women's Year offered the Commission an opportunity of focusing attention on women all around the world, on improving conditions of life and the freedoms of choice for women and for future generations. The Year should not be seen as a goal in itself to end in December 1975, but as a staging area for new advances, particularly during the Second Development Decade. Women all over the world were looking to the Commission for leadership. In order to foster that leadership, her delegation had the honour of introducing the draft resolution in document E/CN.6/L.658, requesting the Secretary-General to organize an international conference during the Year to examine progress made by the United Nations system in implementing the recommendations of the Commission, during its existence, for the elimination of discrimination against women and to consider further programmes to encourage the full integration of women in the total development effort.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said that, as the members of the Commission were aware, her country attached great importance to the advancement of women. Recently the plenum of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party had analysed the implementation of resolutions relating to the role of the woman in the political, economic and social life of the country and had praised the contribution made by millions of women to the progress and prosperity of socialist Romania and the training of a sound youth, imbued with noble ideas of socialism. New measures had been elaborated for increasing the involvement of women in the social and political life of the country and for improving their working and living conditions. A resolution had been issued on the measures to be adopted in order to ensure appropriate conditions for the increased involvement of women in development programmes.

In a recent statement on the role of the woman in political, economic and social life, the President of her country had pointed out that insufficient

/...

(Mrs. Andrei, Romania)

attention had been given to the advancement of women in different sectors of activity and that such a situation needed to be rectified. He had stressed that women should participate to a greater extent in the life of society.

Accordingly, her delegation was able to support the draft programme for International Women's Year and in particular supported the view expressed in paragraph 5 that the Year should demonstrate the value of a unified approach to issues of human rights, development and peace. It was not enough merely to inform women of their rights. Public opinion needed to be influenced, and her delegation wished to stress the need for education for young people of both sexes. It would be useful to establish a working group to formulate a draft document and consider any new proposals. She agreed with previous speakers that the results of International Women's Year should be followed up after the conclusion of the Year itself.

In conclusion, her delegation wished to draw attention to the close links between International Women's Year and World Population Year. The Secretary-General should be requested to recommend to the World Population Conference to be held in Bucharest in August 1974 that the agenda should make adequate provision for the discussion of problems of concern to women. The Secretary-General might also be requested to urge Governments to ensure a representative attendance of women at the Conference.

Mrs. SAARINEN (Finland) said that as early as 1972 her delegation had stressed the need for International Women's Year to be based on the concept of equality between men and women and had welcomed the adoption of equality as one of the central themes of the Year. Although it was true that the choice of measures by different countries was influenced by such factors as the degree of development, and historical, cultural and religious traditions, the achievement of equality of men and women implied a reconsideration of their traditional roles. Indeed, it was impossible to improve the status of women in any society without changing the status and role of men and without changes within the family. Consequently, the specific objectives set out in the draft programme should be viewed within the framework of an over-all strategy promoting equality between men and women.

(Mrs. Saarinen, Finland)

In view of the wide gap between women's living conditions in industrialized and developing countries, it was difficult, if not impossible, to work out a meaningful unified programme for the Year for all countries. The main purpose of the programme should be to prepare a useful list of ideas on which people and Governments could draw according to circumstances.

The questions of the status of women and population were interrelated in so many ways that the only sensible approach was to deal with them together. How, for example, could a woman be expected to limit the number of her children if, as was still the case in many countries, the only foundation of her status was that she was a mother? The level of consumption was another important factor influencing the rate of utilization of natural resources. The crucial question was how many people could be maintained at a decent standard of living within the limits of the earth's natural resources.

Women were often politically and socially passive in both the developed and the developing countries. Their contribution to the work for equality and peace was therefore weak. Efficient education and public information were needed to improve that situation and to change attitudes to the roles of men and women in general. Information and education should be an important part of the programme for the Year in all countries. National action groups for the promotion of the status of women tended to concentrate exclusively on the national aspect of the matter. Particularly in the developed countries, therefore, the Year should emphasize the international aspects of the issue. Special emphasis should be laid on informing women in the developed countries of the living conditions and problems of their sisters in the developing countries. In that way, women in the rich countries would become involved in the work for accelerated development in the less developed parts of the world.

Equality and peace were interrelated; neither could be achieved easily or quickly. International Women's Year was a unique opportunity to set new goals and to examine achievements. Nevertheless, consistent long-term work must be continued vigorously. Improvements in the status of women and equality between individuals and nations would accompany harmonious development in all sectors of society. Such development was an essential condition for a just and lasting peace.

/...

Mrs. CADIEUX (Canada) said that the fact that Canada had not submitted comments on the draft programme in document E/CN.6/576 did not mean that it was not interested in International Women's Year. On the contrary, Canada had long been making plans for the celebration of the Year. Several voluntary organizations had informed the Government of their wish to develop special programmes or intensify existing programmes to promote the equality of men and women. She wished to assure the Commission of her Government's support for the objectives of the Year as proposed in the Secretary-General's report and as expressed in the central theme, namely, equality, development and peace.

Her Government wished to pay special attention to the promotion of equality between men and women in all aspects of life and to inform and educate the general public about the new roles played by women in society. Its programme of activities included the following points: a statement by the Prime Minister early in 1975 supporting the international community in recognizing 1975 as International Women's Year and reaffirming the principle of the equality of men and women in Canada; a series of regional and national conferences for the general public; a national programme of education and information to influence society's attitude to women; increased financial assistance to voluntary bodies to enable them to implement their own projects for the Year; the deletion from federal legislation of clauses discriminating against women; the implementation by government ministries and agencies of special programmes for 1975 aimed at promoting equal opportunities for women in their public programmes and in programmes for their women staff members; hosting of an international seminar in 1974 on the status of women; review of international instruments on women's rights with a view to ratifying them or suggesting revisions where necessary; an increase in the number of women representing Canada at international conferences on all subjects.

Canada had made progress in promoting equality of the sexes, but had not yet fully achieved that goal. It hoped, therefore, that 1975 would provide an opportunity for an evaluation of what had been done.

Mrs. LI Su-wen (China) said that her delegation hoped that the demands of women throughout the world would be fully reflected in activities to be undertaken during International Women's Year and that the Year would result in an improvement

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

in the status of women and their liberation. In its deliberations, the Commission should consider the actual situation facing women. Women made up one half of the world population and were an important part of the social force. They lived in a specific society, not in a vacuum. Currently, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism still existed. In the Middle East, Europe and the Indian Ocean, the two super-Powers were practising hegemonism and power politics. They were contending for spheres of influence, threatening the peace of the world, impinging on the sovereignty of States, undermining the rights of peoples and infringing the rights of women. Women should be mobilized to stand together with all peoples struggling against the evils of imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism. Women in territories under colonial domination were already participating in the struggle to win their independence, safeguard their natural resources and develop their national economies. They were thus opposing policies of war and imperialism. If women worked in isolation from or opposition to the revolutionary movements of their countries, they would merely weaken the common struggle and lead their movements in the wrong direction. During International Women's Year, emphasis should be placed on bringing women together to oppose imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism and to safeguard national independence and women's rights. Millions of women throughout the world were fighting for the cause of women's liberation. Provided that they mobilized the masses in their countries, they would achieve their liberation. During International Women's Year, therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that as many women as possible co-operated in movements for women's liberation. Since the situation of women differed from country to country, plans for the celebration of the Year should not be rigid and countries should be allowed to celebrate the Year in accordance with their own practices.

It was suggested in the draft programme that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women could serve as a basis for the formulation of goals to be pursued during International Women's Year. It should be noted that all those instruments had been

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

adopted at the time when China had been deprived of its legitimate rights in the United Nations. Her delegation wished to reiterate, therefore, that ratification of or accession to those instruments by the Chiang Kai-shek clique was invalid. The contents of the instruments were still being studied by the competent departments in her country.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that her delegation was very satisfied with the draft programme submitted by the Secretariat, which attempted to deal with women's activities throughout the world. The extent to which countries could rely on assistance from the United Nations and specialized agencies in implementing the programme was, however, a source of concern. Even if very rich in content, international programmes and seminars would not be fruitful if they did not result in an increase in the participation of women in development at the national level. It was essential, therefore, that the United Nations and the specialized agencies should give more assistance to women's groups in all countries.

The question of training for women was another source of concern to her delegation. Discrimination against women would continue until women attained the highest level of education.

It was important to help countries to mobilize women at the national level. Her country was arranging two meetings for 1975, one for urban women and one for rural women. Committees and meetings would achieve nothing if the rural masses were not integrated in development and education programmes. Any working group established to prepare specific measures to be adopted during the Year should bear in mind the need to promote the cause of women at the national level and in rural areas.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said she wished to stress that International Women's Year would benefit from co-ordination of the plans and activities of the specialized agencies. For ILO, the target population was working women; its aim was to focus the attention of Governments and employers on female labour issues, with a view to raising the status of women in economic life and ensuring equal opportunity and treatment, having full regard to women's social function of maternity.

/...

(Mrs. Johnstone, ILO)

The agency's main contribution to International Women's Year depended upon a decision to be taken by the Governing Body in the very near future about the agenda of the 1975 session of the International Labour Conference. A proposal that the agenda of the 1975 Conference should include the question of equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers had been submitted to the Governing Body. The item had been selected by all three groups in ILO. Although the effects of the general discussion of the item would probably be mainly promotional, there were certain practical aspects. Part of ILO's work might be devoted to improving the status of women; if so, the 1975 Conference might contribute to an international conference on the status of women.

A world-wide survey of the application of the Equal Remuneration Convention was being made and would touch on such other matters as equality of opportunity and treatment. Revised recommendations on professional guidance and training had also been approved. They spelt out the principle of non-discrimination against women and details of how that was to be ensured. It was hoped that a meeting with non-governmental organizations would reveal the ways in which they and ILO could co-operate on issues relating to working women and their families. A special issue of the International Labour Review would be devoted to women and the main themes of International Women's Year.

She had been surprised to learn at the previous meeting that women had to rely largely on NGO publications to find out what United Nations documents existed that affected their interests. She hoped that a greater effort would be made in 1975 to publicize the aims and purposes of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. ILO would do whatever it could to assist in that effort.

Although educational programmes were mainly the responsibility of the trade unions, ILO hoped to have the opportunity in 1975 to co-operate with the unions in organizing leadership training courses for women and in discussing the issue of equality between men and women. It would provide technical material and expertise.

The agency hoped to co-operate more actively with the regional economic commissions in the future; it hoped that they would be renamed "regional economic and social development commissions". Work at the international level would remain

(Mrs. Johnstone, ILO)

general unless it was backed up by activities at the regional level. ILO was also considering putting International Women's Year on the agenda of the regional conferences, advisory committees and industrial committees.

Mrs. ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) announced UNESCO's appointment of a woman co-ordinator for human rights and for International Women's Year. She was very happy to see many of UNESCO's suggestions in the draft programme.

A task force had been set up to formulate UNESCO's role in International Women's Year. The force would consider the possibility of a programme of social, psychological and political research which might help to redefine the role of women in the family and society for the purposes of economic development and the strengthening of world peace. UNESCO's Division of Equal Access to Education had designed all its programmes for 1975 and 1976 to fit the three themes of International Women's Year. That aspect of the work had been approved by the Director-General.

During International Women's Year, there would be a follow-up of the joint UNESCO/ILO investigation of the relationship between the education, training and employment opportunities open to women. Reports from five countries would be studied and it was planned to follow them up by assisting the countries to apply the recommendations made in the reports.

A second project was a study of the working mother and her role in early childhood education. The purpose of the study was to help member States to help working mothers bring up children of pre-school age. The programme would eventually be included in school curricula.

UNESCO's third and most ambitious programme was connected with women's efforts for peace. There were three stages in the programme: meetings would be held in selected member countries to work out appropriate procedures. UNESCO would then sign contracts with seven representative countries which would list their achievements, new developments and innovations. Fourteen eminent women would then be given grants to visit the seven countries and learn from their experience. The purpose of the programme was to strengthen world peace through the efforts of women. A pamphlet on the three projects would be issued during International Women's Year.

/...

(Mrs. Zahran, UNESCO)

In many areas of the world, women were denied equality in primary education. UNESCO was running a pilot project in one country where such inequality existed with a view to pinpointing the obstacles involved and finding ways to help girls overcome those obstacles and go to school. UNESCO would also be holding a limited meeting with ILO on educational and vocational guidance, which was very important to girls. It was hoped that the results of the meeting would help member States to devise suitable strategies. Co-operation with non-governmental organizations would continue in 1975. UNESCO's programme would have been largely the same without International Women's Year, because the aims of the Year were largely the same as those of UNESCO itself. In principle, all UNESCO projects were for both men and women.

UNESCO hoped to hold a meeting in 1974 to which the task force would invite social science experts. Efforts would also be made to mobilize intellectuals throughout the world during the Year. UNESCO's information section would publicize International Women's Year.

Miss SNYDER (Economic Commission for Africa) said that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was the only regional economic commission to have developed a programme for the integration of women in development. The Women's Programme of the Human Resources Development Division of ECA was implementing three projects which had a particular bearing on International Women's Year and which fell within the Division's five-year programme for the participation of women in development. The five-year programme had been drawn up on the basis of recommendations formulated at conferences of African women themselves.

The three projects related to national commissions on women and development and women's bureaux, the African Women's Development Task Force and the Pan-African Women's Centre. In so far as the first was concerned, in 1974 a team of three or four women would visit interested countries to explain the nature, structure and functions of commissions and bureaux. A brochure on the subject had been prepared by ECA. As a follow-up to the team's visits, consultants would be made available to countries requesting them. Furthermore, in 1975 there would be a regional workshop in which special emphasis would be placed on the development of national machinery for the integration of women in development. Both women and

(Miss Snyder, ECA)

men would participate in the workshop. ECA would bear in mind the experience gained by the Arab countries in promoting the integration of women in development.

The African Women's Development Task Force would be a volunteer corps composed mainly of African women who would serve either in less developed areas of their own countries or in other African countries. It would be organized by ECA, which would also prepare guidelines for countries wishing to establish national task forces. The Force would provide training and advice in such subjects as nutrition, child spacing and care, labour-saving technology and the establishment of national commissions and bureaux on women in development.

The project on the Pan-African Women's Centre was the result of recommendations made at meetings held at Addis Ababa in 1969 and at Rabat in 1971. Participants in those meetings had urged that a regional training institute for handicrafts be established. Furthermore, officers of the All Africa Women's Conference had often spoken of a regional training centre, at which emphasis would be placed on training of liberation movement women. It was envisaged that the centre would provide in-service training in such matters as foods and nutrition, handicrafts and small-scale industries, family resource management, family size and family relations, and communications and organization skills; conduct applied research on national policies related to women's socio-economic roles, women's tasks and responsibilities, relationships between population and women's work and so on; train young university women in analytic and action skills for rural development and the integration of women in development; and offer apprenticeships for young graduates in the administration of organizations and programmes.

Dr. MALAFATOPoulos (World Health Organization) said that WHO would be represented by a senior official at the United Nations International Forum on the Role of Women in Population and Development. It was considering the possibility of preparing a background paper on health and nutrition in relation to the integration of women in various development sectors, including the rural sector. It would also examine the merit of certain other actions, such as a special issue of the magazine World Health devoted to the theme of International Women's Year, a photographic reportage of the female health worker in the field, the analysis of the current situation of women as health workers in all categories in different

/...

(Dr. Malafatopoulos, WHO)

parts of the world, and a paper on the role of women in local community involvement and their contribution to the improvement of health and social well-being. In those ways, WHO hoped to make a positive contribution to the success of International Women's Year.

Mr. CHARNOW (United Nations Children's Fund) said that UNICEF was paying increasing attention to the training and education of women and girls, including the elimination of illiteracy. That development was attributable not only to UNICEF's recognition of the right to individual development and work opportunities but also to its recognition of the special relationship between mother and child and the fact that the enlightenment and emancipation of women redounded to the advantage of children. From the point of view of UNICEF's mandate, there was no question that the integration of women in development efforts and the preparation of girls to play their part in development would improve the quality of life for children. Thus, UNICEF believed that it had an important stake in the success of International Women's Year. A number of the objectives of the Year, as set forth in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/576) were very much in line with UNICEF's ongoing concerns, as were the suggestions concerning activities to be carried out at the national, regional and international level. Officials in UNICEF would be glad to work with the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the Deputy Director-in-Charge of the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women Branch in determining to what extent efforts could be intensified and a new impetus given to action aimed at attainment of their common goals.

Mrs. JURADO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that FAO had noted with pleasure that most of its suggestions and recommendations concerning the programme for International Women's Year had been incorporated in the draft programme currently before the Commission. In observance of the Year, FAO intended to promote special agricultural and rural development activities through its headquarters, its regional offices and its country field programmes. It was FAO's opinion that equality of men and women was not only a goal in itself but also a means for achieving economic and social development.

/...

(Mrs. Jurado, FAO)

It must be acknowledged that it would be very difficult for women to secure their equality with men. FAO still encountered negative attitudes with respect to the inclusion of programmes for women in development plans and in many instances the degree of priority allocated to programmes for women was very low. To counteract that tendency, FAO had established interdisciplinary task forces in which women participated and through which they were able to try to ensure that their needs were taken into account. Furthermore, under some field programmes, country planners with the specific task of promoting the full integration of women in development had been appointed. FAO was also working with ECA and the European Working Party on Home Economics to promote women's role in development.

FAO's plans for commemoration of International Women's Year included the establishment of an ad hoc interdisciplinary working group to make systematic plans for FAO's involvement in the programme for the Year and the issue of Ceres medals depicting distinguished women. An item on International Women's Year would be included in the agenda for FAO's regional conferences.

FAO would also play its part in activities to be carried out in World Population Year and would concentrate on population education programmes. The role of women in development, a main feature of FAO's programme of work, had been included in its educational programmes. Most of FAO's training programmes were development-oriented.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in accordance with the procedure agreed upon at the previous meeting, she should invite the representative of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women to address the Commission.

It was so agreed.

Mrs. HYMER (International Federation of Business and Professional Women) said that she was speaking as the Chairman of the Committee on International Women's Year of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council. Members of those organizations were to be found in every country and they could spur national and international efforts to promote the integration of women in development. Documents

/...

(Mrs. Hymer, International Federation
of Business and Professional Women)

E/CN.6/NGO/248, 249 and 250 had been drafted by the Committee on International Women's Year, which was made up of representatives of 31 international organizations representing a wide range of interests. The following should be added to the 14 organizations listed in the documents to which she had referred: Associated Country Women of the World, International Federation of University Women and Zonta International.

The organizations had responded most enthusiastically to the proclamation of 1975 as International Women's Year. They had carefully examined the excellent plan for the Year in document E/CN.6/576 and had made many suggestions for dealing with particular groups and specific problems. In that way they had indicated that they were willing to take advantage of the opportunity afforded to create a new awareness among their members of the needs of women throughout the world and the urgent need for immediate action.

The statements in documents E/CN.6/NGO/248, 249 and 250 were joint statements by the organizations listed. They offered a pattern to be followed internationally, regionally, nationally and locally in furthering the aims of International Women's Year. There had been a strong feeling that there must be widely based groups in order to make the greatest impact.

As would be seen from document E/CN.6/NGO/248, her Committee had felt that a paragraph should be added to part I of the draft programme in document E/CN.6/576 pointing out that the Year would be a time not only to evaluate progress and start new programmes but also to document the contributions which women had made and were making to improve the quality of life where they lived and enhance the economic worth of their countries. That was a task which non-governmental organizations were particularly fitted to perform, because they were in a good position to appreciate the value of the work being done by women.

Referring to paragraph 26 of the draft programme in document E/CN.6/576, she said that the organizations on whose behalf she was speaking had been of the opinion that an international conference should be held. They had also expressed particular interest in participating in efforts to achieve the third goal to be pursued during the Year, namely, peace.

(Mrs. Hymer, International Federation
of Business and Professional Women)

The paper on obstacles to the attainment of equality of men and women (E/CN.6/NGO/249) was merely a research study of what participants in United Nations seminars had stated to be obstacles to the advancement of women. In submitting it, the organizations had not intended to advocate any particular point of view or programme. They had felt, however, that the paper might prove useful in discussions on long-range programmes for the integration of women in development.

In conclusion, she hoped that the final plan for the Year would indicate measures that could be taken by non-governmental organizations. Possibly, an additional section on the contribution of non-governmental organizations could be added to the plan.

The CHAIRMAN said that those members of the Commission who wished to form part of the working group which, it appeared, the Commission wished to set up on agenda item 3, should communicate their names to her at the end of the meeting. In forming the group, attention would have to be paid to the principle of equitable geographical distribution. She suggested that representatives of the specialized agencies would be able to make a significant contribution to the work of the group. She suggested further that members of non-governmental organizations should be allowed to participate in the work of the group in the same manner as they participated in the proceedings of the Commission itself.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

STUDY ON THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING (agenda item 6) (E/CN.6/575 and Add.1 and 3, E/CN.6/NGO/250)

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the Egyptian representative, who was also attending the current session, had raised the question of family planning for the first time about 11 years previously, when no one had ever heard of the subject. The Egyptian representative had also played a part in initiating the study which the Commission had before it, in 1965 in Teheran, together with Austria, Finland and the United States. At that time, it had been believed that data would be available at Headquarters which could be used for the study, but in 1968, when the first interim report had been submitted, it had been recognized that no relevant information had been available at Headquarters. After considering the interim report, the Commission had recommended the appointment of a Special Rapporteur entrusted with the further study of the question, which was to be based on the findings of national surveys or case studies undertaken by interested Governments; and on information furnished by specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in consultative status. When the first progress report had been submitted in 1970, only four States had replied to the Secretary-General, but some 35 had indicated interest in the subject if they could be given time and guidance. The Commission had requested the Special Rapporteur to prepare guidelines which would assist Governments in undertaking national surveys and which would aid United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations in further work on the subject, and had invited her to consider the holding of consultations at the regional and national level with appropriate national and international officials, experts and women leaders. She had prepared and circulated the guidelines to Governments, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations; she had held consultations in 1971 and 1972 with national and international officials, experts and women leaders in various countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and also with the United Nations regional economic commissions in the regions concerned. In 1972 and 1973 regional seminars had been held on the subject of the status of women and family planning in Istanbul, Turkey, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and in Jogjakarta, Indonesia, the latter two seminars being carried out with funds made available by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. In her

/...

(Mrs. Sipila)

consultations with national officials, she had learnt that, while all were aware of the meaning of family planning, its relationship with the status of women was not understood. She had been at pains to clarify the issue for the officials with whom consultations had been held. The main problem had been that, since the subject was a multidisciplinary one, many ministries and offices had had to be consulted, and even Ministries of Foreign Affairs had found it difficult to assemble the information. The relevant statistics were incomplete, even in the most developed countries. At its twenty-fourth session, held in 1972, the Commission had taken note of the progress of work and had indicated its desire for the report on the subject to be submitted to it at the twenty-fifth session. She had been appointed Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs on 1 September 1972, and had been obliged to relinquish her duties as Special Rapporteur but, since the Commission had not been scheduled to meet, she had continued in that capacity until the current session. The report gave almost all the information relevant to the subject, and formed a very comprehensive summary. The intrinsic importance of the report was all the greater in view of its timeliness, since it was being submitted precisely at the beginning of World Population Year, because various conferences and seminars would be held in 1974, and in view of the importance of the study for the review and appraisal of the Second Development Decade.

The report began by analysing the meaning of the term "status of women". "Status" was defined as the position a person held in the structure of a society, in its educational institution, its political system, in the family, and so on. To those various positions were ascribed varying degrees of power, privilege and prestige. Thus, the "status of women" was the conjunction of positions a woman occupied at any one point in time, as a worker, student, wife, mother, church member, political worker, or whatever, and of the rights and duties she was expected to exercise in her active role as occupant of those positions. The report examined the concept of family planning, especially in relation to human rights. The concept varied widely and some referred to it as applying to very specific methods of birth control, while others included broad social, economic and/or medical assistance programmes under its rubric. The report interpreted family planning as the right of

/...

(Mrs. Sipila)

all persons to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and the right to adequate education, information and services in that respect. Three main aspects could be distinguished: the extent to which family planning determined the status of women, the status of women as a factor influencing family size and the birth rate, and the implications for women of current population trends.

There should be universal awareness of the relationship between demographic growth, development and opportunities for women to participate in the social and economic development of their respective societies. Peoples and Governments must do everything in their power to ensure that women were able to decide freely and responsibly on the size of their families.

The conclusions and recommendations of the report indicated that, although much remained to be done, encouraging progress had been made in many of the important fields in which the Commission had been active since its inception. It was to be hoped that it would continue its fruitful work.

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) pointed out that, long before the United Nations had proclaimed 1974 as World Population Year, and 1975 as International Women's Year, the Commission had already begun its study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning. The Commission had, in fact, requested the study at a time when the subject had still been a delicate and controversial one.

In the United States, it was believed that the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning was extremely important, and there was no doubt that greater accessibility of means and knowledge of family planning had contributed to the health and survival of mothers and children and enabled girls to have the same educational opportunities as boys, as a result of which the number of professional and university women had increased considerably. Their ability to exercise their right to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children allowed women to take up employment outside the home and to devote more time to national politics, which was beneficial not only for them but also for society.

Her country supported the Teheran Declaration and the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (General Assembly resolution 2542 (XXIV)) which affirmed the

/...

(Mrs. Hutar, United States)

need for the provision to families of the knowledge and means necessary to enable them to exercise their right to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children. Two Presidents of the United States had stated that it was national policy that no woman should be deprived of that kind of knowledge and means through lack of information or resources. For almost three years, national legislation and programmes had guaranteed access to family planning services for all women in the United States.

The report in document E/CN.6/575 was an excellent one; thought would have to be given to the possibility of circulating it widely as a public document as part of the observance of World Population Year and International Women's Year. Perhaps the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, one of whose responsibilities was to disseminate information on World Population Year, might assist in that undertaking.

In conclusion, she announced that President Nixon had just signed an executive order establishing a commission to supervise the celebration of World Population Year in the United States.

Mrs. COCKROFT (United Kingdom) noted that the experience reflected in various reports and seminars on family planning indicated that the conditions, needs and difficulties of different countries varied and, accordingly, the contraceptives used and services provided should vary in each country. It was therefore essential to carry out surveys in order to draw up effective programmes.

Since 1947 she had been practising as a doctor in the family planning programme in the United Kingdom, and wished to stress that family planning was a branch of medicine that should form part of the study plans and programmes of all medical personnel, which was not the case in all countries at the present time.

In the United Kingdom, the work of the volunteers of the Family Planning Association, which had encountered some hostility at the outset, had borne fruit in 1967 with the adoption of a national law on family planning under which medical advice and contraceptives were distributed free of charge to those who needed them. The process would culminate in April 1974, when the family planning service would become an integral part of the United Kingdom National Health Service.

/...

(Mrs. Cockroft, United Kingdom)

Family planning played a primordial role improving the status of women in society. Couples should have the number of children that they wished and could afford, and the mother's health should be the basic consideration in reaching a decision. Every child should be wanted and loved, and that principle was one of the basic human rights for both children as well as parents.

Ideally, each couple should jointly take decisions concerning family planning; however, in practice, the responsibility tended to fall on the woman alone. Accordingly, all women, whatever their social class or level of education, should have easy access to family planning services and methods. It was also very important to provide young people with education in family planning, since abysmal ignorance of the matter still persisted. It was also indispensable to provide free medical advice on contraception to those who needed it, not only in clinics, but also in mobile units which could reach women in rural areas. It should be remembered that modern methods of oral contraception required constant medical supervision and that, if women could not rely on an effective and reliable contraceptive, they might resort to illegal abortions with all the physical and psychological problems which that entailed. If a woman had no control over her fertility, she would have even less control over her status in life and her role in society. It was true that some women freely decided not to work outside the home, and were very happy with the life they had chosen; but the old concept that the principal function of a woman was to bring children into the world was gradually disappearing, and was being replaced by a whole range of new concepts and attitudes which enabled women to develop and enrich their lives. At the same time, if a woman could not rely on efficient contraceptive services and methods, her life and career could be wrecked by unplanned and unwanted pregnancies.

She urged members of the Commission to do all within their power to ensure that their own countries gave the highest priority to family planning programmes within their social and health programmes.

Mrs. LI Su-wen (China) said that her Government favoured family planning because it helped to protect women's health and freed them from the burden imposed by too many children born in quick succession, so that they might have more time and energy for study and work and play a fuller role in all spheres of life. Her

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

Government's policy was to develop the national economy in a planned manner, including the policy of planned population increases. To that end, it actively promoted production with the aim of raising the living standard of the people, developing medical and health services throughout rural and urban areas and improving health services for women and children. While lowering the mortality rate of the population, it encouraged family planning in order to regulate the birth rate. For China, family planning was not restricted to birth control, but also covered the adoption of various measures in the light of differing circumstances. In densely populated areas with high birth rates, late marriage and birth control were encouraged. In sparsely populated national minority areas, the Government adopted appropriate measures to increase the population and promote production. Guidance and help were given to those who desired to practise birth control. Family planning activities in China were carried out according to the principle of combining voluntary choice by the masses with State guidance. The State provided contraceptives and related medical services free of charge.

In general, Chinese women welcomed the idea of family planning and actively co-operated with medical departments which sought to limit the number of births and space them out more reasonably. The Chinese Government had made great efforts in that field, especially in recent years, carrying out extensive publicity and educational work. Consequently, family planning activities had produced relatively good results. Chinese women had become aware of the advantages of planned parenthood. The State devoted particular attention to the problems of women and to the protection of women and children. For example, women workers were entitled to maternity leave with pay; women were transferred to light work during pregnancy; and maternity and child care services had been set up. Notwithstanding all those advantages, Chinese women felt that late marriage and smaller families were truly beneficial to their health, and enabled them to work, study and take part in other activities in order to make a greater contribution to socialist construction. With fewer children, the burden of household drudgery was alleviated and, more importantly, the health and education of the younger generation could be improved.

At present family planning was more successful in urban China than in rural areas, where the birth rate was comparatively high, as some people were still

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

influenced by old ideas, such as "more children, greater happiness", and were not content with families containing only daughters. Accordingly, publicity and persuasion work was still necessary in rural areas, so as to help peasant women carry out family planning more successfully.

Since conditions varied from country to country, policies and measures in the field of family planning should be drafted in accordance with the specific conditions obtaining in each country and the wishes of women themselves. No uniform rules should be imposed.

In a word, family planning helped to create favourable conditions for the improvement of women's status. Of course, a radical change in the status of women hinged not only on family planning, but also on whether or not the hundreds of millions of women were actively mobilized to fight together with men for the complete victory of the cause of national and social liberation.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines) said that her country gave high priority to family planning programmes. A decree had recently been issued establishing a population commission, which was entrusted with the task of carrying out a programme in the field of family planning and co-ordinating the activities of the various bodies concerned.

Various government departments in the Philippines had programmes relating to family planning. The Ministry of Education had included family planning information programmes in curricula for children from the first grade through to university level. The programmes also covered the provision of information on the matter to drop-outs. The Ministry of Social Welfare had also established a special programme on the subject aimed at youth. The Ministry of Public Health had worked actively on the matter, both in the countryside and in the cities, through health and child care centres. The Ministry of Public Information co-operated in such work, and a department within the Ministry of Labour dealt with family planning programmes for female workers. In addition, a tripartite committee had been set up in the Ministry of Labour to assist workers and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

Turning to the activities of non-governmental organizations, she said that various women's organizations had worked actively in the field of family planning.

/...

(Mrs. Alday, Philippines)

Thus, the National League of Child Care Centres was helping to establish such centres in rural areas, and the National Federation of Women's Clubs and the Young Women's Christian Association were sponsoring family planning programmes. Various youth organizations also took part in such activities. There was full awareness in the Philippines of the importance of family planning for the country's development and, consequently, programmes in that field were given high priority.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), noting that Egypt had co-operated in the preparation of the report submitted by Mrs. Sipila, said that the report had provided important data and guidelines for various Governments. The conceptual approach to the problem was of particular value. For example, the definitions of "status of women" and "family planning" were extremely useful. Her delegation supported the proposal that the report should be widely distributed, especially at the World Population Conference.

The Istanbul seminar on the status of women and family planning had provided an opportunity to introduce new topics to the participants, who had learned much from the seminar. In Egypt, family planning programmes had been introduced: however, since such programmes constituted a new idea, few were prepared to recognize their value. The Family Planning Association had been encouraged to continue its work, especially in mobilizing public opinion. It had then been realized that family planning and the population problem were closely linked with socio-economic development. Ten years later, the Government had incorporated into its population plans programmes orientated towards women, community development, and so on. Those programmes had been criticized for not attaching due importance to clinics. However, clinics were no more than a prerequisite: the people could be expected to exercise their rights only if they were provided with advice.

Egypt was pleased to be able to co-operate with the Commission in giving more thorough consideration to the item before it. Egypt's ideas and activities in that area derived from the questionnaire which it had previously been sent by the Commission.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that she had attended two seminars, one regional and one interregional, dealing with the relationship between the status of women and family planning, a matter which she had been studying for 11 years. Over that period important changes had occurred in the way the problem was approached.

/...

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

In Indonesia, the success of development was a matter of life and death. Consequently, the problem of the status of women had to be examined as it related to development. It was necessary to draw up a positive strategy for education in family planning, so that women could understand what their rights were. Nevertheless, it was essential to look beyond the question of family planning and to integrate it within the framework of over-all development.

If the Special Rapporteur was to continue her studies on the matter, those studies should be broader, so that they brought out the relationship between family planning and development, and the importance of participation by women in the development process.

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) expressed her agreement with what had been stated by the representative of Indonesia and pointed out that, in assuming the post of Assistant Secretary-General, she had relinquished the duties of Special Rapporteur.

Admittedly, the problem of family planning came within the wider framework of development. The question of population policies and planning was not only connected with the problem of human reproduction, but also had other aspects related to general development. At the current stage, the most important thing was for women to participate diligently in all the activities of World Population Year.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) apologized on behalf of her Government for having failed to respond to the Commission's invitation. Japan had been considered an example of the successful application of population policies. However, repeating what had been reported during the previous session, she pointed out that family planning in Japan had begun in the midst of war and poverty. It had been initiated not by the Government, but by the people and the women of Japan, who had suffered the consequences of large families and deprivation.

Japan was currently engaged in revising its population programmes and policies. In carrying out the revision some were in favour of prohibiting abortion, which was currently allowed for economic and health reasons. The women were opposed to such a prohibition. It was necessary to launch publicity and educational campaigns before revising the population policies. As the Special Rapporteur pointed out in her report, the fundamental objectives of such policies should be the enhancement of human rights and the welfare of the individual.

/...

Miss TYABJI (India) said that India was, together with Japan, one of the first countries to pursue a family planning policy, although it had not been as successful as Japan in that respect. India's dilemma lay in the fact that, unless living levels were raised, it would not be possible to convey the message of family planning to the people. For that reason, the Indian Government laid emphasis on development and employment opportunities.

Mrs. HOOGSTOEL-FABRI (Belgium) said that the demographic situation in Belgium had reached a stage where the aging of the population was a very marked phenomenon. The number of families with one or two children had for some years been increasing, whereas those with three children had been decreasing since 1964, while the number of families with more than three children continued to decline. The Belgian Government was currently concerned about family planning policy not so much because of demographic trends as out of consideration for the quality of life. From that point of view, specialists had been instructed to prepare an information campaign intended for the majority of the population, involving the participation of doctors, ancillary medical personnel, and public and private educational bodies, including women's organizations. The aim was to promote sex education among young people and adults, so as to help married couples to live in harmony, to encourage conscious and responsible parenthood and the spacing of births, and to combat sterility.

In July 1973 Parliament adopted an Act abrogating certain articles of the penal code which prohibited publicity and information concerning contraceptive methods, and the sale and advertising of some contraceptive products were made subject to regulations designed to safeguard public health.

Mrs. GOMEZ (International Planned Parenthood Federation), speaking at the Chairman's invitation, said that the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) was a private organization which believed that knowledge of planned parenthood or family planning constituted a fundamental human right, and that a balance between the world's population and its natural resources and productivity was a necessary condition for the happiness, prosperity and peace of mankind. IPPF encouraged both the establishment of national associations, to pioneer family planning services throughout the world, and the mobilizing of public opinion to persuade Governments to accept responsibility for them. Since it was

/...

(Mrs. Gomez)

founded in 1952 the membership of the Federation had increased from 8 to 84. IPPF had always considered that the development of its activities formed an integral part of the progress of women in the process of social change and economic development. It clearly recognized the need for accelerated economic and social development and, in particular, for an improvement in the social status of women as a prerequisite for the control by men and women of their own fertility.

She said that document E/CN.6/575 clearly confirmed the existence of a relationship between the social status of women and family planning, despite the difficulties involved in evaluating that relationship. The study pointed out some major complex problems requiring urgent, careful and continuing analysis by IPPF in line with its programmes and human and financial resources. IPPF focused its attention on some aspects of those problems, such as education, activities aimed at the elimination of legal restrictions affecting the social status of women and access to birth control methods, the contribution of family planning and the spacing of births to mental health and general family well-being. In developing its activities and in national labour programmes the Federation would lay special emphasis on the integration of family planning with other social development programmes and on the promotion of opportunities for the progress of women through productive employment and greater participation in the life of the community. The Federation did not regard the employment of women as the only alternative to raising children, but as a concomitant which could provide women with a certain economic and social independence and an outlook on life itself, which was not limited solely to the home and motherhood. She shared the views expressed by various delegations concerning the need to establish child care facilities. The Federation welcomed the exchange of ideas with other non-governmental organizations, and in the near future would undertake to organize a seminar for that purpose. It hoped that the study would help to establish a link between World Population Year and International Women's Year, and approved of the spirit and the aims of the study.

Mrs. LIPKOWSKI (International Alliance of Women), speaking at the Chairman's invitation, pointed out that her organization had held regional seminars on the relationship between family planning and the status of women, and had found

/...

(Mrs. Lipkowski)

that in various regions of the world the population problem was not a problem which could be solved by laws or prohibitions or promotional campaigns. Family planning was a human problem in which ethnic, religious, social and personal factors were involved.

In 1970 the Congress of the International Planned Parenthood Federation had reached the conclusion that the birth control policies of the developing countries had failed despite the encouragement of their respective Governments. The effectiveness of contraceptive methods depended on the economic, cultural and social situation of the women concerned. So long as women were denied political, social and economic responsibilities they could not reconcile the number of their children with national and international interests.

The problem was an international one and should be recognized as such. Statistics showed that factors such as age at the time of marriage, the level of culture, the area in which people lived, the social and economic milieu and the type of employment influenced the number of births per family. In the developing countries the prevailing attitude favoured large families, which enjoyed greater prestige. In the developed countries family planning was directly related to the social and economic status of the family. Thus, the less educated a woman was, the larger the number of unwanted children she would have, and to the extent that she had a career outside the home, the smaller the number of her children would be. For example, in France the fertility of only 32 per cent of working women was higher than the average, while the figure rose to 57 per cent in the case of women who did not work.

States had a duty to carry out campaigns of education, information and demystification (concerning the role of women in the home), in order to give women the opportunity to choose freely and with dignity, in agreement, and on an equal footing, with their husbands, the number of children they would have.

In 1974, World Population Year, the International Alliance of Women would carry out an intensive campaign in the 42 countries in which it operated, with a view to promoting, as appropriate, the dissemination of the study of the relationship between the status of women and family planning.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

/...

607th meeting

Friday, 18 January 1974,
at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI

STUDY ON THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING
(agenda item 6) (continued) (E/CN.6/575 and Add.1 and 3, E/CN.6/NGO/250)

Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) said that her delegation had noted with appreciation the valuable information in the excellent study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning (E/CN.6/575 and Add.1 and 3) on the interregional and regional seminars held in Istanbul, Santo Domingo and Jogjakarta.

Although it was far from over-populated, Liberia recognized family planning as an essential factor in its economic and social development. It had been one of the first countries in West Africa to establish a family planning centre, which provided educational material and family planning services to men and women. The centre's success was evidenced by the significant reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates and the increase in the number of girls and women joining the labour force and enrolling in schools. In addition, health services, housing and nutrition had improved in both urban and rural areas.

The definition of the term "family planning" given in the study would help to remove doubts and misunderstandings concerning the aim of family planning. Family planning afforded parents the choice of deciding freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and the right to adequate information, advice and services. Its objective was to ensure the exercise of individual choice in reproductive behaviour. Family planning was less a matter of providing the pill or other means of contraception than of mobilizing people through education and employment and providing a minimum social infrastructure and social security. If basic human needs were to be satisfied, people must be free to decide on the number of children they could afford rather than having an unlimited number of children who would grow up facing an uncertain future. The aim of family planning was therefore to improve the quality of life and to free the individual to reach his or her full potential.

Studies had shown that there was a definite interrelationship between family planning and the status of women. Family planning could be a positive force enabling women to exercise their rights in many areas, particularly in the family and in society. Lack of access to education, information and family planning

/...

(Mrs. Stevenson, Liberia)

services had, in many instances, caused women to resort to crude and sometimes fatal means of ending unwanted pregnancies. Family planning not only ensured the equality of man and wife during marriage and at its dissolution but enabled the woman to have more time for rest and leisure and to broaden the scope of her activities. The benefits of family planning were aptly summarized in paragraph 32 of the study (E/CN.6/575).

When economic development was outdistanced by a rapid increase in the population, Governments with limited resources had difficulty in providing adequate housing, health services, nutrition and education for the population. In such situations, conditions affecting the status of women could not be considered in isolation; they must be considered as part of the problem affecting the entire population. Family planning was, therefore, indispensable for economic and social progress. While Governments must plan according to their individual needs, the conquest of ignorance, poverty and disease depended to a great extent on the acceptance of family planning as a basic human right.

The study before the Commission would be extremely useful to the World Population Conference. Its summary, recommendations and conclusions were of interest to men as well as women, and they could serve as useful guidelines in identifying obstacles to the full integration of women in the total development effort.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the most successful of the international meetings on family planning matters held during the previous two or three years were the seminars in Turkey and Indonesia. They had revealed a growing awareness that the birth rate was closely linked with the level of economic development, health, the distribution of the national income, the level of female education and the degree of female employment. It depended on the cultural standards of the population and on the equality of women in the family. It was becoming increasingly clear that artificial methods of birth control would not produce the desired results.

Despite differences of opinion, a number of general conclusions had been reached at the Istanbul seminar. There seemed to be very little contradiction, for example, between the idea that family planning involved the right to have children at one's own discretion and the right of a child to be wanted, and the idea that family planning was a set of social economic, legal, medical and educational measures to provide women with the most favourable opportunities to

(Mrs. Nikolaeva, USSR)

exercise their rights as mothers, working women and citizens in their own interests and in the interests of their families and the whole society. It had also been agreed at the Istanbul seminar that family planning could not solve the problem of hunger and poverty and that States had a sovereign right to pursue independent demographic policies. The report of the Indonesian seminar contained some interesting conclusions. According to the report, if a woman had an occupation of her own and spent part of the day away from home, and if she had to divide her time between socially useful work and her family, she would be unlikely to have many children. Nevertheless, she would feel happier because her participation and the knowledge that she was useful to society would make her life more worth while and attractive. The report of the London seminar stated that family planning should be considered in terms of social development and not as a matter of birth control. It was clear from the seminars that demographic processes could not have a decisive influence on socio-economic progress, since only far-reaching socio-economic and cultural transformations within the countries themselves could boost the economy in general and overcome backwardness.

The Soviet Union had never introduced special measures to reduce the birth rate. The terms "family planning" and "birth control" were not used. The Soviet State had not interfered in the right of families to decide for themselves how many children they wanted, but was more concerned with improving people's standard of living. Nevertheless, Soviet society was not indifferent to the number of children per family and the State was creating conditions that would encourage a rise in the birth rate. With the help received from the State, women were able to combine their professional activities and family obligations. The general picture in the Soviet Union was one of a fairly low birth rate and of a very low child mortality rate. The aim of demographic policy should be limited to producing an optimum rate of population replacement by systematic action to stimulate or limit the birth rate depending on the conditions in a given country. It was hardly right, therefore, for the United Nations to make recommendations in such matters. General recommendations could not be acceptable to all countries; each country had the right to pursue its own demographic policy with due regard for humanitarian principles and human dignity. A national demographic policy could not be imposed from outside. It was a part of a State's social policy and could be successful only if it reflected the general trend of development within a society.

(Mrs. Nikolaeva, USSR)

Her delegation viewed with understanding the sovereign decisions of countries to reduce their birth rates but considered that such measures would not produce the results expected without profound social and economic changes. Birth control was but a supplementary means of overcoming social, economic and cultural backwardness.

Miss PIETALA (Finland) said that the study under consideration was the first authoritative document to place woman's right to decide on a very important aspect of her life, namely, childbirth, in its proper perspective. Full use of the right would make a woman master of her own life. The Special Rapporteur had also done pioneering work in defining such important concepts as "status of women" and "family planning". It was true that a woman's status depended on the extent to which she had control over her own life. In practice, that meant the extent to which she had access to knowledge, economic resources and political power. The status of a society could be assessed according to the choices it afforded its citizens in the areas of education, employment, political life and family life. Clearly, the status of the citizen in any society was linked to the status and quality of the society itself.

The definition of the concept of "family planning" given in the study was important. Hitherto, family planning had too often been taken to mean only birth control. The negative reaction to it on the part of many developing countries and religious societies was therefore not surprising. The study made it clear, however, that family planning was the right of all persons to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children, taking into account the right of every child to be wanted, loved and cared for. The right to practise family planning facilitated the exercise of other rights, such as the right to health, to education, to equal pay for equal work, to active participation in public life and to equality within the family. In the ability to exercise those rights, women had been and still were underprivileged in comparison with men. The report made it clear that family planning was not just a trick whereby the rich countries tried to restrict the populations of the less privileged countries. On the contrary, it was a means of making life more meaningful for those who had previously had little say in the unfolding of their destiny. The more developed a society, the greater the importance of the ability to practise family planning.

/...

(Miss Pietala, Finland)

Another fact brought out in the study was that the problem of improving the status of women affected all sectors of society. The study was also valuable as a clear statement of the principles which should guide those working to improve the status of women. Her delegation endorsed the United States representative's suggestion that the study should be given as wide a distribution as possible. It would be useful if the Office of Public Information were to produce a more popular, less technical version in which some of the points made in the addenda were illustrated by pictures. The information contained in the study would also prove most useful in the information and education activities to be carried out during World Population Year and International Women's Year. Indeed, her delegation wished to propose formally that the Commission should recommend that the study be one of the basic documents for the World Population Conference. That would be one means of ensuring that women's views were taken into account in the discussions at the Conference. It might also lead Governments to include women in their delegations to the Conference.

Miss CHATON (France) said that she had participated in the progress made, and difficulties encountered, by the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in the research work she had undertaken for her study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning. The subject of family planning and its effect on the status of women was now regarded as extremely important. She had participated in the drafting of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and wished to recall the terms used to introduce the notion of access to educational information to help in ensuring the health and well-being of families into the article on the right to education. Gradual acceptance of that principle by populations with different religious and moral outlooks had made progress possible, and it was through women that such acceptance was strengthened.

Family planning was a long-term undertaking which required the participation of both partners of the couple. It supposed sex education in the family and at

(Miss Chaton, France)

all levels of education, including higher and adult education. The constant collaboration of family, school and social groups was necessary, as were unambiguous attitudes on the part of the family and teachers at all levels.

The notion that family planning was a right and a duty of responsible parents was gaining ground and leading, even in countries following a policy of demographic growth, to the notion of the qualitative improvement of the population.

In France, an Act of 1967 had made family planning possible, but family planning facilities had been introduced only very slowly. In January 1974, sex education had been made compulsory in secondary schools and a council composed of doctors, educators, members of women's trade unions set up to propose necessary developments. The delay in the introduction of family planning measures had been responsible for a shift of emphasis to the question of liberalized abortion, which was the subject of a bill to come before Parliament at its next session. The notion of the "wanted" child was one which should predominate in the female population.

In order that family planning might develop normally, much research work on appropriate techniques and on the development of appropriate information must be undertaken. Her delegation hoped that the representative of WHO would indicate the most suitable means of providing couples with the best contraceptive information and evaluate the results of certain contraceptive policies.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that on the whole Norwegians did not use the words "family planning" but the more direct word "contraception", by which they meant the right of all persons to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children, in the interests of the health and welfare of the population.

It was commonly accepted in Norway that sex education and contraceptive information were of the utmost importance in precluding unwanted pregnancies and that such information should be given to young people as early as possible. Accordingly, since 1972 courses in sex education had been compulsory in elementary schools, which were attended by children between 7 and 16 years of age. In high schools, the courses were broadened to include information about abortion, contraception and sterilization. Instruction in the use of contraceptives could be given with the parents' consent. It was the duty of the school to provide such information to

(Mrs. Kolstad, Norway)

all pupils and to try to correct any erroneous ideas they might have. It was of the utmost importance that teachers should be well-informed and adopt a sensible attitude to the difficult and often delicate subject of contraception. The availability of good teachers must be a crucial point in all Member States.

Possibilities for direct contraceptive instruction for adults had been increasing in recent years in Norway but were still far from adequate. Doctors, public health nurses and midwives were supposed to take part in the programme. Medical students were now being instructed in family planning and older doctors and midwives could attend refresher courses on the subject. Nevertheless, there were bottle-necks in local districts, where it was necessary to resort to the mass media to provide information.

In Norway, family planning was regarded first and foremost as a health matter although economic aspects were involved as well. Recently it had come to be discussed in connexion with the status of women, and an increasing number of young people considered that even Norway's low birth rate was too high. At the current growth rate of 0.8 per cent, the country's population would have doubled within 80 years. Abortion under certain circumstances had been legalized in Norway in 1960. A revision of the law was currently being prepared and the right of a woman to free abortion at her own decision was under constant discussion. It was impossible to say whether political agreement would be reached on that point. There was, however, agreement that all women should be able to exercise their rights in the matter and to appeal if their rights were denied.

Norwegians believed that family planning influenced the status of women and that the status of women had a bearing on fertility. Higher social status meant more family planning and family planning gave a better status. In Norway, families were small. In the last 40 years, the size of the average family had declined from 5 to 2.1 children. Nevertheless, there was a growing tendency for the first child in a family to be unplanned. The tendency also revealed social discrepancies in the population, for many more early marriages were contracted between young persons with very little education and a rather low social status. Ninety per cent of teenage girls were pregnant when they married. It followed that the divorce rate was rising. In 1970, 25 per cent of divorced women had been below 25 years of age. It would be seen, therefore, that the problems of early sexual experience, unplanned pregnancies

/...

(Mrs. Kolstad, Norway)

and weakly based marriages called for special attention. In Norway, early marriages, which were often the source of much unhappiness, were attributed to lack of sex education.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) felt that document E/CN.6/575 should be given the widest possible distribution, and should also be studied at the International Forum on the Role of Women in Population and Development, to be held in February 1974. The report should be an official document of the World Population Conference, since the Conference documentation addressed itself to very few matters of concern to women. Her delegation would like the Conference's agenda item 4, which dealt with the family, expanded to include questions of interest to women.

Her delegation wished to thank, on behalf of her Government, the Assistant Secretary-General and the Deputy Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs for their collaboration in organizing in the Dominican Republic the regional seminar on the status of women and family planning. The seminar had provided an opportunity of reviewing national planning policies with a view to ensuring the participation of women in those tasks and her delegation wished to draw the attention of Governments, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to the recommendations issued at the conclusion of the seminar.

The concept of family planning was more than the mere prevention of pregnancy; it also meant the exercise of responsible parenthood. Some people feared that a reduction in the population growth rate might become an obstacle to social progress. However, her delegation considered that it would be difficult for family planning to become an instrument of opposition to social change. Moreover, it believed that societies had to evolve and that nothing could turn them away from the path of progress. There was no reason why any country should reject the right to formulate its own population policy. Each country had its own special characteristics and its demographic policy should reflect those special characteristics and its national interests.

(Mrs. Marte de Barrios, Dominican Republic)

A few Latin American countries, including the Dominican Republic, had extended their family planning programmes to rural areas. Contraception was still a luxury for women in rural areas and family planning programmes were needed for those areas in other Latin American countries.

Family planning was not incompatible with the right of procreation, and her delegation defended the right of a woman to have children in accordance with her own wishes as warmly as it defended the right of a couple to have as many children as it wished. There was nothing wrong about explaining the consequences of unlimited procreation, and it was the duty of doctors, sociologists, demographers and teachers to give the couple sufficient information to enable it to make a wise choice with regard to the size of its family. The woman had the final word and that final word should be respected.

In conclusion, an increasing number of countries, including her own, was sponsoring official family planning programmes, and it could be said that family planning had become one of the most important means of advancement for the women of Latin America.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that family planning improved the status and health of women and that each country should work out its own demographic policy. Costa Rica, which had formerly had one of the highest population growth rates in the world, had given priority to the question of family planning, and a decline in the birth rate had begun in 1960. Contraceptive pills had been introduced in that year and in 1967 the Ministry of Public Health had launched a family planning programme. Machismo, frequently adduced as one of the most significant factors in the high population growth rate in Latin America, appeared to be something of a sociological myth in Costa Rica in view of the 800 vasectomies performed in one hospital in San José. An effective programme of education and information seemed to have been one of the main factors in changing the attitude of the population with regard to the size of the family. In 1970, the population of Costa Rica had been estimated at between 1.8 and 2 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.6 per cent. In Costa Rica, women generally married before the age of 23 or 24, and almost one fifth of the female population remained

/...

(Mrs. Curling, Costa Rica)

unmarried. For the country as a whole, there were few consensual unions and, although the illegitimacy rate was 25 per cent, it was low compared with other Latin American countries. Contraceptives were used extensively in urban and semi-urban areas, independently of such factors as income and education, but in rural areas they were used infrequently. Rural and urban low-income groups, for the most part, took advantage of the services offered by the national family planning programmes, but middle-income and upper-income groups did not. In Costa Rica, separation occurred much more often than divorce, for various social, legal and religious reasons.

It seemed reasonable to assume that, as a consequence of family planning, the family would undergo important changes. Its role as the reproductive unit of society would decline and its role as a source of companionship and emotional support for the individual would be enlarged.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that her Government had recognized that the demographic explosion in Thailand was a serious problem and had decided to integrate population policies into national development policies. However, in accordance with its tradition of respect for human rights and freedom of decision, it had affirmed that couples should be allowed to take advantage of family planning services, if they so wished.

The Ministry of Public Health planned to provide a family planning service suited to the requirements of all levels of the Thai population. However, family planning involved not only methods of contraception but also the planning of family life from the economic, social, educational and hygiene standpoints, and such an extensive programme would require co-operation from other sectors. At present, the Ministry of Public Health was responsible for the family planning programme, which aimed at drastically decreasing the birth rate in five years' time to relieve some of the strains and scarcities in the sectors of nutrition, housing, employment and education. However, educational organizations would also have to become involved in the effort to educate both young people and adults to enable them to understand and participate in population planning programmes.

(Mrs. Huvanandana, Thailand)

In conclusion, her delegation noted that many countries had begun to realize that more attention should be paid to population education, which seemed to offer the best hope of solving national population problems.

Mrs. MAKA (Guinea) said that her delegation agreed with section C of document E/CN.6/575 and, in particular, paragraphs 22 and 23. It also generally approved of the recommendations in section E and more specifically in paragraphs 27 to 34.

Her country, 96 per cent of whose people were of the Moslem faith, was underpopulated and her Government had therefore not given priority to the question of family planning. In Africa, a child was a precious gift, and a childless woman was conscious of her handicap, which often served as an excuse for her husband to have recourse to polygamy. Her Government was therefore not concerned to limit birth but to protect the health of the mother and child. Abortions were unlawful and any doctor or midwife who performed abortions was liable to punishment. An extensive campaign of sex education for young women had been undertaken in schools and the youth organization. The Government had promulgated legislation and established social institutions providing free facilities and services in maternity clinics and health centres and a national social security scheme which disbursed various allowances and benefits before and after confinement.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) said that her delegation was not in agreement with the philosophy reflected in document E/CN.6/575. It considered that family planning was closely related to development and was, in practice, dependent on the wishes and requirements of each individual country. Consequently, it could not agree with paragraph 31, which stated that the right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of children was a fundamental human right to be guaranteed to all persons, regardless of particular national or international demographic conditions or goals. Human rights, and their exercise and preservation, could not be guaranteed regardless of particular national or international demographic conditions or goals. Human rights were not abstractions but realities related to the cultural pattern of each nation and, indeed, of the countries

/...

(Mrs. Stabile, Argentina)

situated in each geo-political zone. Thus, paragraph 32 recognized the difficulty of isolating the effect of family planning on the exercise of women's rights from the effect of other social, economic, political and cultural factors, and paragraph 33 noted that it was essential to keep in mind that family planning was only one among a number of factors facilitating or constraining the expansion of women's roles. Under adequate social and economic conditions, women could more easily exercise their rights. Paragraph 34 stated that family planning must therefore be viewed as part of a larger effort aimed at improving maternal and child nutrition and the distribution of general health and medical services.

Her country's policy objectives were very clear: they aimed at the creation of greater wealth so that more services could be provided. There was no question of limiting the present or future number of recipients in order that wealth, irrespective of its amount, could be distributed more equitably. The main objective was to develop wealth and exploit natural resources in order to place them at the service of the community. Therefore, her country's legislation was designed to give maximum protection to the family unit. Since October 1973, two fundamental laws to provide increased protection for the mother and child had been adopted, one of them establishing the National Institute of District Kindergartens and the other providing for a prenatal allowance of an amount equivalent to that received by the mother and children throughout the period of pregnancy. Moreover, a National Secretariat for Minors and the Family had been set up within the Ministry of Social Welfare. At the same time, the Vice-President was elaborating, with the assistance of a group of technicians, various draft laws designed to involve women actively in the development process. Argentina had a long tradition of legislation in that field, including a law which prevented an employer from dismissing an employee because of marriage. Allowances for marriage, maternity and education were paid to persons employed in trade, industry, rural occupations and State enterprises.

In conclusion, her country did not accept birth control or family planning as a means of improving the de facto and de jure situation of married or unmarried women. Neither did it see them as part of its development programmes.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) endorsed the idea that there was a significant link between the status of women and family planning. While she agreed in general with the definition of family planning given in paragraph 28 of the report (E/CN.6/575), the part played by the State in educating people to enjoy their rights should not

/...

(Mrs. Bokor, Hungary)

be limited to methods of birth control. Family planning also implied the right of individuals to have children in suitable conditions when they so wished. If it was accepted that family planning was a dual concept, it was clear that Governments would have to undertake substantial social, economic, political and educational programmes. Her own Government had promulgated a decision on the rights conferred under its population policy. According to that decision, the population must be educated in modern birth control methods, while measures were introduced to help families wanting children. Young people would be required to certify that they had received instruction in methods of contraception before the marriage ceremony could take place; schools would provide education in sexual matters, family planning and family affairs. Steps were being taken to ensure that pharmacies had ample supplies of both contraceptives and preparations to overcome infertility. Because it had been found that repeated abortions had led to sterility and a high incidence of premature birth, abortion had been limited. It had been felt that ways should be found to avoid resorting to abortion as the principal form of birth control.

Detailed provisions had been made to help women who wished to have children. Family and maternity allowances had been increased, employers were bound to re-employ women after confinement, considerable time off with pay was allowed to care for sick children, and families with children were entitled to additional holidays. The over-all purpose of the measures was to improve the demographic situation, increase aid to families, provide greater protection for mothers and children and improve knowledge of contraception methods. Her Government was fully aware that family planning helped to contribute to the well-being of individuals and society. It welcomed the fact that United Nations bodies were discussing the issue. She hoped that the discussions would produce a definition of family planning that would go well beyond the concept of birth control and that Governments would gradually introduce large-scale programmes to solve population problems.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said she was glad to see that paragraph 1 of the report (E/CN.6/575) stressed a number of important interrelationships.

For obvious reasons the report had started out as a study of the relationship between the status of women and family planning in over-populated countries. The concept had subsequently been developed, however, to cover the situation in other countries. Family planning was not merely a matter of limiting the number of births.

/...

(Mrs. Andrei, Romania)

Her delegation therefore could not accept the statements in paragraph 31 of the report.

Every State had a sovereign right to formulate its own demographic policy for the well-being of the nation. The status of women must be seen in a demographic and human rights perspective that depended on historical, economic and political factors. The concept of family planning would probably be clarified further at the World Population Conference in Bucharest. She agreed with the Finnish representative that Governments should increase the number of women in their delegations and that specific provision should be made for the discussion of population questions with a particular bearing on the life of women. Her Government was already arranging a vast programme of meetings within the country; the National Council of Women would be represented in all phases of the Conference.

The purpose of family planning should be to enrich human life, not to restrict it. Her country was particularly concerned with improving the nation's health. It was doing everything possible to help the family, mothers and children. State assistance to the family was continuous and effective. Romania's rapid economic development was raising the standard of living of the people and would ensure that future generations had a happy life. Family allowances accounted for a large part of State expenditure on the welfare of mothers and children. Substantial maternity benefits were paid for each child after the first three, regardless of income. Extensive medical assistance was available to women before and after confinement. Steady economic and social development would make life increasingly agreeable for women.

Mrs. ROMO ROMAN (Chile) said that her country recognized the importance of family planning programmes for the development of the country. Recent studies had shown once more the need to introduce a clear concept of responsible parenthood, based on respect for the dignity of the human person and freedom to choose how many children one wanted. The Government had set up a special office to co-ordinate not only family planning, but also plans to ensure that children would receive sufficient food. Milk would be provided for children up to the age of two and would be supplemented later with other low-cost high-protein foods. It was hoped that the combination of family planning and nutrition planning would be a substantial step towards ensuring the well-being and development of the whole people. Chile's

/...

(Mrs. Romo Roman, Chile)

ability to introduce the concept of responsible parenthood and to provide food to the underprivileged was the key to raising the standard of living of the whole population. The women of Chile had undertaken to strive to achieve those goals.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said, in reply to the proposal made by Finland, that the report of the Special Rapporteur would be issued in a more popular format using funds from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

608th meeting

Friday, 18 January 1974,
at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

STUDY ON THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING
(agenda item 6) (concluded) (E/CN.6/575 and Add.1 and 3, E/CN.6/NGO/250)

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria), Rapporteur, referring to the comment by the representative of Finland that the developing countries had a negative attitude to family planning, said that it must be understood that in countries where women often had no access to even the most elementary medical care during pregnancy or after confinement, the first thing to be done was to teach them to look after themselves and their children. Only when that had been done, preferably by medical teams, could they be given information about ways of spacing births. Medical information played a vital role and the idea of family planning could only be accepted if it was properly understood.

Mrs. CADIEUX (Canada), noting the development of attitudes to the principle of family planning, said that the study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning (E/CN.6/575) which had been introduced at the 606th meeting should help to produce further changes in that field provided that it was widely publicized. The definition of family planning given in the report should be adopted universally because it was based on the idea of the right of the individual and not on demographic or other considerations. Canada was carrying out a family planning programme on that basis. Although the birth rate had fallen in all parts of Canada since the 1950s, Canadians in all walks of life still needed information about means that allowed them to decide the size of their families. An amendment to the Penal Code, promulgated in 1969, had made it legal to disseminate information on birth control and to sell contraceptives. In 1970, the Canadian Government had set up a federal programme of information, training and research in the field of family planning following the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on the status of women in Canada. In 1972, a family planning division had been set up in the Ministry of National Health and Welfare to carry out the federal programme. The aim of the programme was to co-operate with the Provincial Governments, municipal authorities and private organizations, in disseminating information on family planning methods to allow Canadians to adjust their fertility and thus to improve their physical, mental, social and economic well-being.

/...

(Mrs. Cadieux, Canada)

Her delegation hoped that during World Population Year as many women as possible would take part in activities and in international meetings devoted to the issue.

Mrs. DAES (Greece) congratulated the Special Rapporteur on her excellent study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning.

Her delegation, which had listened with great interest to the remarks and proposals made by India, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria and other developing countries, supported unreservedly the moral, technical and financial assistance that the relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies could give developing countries in that field. She subscribed to the definition of family planning given in paragraph 28 of document E/CN.6/575.

Nevertheless, as the representatives of Argentina and Romania had pointed out, every country applied a demographic policy that matched its needs. Greece, for example, which was underpopulated, had taken special steps to help families, such as the granting of family allowances starting with the third child and assistance to working mothers with more than three children and to mothers in rural areas. Her delegation hoped that the Special Rapporteur would state her views on the part that could be played by the Commission in improving the status of women in underpopulated countries.

She also wished to know what contribution the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs intended to make, in connexion with family planning, to the work of the World Population Conference to be held at Bucharest.

Mrs. SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that in Colombia the rate of population growth was much higher than the rate of economic development. Despite their scope, teaching programmes did not adequately fulfil the needs of people in rural areas and of marginal groups.

In Colombia, there was an institute which promoted, among other things, responsible parenthood. It was hoped that the promotion of responsible parenthood would lead to true family planning based on the dignity and liberty of the individual, with positive consequences for the future.

Private organizations in Colombia had also set up family planning programmes, and some private schools had started to give courses in sex education. In its

(Mrs. Sanchez-Torres, Colombia)

development studies, the National Department of Planning referred to the need to adopt a demographic policy. Planning in that field was particularly important because the population of Colombia included a high percentage of young people who needed to have access to education, to enjoy various social services (health, accommodation, etc.) and to find work. Colombia had already made a great effort towards development, which was reflected in positive results that it intended to follow up, particularly in the fields of health and education, so that the population would become fully aware of its responsibilities, including those relating to family planning.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines) said she wished to give some additional details regarding family planning in her country.

Apart from the private organizations mentioned in her statement at the 606th meeting, the national organization for family planning and responsible parenthood had set up a family planning programme in collaboration with a number of other organizations some 10 years previously. Moreover, the Ministry of Labour had organized two seminars on the question jointly with the ILO and UNDP, one at the national and the other at the regional level. The seminars had been attended by representatives of the trade unions, of working women and of employers in Asian countries. One of the obstacles to family planning was the position of the Catholic Church, which approved only of the rhythm method. Since most of the population of the Philippines was Catholic, the application of family planning programmes had been fairly limited, despite the enthusiastic participation of many interested organizations.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) congratulated the Special Rapporteur on the excellent work she had done. She stressed that the seminars held in Istanbul (Turkey), Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) and Jogjakarta (Indonesia) and various studies made at the request of the Special Rapporteur had shown that the status of women was very closely linked to economic and social development, particularly where family planning was concerned.

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

She then gave a very detailed account of the background of the issue in Indonesia. Two thirds of the population was concentrated in the three islands in the centre of the Indonesian archipelago: Java, Madura and Bali. The outer isles, which accounted for 93 per cent of the area of Indonesia, were sparsely populated, partly because after the colonial era it had been virtually impossible to obtain an education and find work except in Java, particularly in the towns, and partly because cultural barriers (taboos, traditions and so forth) drove young people to leave rural areas for the towns. That was the case, for example, in the western part of Sumatra, where, because of migration, the population had been "stable" for 20 years.

The growth of the towns and internal migration were causing an acute shortage of housing and schools, growing unemployment and ecological problems in the towns, while there was an acute shortage of skilled and unskilled labour in the deserted islands which, however, offered a basis for prosperity.

The number of women of childbearing age (15 to 44 years) had already reached 26.5 million in 1971; the rate of population growth for the whole archipelago was 21 per cent. If the population continued to grow at that rate, Indonesia would have 175 million inhabitants in 1981, of whom 45 per cent would be less than 15 years old. Such an increase would have many repercussions in the economic, social, political and educational fields, and the illiteracy rate, particularly among the female section of the population, would be very high.

In 1957, aware of the size of the problem, the Indonesians had set up a group which was to become the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association. The group had been unable to operate fully until after 1966 when President Suharto had come to power. President Suharto had given a prominent role to family planning both under the first five-year plan (1969) and through the National Family Planning Board (1970) which had been given the job of co-ordinating all activities in that field. Currently, efforts were being focused on Java, Madura and Bali, which were the most populated and where people had the lowest per capita income.

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

In general, the aim was to improve the health of the mother and child so as to reduce the infant mortality rate and thus the need to "produce" a large number of children in order to ensure the survival of at least a few.

Unfortunately, it was still too early to assess the success achieved in family planning, for it was only since 1967, when President Suharto had signed the Declaration on Population, that the authorities had been officially concerned with population problems. However, while it was still too soon to draw conclusions as to the effects of the population policy on per capita income, primary education, housing, employment, etc., it was already clear that account had to be taken of various factors arising from popular attitudes: traditionally, the presence of children was considered as enhancing the position of the wife in the enlarged family; the child was regarded as a "gift of God", a sign of prosperity, "each child bringing its share of good fortune"; it was a form of old age insurance for its parents and represented cheap labour.

Studies in urban and industrialized zones had shown that there was at present no clear link between the employment of women and the fact that they were of child-bearing age. However, given the high rate of unemployment, employers hesitated to recruit married women since they would have to provide them with the legally-established benefits in the event of pregnancy, including maternity leave on full pay for six weeks prior to, and six weeks following, confinement. In 1973, in order to discourage births, the Government had passed a law under which civil servants would no longer receive the benefits provided for children after the third child.

Although the Indonesian Constitution recognized the equality of men and women, much remained to be done in the area of marriage, where there was not full equality, since a Moslem husband could obtain a divorce simply by repudiating his wife (talak). Polygamy, which was infrequent in Indonesia, made only a very small contribution to increasing the birth rate.

The extended family, which still existed in certain regions, could influence the decision of a couple concerning the number of their children. Further, in areas where male children received larger shares in an inheritance, that inequality could stimulate the birth rate. Fertility and family planning studies carried out in Java

/...

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

had shown that the level of women's education had an appreciable influence on the fertility rate: education, unlike traditional customs and beliefs, instilled a positive attitude towards family planning and, by enabling women to find employment, delayed the age at which they married and began to bear children.

Abortion, even for medical reasons, was prohibited in Indonesia.

The Government was currently trying, as part of the first five-year plan, to promote rural and agricultural development in order to ensure more balanced distribution of the population. In the second five-year plan, it intended to devote more attention to demographic policy within the over-all development programme, and to attempt to overcome the obstacles encountered in that field: insufficient funds, lack of co-ordination, inefficient management and administration, over-attachment to traditions and beliefs, serious problems of infrastructure resulting from the geography of the archipelago and, finally, the lack of skilled labour.

In view of the seriousness of population problems, it would be necessary to adopt a positive strategy in place of the present "passive" policy, to base national demographic policy on an integrated and interdisciplinary approach, and to amend the laws governing marriage, succession, abortion, etc. In the social field, it would be necessary to increase pensions, to limit but not abolish maternity allowances, to promote education and the participation of young people in family life, to develop community behavioural research centres and to ensure that women played a greater part in decision-making.

In conclusion, she supported the suggestion that the report entitled "Study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning" (E/CN.6/575) should be circulated as widely as possible and stressed the importance of continuing to make similar studies, for example on the influence of taboos, traditions and ancestral values on the status of women in particular and on their attitude towards family planning and population growth in general.

The United Nations specialized agencies should co-operate with both governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with such matters, at both the international and the national level.

Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) thanked all those who had helped her to gather the data necessary for the preparation of the report entitled "Study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning" (E/CN.6/575), particularly the resident representatives of UNDP, who had made her contacts with the various Governments much easier.

The report was based on two principles which had been adopted by the General Assembly but which might sometimes seem contradictory, namely, the right of all persons and of all couples to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children, and the sovereign right of every State to formulate its own population policy. In fact, those two principles were not necessarily contradictory, for the right of all persons to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children could coincide with the national policy of the Government.

She had tried above all to show in the report to what extent women had so far been able to exercise that right; to what extent a woman's decision as an individual could affect her rights in other fields such as those of education, employment, and family and community life, and to what extent current demographic changes affected the rights of women in all fields.

No attempt had been made in the report to interfere in any country's demographic policy; the aim had been to study the rights and aspirations of the individual and their repercussions on demographic policies, since the success of such policies depended to a large extent on the attitude and support of individuals, which was not the case in other fields, such as that of the environment, where Governments had far greater freedom of action.

Replying to the question raised by the representative of Greece concerning the role played by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in World Population Year, she pointed out that the Centre was particularly concerned with the question of equality from the point of view of human rights, development, and the integration of women in society and in that connexion it was called upon to participate in World Population Year. On the other hand, it did not deal with population matters proper, which were the direct responsibility of the Population Division and the Population Commission, even though it was in constant

(Mrs. Sipila)

contact with them both. If the members of the Commission on the Status of Women wanted the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs to play a greater role in that field, they would have to extend its mandate.

As for the participation of women in the World Population Conference, it would not be enough for them to take part in the Conference in greater numbers. It was equally, if not more, important for them to take part in the regional conferences which would study the draft plan of action for the World Population Conference.

In conclusion, she said that women should be more strongly represented in governmental delegations to meetings of all kinds.

Mrs. JURADO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) welcomed the report of the Special Rapporteur on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning. As part of its mandate, FAO was called upon to implement policies and programmes designed to improve the well-being of the family and to promote national development. Many States members of FAO did not accept the notion of "family planning", but did agree that FAO's programmes should be directed mainly towards those heavily populated countries where the food supply lagged behind population growth.

FAO had noted that when the fruits of economic development had been widely distributed within a community, the size of families had tended to decline. Moreover, it had realized that an appropriate population strategy, associated with the adoption of social measures, could in the long run accelerate the rate of economic development. FAO had made a special effort to help populations which lived according to traditional living patterns to link the notion of family size to already accepted concepts of development and higher living standards.

Extension programmes and programmes for women and young people had proved to be excellent means of reaching families and enhancing the status of women. Some existing programmes, institutions and agricultural services provided excellent means of communication with agricultural workers and their families and women were now being offered an opportunity to participate to a greater extent in such projects as those relating to extension services, land reform and

(Mrs. Jurado, FAO)

co-operatives. Those various measures had a favourable influence on the life of the agricultural worker and his family and made it easier for him to take decisions regarding the size of his family.

The Planning for Better Family Living programme was designed to reach families in rural areas through food and agricultural programmes including research activities concerning, in particular, the links between family size and standard of living and the relationship between the evolution of agriculture and population dynamics. Regional meetings had been held in the Middle East with a view to studying the assistance which FAO could give to countries in connexion with the population growth rate. FAO was currently developing its "Planning for Better Family Living" programme, by linking it to maternity programmes being executed by WHO and other agencies.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that the ILO was deeply interested in the questions under consideration and that she had taken note of the comments made by members of the Commission.

She supported the observations and conclusions in paragraphs 42 and 43 of document E/CN.6/575 and pointed out that the ILO was equally interested in the questions of the relationships between family size and standard of living, between participation in the labour force and fertility, and between the type of occupation and fertility, raised in document E/CN.6/577.

The participation of women in the labour force should not be regarded as a means of reducing the size of the family, and family planning should not be aimed solely at the poorest strata of the population, since it was of concern to the whole of society. Lastly, she observed that the ILO was concerned with the social infrastructure and services to assist working parents.

Mrs. ASIYO (Kenya) associated herself with other delegations which had offered their congratulations to the Special Rapporteur and said she hoped that the study on the interrelationship of the status of women and family planning would receive wide circulation. Family planning was an integral part of the national programme. Kenya had worked out a strategy for parent education which was designed to reach the greatest possible number of people. Women's

(Mrs. Asiyo, Kenya)

organizations, religious groups and non-governmental organizations, among others, were participating in family planning programmes and thus helping to enhance the status of women.

Health services were to a large extent free in Kenya, and as a result the population could be offered free contraceptives. However, Kenya lacked the necessary trained personnel, particularly in clinics and schools in rural areas, to carry out a programme of sex education which was included in the curricula of schools which had competent teaching staff. Social welfare workers and extension workers had various teaching tools, but there was still a long way to go to reach all Kenyan women, particularly in illiterate rural areas where families still had too many children.

Mrs. SEKELA KANINDA (Zaire) commended the Special Rapporteur and her team on their excellent report. The fact that various definitions had been given of the concept of "status of women" attested to the complexity of the question before the Commission. Her delegation thought that the concept was dependent on the social and economic structures of each nation. In that connexion, she pointed out that Zaire, which had an area of 2,345,000 km², could accommodate a population ten times higher than its current population, namely 22 million inhabitants. Nevertheless, the problem of the status of women arose in terms of education and training, if Zairian women were to participate actively in economic and social development. Those responsible were endeavouring, in particular, to combat the illiteracy which prevailed, particularly among women, and to that end were organizing courses for adults. Moreover, radio and television played an important role and the emphasis had been placed particularly on health education. Health education centres had been established throughout the country and absolute priority was given to the granting of fellowships for medical studies.

In the matter of family planning, Zaire was endeavouring to prepare families to have children when they wanted them and was taking economic and social measures to that end.

Miss von ROEMER (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) welcomed the very interesting report which had been prepared by the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

/...

(Miss von Roemer, ICFTU)

In 1968, the third Conference on the Problems of Working Women had adopted a resolution relating to social and family policy in which it had expressed itself in favour of the establishment of a large number of family planning centres, scientific research into contraception and the rejection of all legislation which might limit or impede the access of the population to information relating to contraceptives and their use. Since then, ICFTU had organized a number of meetings on the question and at Aurangabad, in India, had set up a particularly interesting project to help poor people in rural areas. With the help of the ILO and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, ICFTU and its two Indian branches had organized a course on the well-being of the family for the benefit of rural workers. Instruction had been given in family planning techniques as part of an over-all programme designed to raise the level of living of a number of families. The participants had been young couples from several villages. Of different religions and different castes, they had all belonged to the very underprivileged rural sections of the population, which generally had very little contact with social development workers. During the programme, the women had been placed on a footing of equality with their husbands, who had been encouraged to participate in the housework and to consult their wives on decisions relating to their daily lives. It was, in fact, essential to the success of any family planning programme for a man to recognize that his wife was his equal in life. For the first time, couples had been able to experience independence and live with people belonging to other castes in the same village, take their meals together and work together. Their attitudes had thereby been changed and they had been able to accept the idea of family planning more easily. The programme in question had had family planning as its central theme and all other subjects dealt with had been directly or indirectly related to it. Courses on child care, trade unions, hygiene, home economics, the construction of small rural housing, poultry-farming and gardening had been organized and had made it possible to set up various self-help projects in the villages of origin of the participants, whose attention had been drawn whenever possible to the link which existed between family size and standard of living.

(Miss von Roemer, ICFTU)

In commenting on the project, Mr. Gunnar Myrdal had noted that the spectacular success of the experiments should lead to their continuation on a wider scale in India and in other developing countries which faced the same problems of mass poverty and stagnation in the rural areas. A further experiment of the same type had since been organized at Poona.

In conclusion, she said that the success of family planning programmes depended to a certain extent on the adoption of social security measures guaranteeing a pension, however, small, to old people. In many parts of the world, children were still regarded as an insurance against sickness and old age, as indicated in paragraph 162 of the report in document E/CN.6/575/Add.1.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission had concluded its consideration of agenda item 6.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

609th meeting

Monday, 21 January 1974,
at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND THEIR INTEGRATION IN DEVELOPMENT (agenda item 7):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (E/C.9/NGO/1, E/CN.5/481, E/CN.6/577)
- (b) STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN, ESPECIALLY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (E/CN.6/583 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/NGO/253 and 256)

Miss KING (Promotion of Equality of Men and Women Branch) introduced document E/CN.6/577 relating to agenda item 7 (a). The document drew to the attention of the Commission the need to integrate its own goals, stated in General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV), with the wider goals of the Second United Nations Development Decade, which appeared in General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV). It was particularly timely to do so at the current session, since it immediately preceded 1975, which was International Women's Year and which also coincided with the mid-term review and appraisal of progress made during the Second Development Decade.

There was a growing awareness that development was a multidimensional process, which meant that the integration of women in development would depend on progress made in other sectors such as education, health, employment, etc., and vice versa. The aim should therefore be balanced development in which economic, social, cultural and political factors all took their rightful place.

Document E/CN.6/577 was divided into two parts. Part one examined the objectives and targets of the Decade, with special reference to those relating to the integration of women in development. It also described the methodology being used by the United Nations to measure and appraise progress made in the sphere of development. The appendix to annex I contained a check-list summarizing the various policy objectives and targets in General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) for use in over-all appraisals at the national, regional or international level.

The attention of the Commission was drawn particularly to paragraphs 26 to 36, which contained suggestions for its role in implementing the Development Strategy.

Part one of the report also stressed the need for more information and statistical data, especially concerning women's economic and social status. Of particular importance was the need for social or development indicators, which could also be used to help to devise strategies to accelerate the process of integration in development.

/...

(Miss King)

Part two of the report contained a brief survey of the most important activities of various United Nations organs relating to the integration of women, as well as of new activities relating to the implementation of the long-term programme.

She also drew the Commission's attention to documents ST/SOA/120, E.72.IV.8 and E/C.9/NGO/1.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that document E/CN.6/577 referred specifically to General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV), which had originated in the Commission on the Status of Women and had been adopted at the same session as General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV) on the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The report in that document was the first attempt to relate the two resolutions.

Document E/CN.5/481 gave a summary of recommendations with special reference to rural women and to the urgency of giving greater attention to women's needs in development planning.

Paragraphs 21 to 28 of the summary contained ideas taken from the recommendations for the programme of concerted international action. She explained that the report on the participation of women in national development had been started in 1965, had not been finalized until 1969 and had been issued in 1971. Consequently, all the references to China in that document should be understood in the light of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI).

At its preceding session, the Commission had adopted resolution 14 (XXIV), in which it had decided to include an item on the status of women in rural areas, particularly agricultural workers, in its programme of work, with a view to studying the ways and means by which women in rural areas could be helped to achieve their maximum potential. As a basis for that study, the Commission had requested the Secretary-General, Governments and the specialized agencies to furnish it with available information.

Consultations had not yet been held with Member States, and document E/CN.6/583 contained the background study prepared by the Secretariat. There were two addenda to the report: a report by ILO and a report by FAO.

/...

Miss TYABJI (India) said that, even before its independence in 1947, India had had a mixed economy, trying to combine the benefits of a planned economy with those of free enterprise. There was often a tendency to forget the great progress made by India in the matter of infrastructure, heavy industry, education and health, since that progress had been virtually offset by the population growth rate. In addition, the strong trade union movement in India had rendered all the more difficult the task of that country, which was firmly committed to democracy.

India was predominantly an agricultural country: 82 per cent of the economically active women were engaged in agricultural occupations. About half of those women worked without wages, so that women were the first to suffer from the shortages in all spheres. They were kept out of school to help with agricultural work, for example, and in the event of a food shortage more food had to be given to their brothers.

The Government had been making efforts, particularly in the sphere of education, but it was an impossible task to try to educate all the population immediately. Only 41 per cent of the inhabitants were literate and women accounted for only 13.2 per cent of that percentage. Women also accounted for the majority of the unskilled population. Against that background, it was pointless to consider long-term education plans, and the best solution was to provide on-the-job training. She described some programmes being carried out with considerable success in her country.

In conclusion, she expressed the hope that the draft resolution which her delegation planned to submit would help to improve the status of women all over the world.

Mrs. ZAHRAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the report in document E/CN.6/566/Rev.1 had been prepared for 1972 and had not been submitted at that time, which had made it possible for UNESCO to revise the document and add 22 replies from member States which had been received in the mean time. A series of difficulties had been encountered in the preparation of the report. Firstly, the study of the problems of education in the context of rural development was relatively recent. The report was based on the replies of member States and United Nations documentation on the subject. Secondly, it was difficult to define the concept of a rural area, since the definition

(Mrs. Zahran, UNESCO)

differed from country to country. Thirdly, it was also difficult to obtain statistical data on the subject. Fourthly, the report did not dwell on certain important changes that should be introduced in agricultural education in order to achieve integrated rural development, although it did stress the importance of such education.

The differences between urban and rural areas were important, especially in so far as education was concerned. Women's traditional role was different in rural areas and in cities. Rural women were at a disadvantage in comparison with men and with urban women with regard to access to education and the professions. Rural development was vitally important, because it would help to close the gap existing between the developing countries and the industrialized countries, and the report showed that education was a necessary condition for rural development. Economic growth was a basic element for development, but it should be accompanied by the transformation of economic and social structures. In other words, the inequality of opportunity in education must not be increased in the process of rural development. On the other hand, the report stressed the need to give education a specific orientation, with the aim of transforming it and adapting it to the rural environment and its problems.

The basic problems dealt with in the report were the definition of rural zones, the exodus of the rural population, the access of women to different types of education, female illiteracy in rural areas, school drop-outs, the factors necessary for rural development, and the integration of women in the process of rural development.

The report confirmed the differences between urban and rural zones, and showed that the latter lacked adequate schools, school equipment and transport, and adequately trained teachers. The exodus of the rural population increased those inequalities. The report also showed the importance of participation by women in the economic development of the community and their contribution to rural development. Despite their determining role in rural development, women were disadvantaged in terms of access to education.

UNESCO hoped that the report would help member States to study the problem of the education of women in the context of rural development, that being one of the priority areas in the programme to achieve equal access to education for girls and women.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said, introducing the ILO report on the status of rural women (E/CN.6/583/Add.1), that ILO was fully conscious of the importance of the question and believed that it could be approached only in the framework of integrated rural development, covering both men and women. The essential task at both the national and international levels was to improve the status of all rural workers.

Two primary considerations stemmed from the data in the report concerning women's participation in agriculture and in rural economic life. The first related to the fact that, while women did the bulk of agricultural work in most developing countries, they were rarely included in training courses preparing people for work, cultivation and leadership in agricultural production and modernization. The second consideration related to the fact that women's contribution to rural development had been severely limited by the mistaken belief that rural women were primarily concerned with domestic tasks in the narrow traditional sense: the care of children and the nutrition of the family, and home management. However, home economics, while essential, were not enough. Rural women must be given opportunities to learn and earn, not only because many such women supported a family, but also because their contribution to rural development was essential; accordingly, they must be trained in rural handicrafts and for small industries and repair and maintenance and similar activities, and be provided with the necessary technical support.

It was on the basis of those two considerations that programmes could be instituted to improve the status of women in the rural community and to raise the living standard of agricultural workers - whether men, women or children.

The ILO paper on the status of rural women suggested those considerations and conclusions, and she hoped it would be a useful complement to the FAO paper. It was only a preliminary working paper, as the United Nations Secretariat had requested, and ILO was ready to complete it in the way considered most appropriate in the light of the Commission's discussions and decisions.

The tentative conclusions of the report were, firstly, that there was an immense discrepancy between rural development needs and the status and integration of women in such development, and the action taken or envisaged to meet those needs. Secondly, while there was a need for joint improvement of the status of rural men and women, special efforts were required to involve women more directly in programmes of integrated rural development. Thirdly, the United Nations system

(Mrs. Johnstone, ILO)

should give greater impetus to the promotion of rural women within the framework of action in favour of all rural workers, since without such action rural progress would be impeded or remain an illusion.

She asked the Commission to attempt to define as clearly as possibly the contributions it sought from the specialized agencies concerned with the status of women in rural areas, especially agricultural workers. The ILO/FAO/UNESCO Working Group might be able to give more substance to the conclusion of the 1970 World Conference on Agricultural Education and Training to the effect that a feature of the Second Development Decade must be to open the opportunities of technical and vocational education and training, as well as employment in rural work and services, to the girls and women of the countryside in order to enable them to make their full contribution to rural development.

Mrs. JURADO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization) observed that the FAO report on the status of rural women, especially agricultural workers (E/CN.6/583/Add.2) showed a clear concern with improving the living standards of rural women and integrating them in the life of the community. The authors had attempted to present an analytical investigation of the scope of women's participation in rural development and to identify the constraints on such participation. Two reference points had been chosen - intra-family and extra-family life. The interaction between them had provided the Organization with an understanding of four different profiles of women's social visibility, which varied greatly from one rural area to another and from one country to another. The study developed a theoretical framework which remained to be tested as part of the over-all development context and in line with the existing situation with regard to the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the activities of rural women. Thus the study had served as an example of a scientific approach towards determining women's place in society and the extent of their participation in rural development programmes.

The study identified and examined the main obstacles to women's participation in rural development. One such obstacle was the limited educational opportunities for rural women. There was a need for a systematic study of all such constraints. For its part, FAO had undertaken a study of family life in rural areas and was preparing relevant policy measures for submission to its 1975 Conference.

/...

Dr. MALAFATOPOULOS (World Health Organization) said that WHO had always regarded the family as the basic unit of approach to community health problems but had, of course, given special attention to the vulnerable group in the family, particularly mothers and children. The need for special programmes for such vulnerable groups was clear. WHO was prepared to consider together with the United Nations any proposals for joint work to increase the effectiveness of health activities in relation to other efforts undertaken to enhance the status of women in all communities, and particularly in rural communities.

So far as the status of rural women was concerned, WHO had been working in close co-operation with FAO on health education. WHO was a member, with ILO, FAO and UNICEF of a joint group which dealt with nutrition education and devoted attention to the situation in rural areas. WHO had also prepared a special programme paper on health education for consideration at its fifty-third session currently being held in Geneva. The paper reflected the extent to which WHO was concerned about the health, development and role of women.

With regard to the activities of the specialized agencies in promoting the advancement of women, WHO had not prepared a special report but would be considering the question during the current year in the context of preparations for International Women's Year. WHO was giving increasing attention to the role of professional birth attendants and to the other potential functions which women at the local level could fulfil to supplement health services and their own role as women. The Organization had provided a major background paper for the Consultation on the Role of the Traditional Birth Attendant in Maternal and Child Health and Family Planning, held in Geneva in March 1973. Earlier, it had contributed a paper on women and national health to the Regional Meeting on the Role of Women in National Development held in 1969 at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa.

WHO would continue to co-operate with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and especially with the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women Branch, as it intended to co-operate with all organizations in the United Nations system, in ensuring that the health aspects of the status of women received the attention they deserved.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that in 1972 she had been elected President of the National Council of Women of Thailand, which worked jointly with the Government and non-governmental organizations for the advancement of women in general. In Thailand, 70 per cent of the population lived in rural areas, where women worked with men in conditions of equality. The National Council of Women had been providing assistance to women in rural areas for over eight years, and had established a women's volunteer corps and a programme for training women leaders for rural community development. The objectives of the programme were: to inform the population on the meaning of community development; to help create among the villagers the ability to participate in the various development programmes at the grass-roots level; and to take part, through field work, in village development projects using all possible means and resources. The project had been prepared in consultation with the representatives of the government departments concerned, adopted as a pilot project of the National Council of Women, and had been receiving budget allocations since 1965. The National Council of Women appointed from 7 to 11 members of the project committee for a two-year term which was subject to extension. Members of the project committee were persons trained in a particular field, such as medicine, community organization, nursing, home economics, communications, education and recreation. Their work was voluntary. Field staff were recruited, but the rate of turn-over was high. Requests were made for the help and participation of members of the local women's associations affiliated to the National Council of Women and the technical assistance of government departments. The National Council of Women operated two multipurpose centres designed to provide accommodation for field workers and supervisors, and to serve as a community club for villagers, a handicraft workroom, a model kitchen and a village library with books and reading material for adults and children. The problems of villagers in the various areas in which such centres were found were similar, and the fortitude of the villagers in the face of adversity and their willingness to better their conditions when they had the opportunity to do so were admirable. Some preparatory work in connexion with the community development project of the Ministry of the Interior had already been done, and the staff assigned to that project co-operated with the staff of the Council responsible for field activities. The action thus far undertaken included the provision of information on better nutrition, training and demonstrations in health education, encouragement of the use of library facilities, demonstrations by recreation leaders, arrangements for village girls to

(Mrs. Huvanandana, Thailand)

travel to a special training course in kindergarten work and for 12 village girls and boys to attend a summer course on agriculture, study trips to enable young villagers to visit a rice-hulling plant, steps to enable a village girl to acquire special training in more advanced first-aid care, and the organization of six-week training courses in carpentry and wood-working for village men and of handicraft groups among village girls and housewives.

Mrs. SNYDER (Economic Commission for Africa) said that reference was made in document E/CN.6/577 to the five-year programme of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and that 30 country studies on vocational and technical training opportunities for girls and women had already been completed. Those studies covered many of the items mentioned in the Secretary-General's report; information on population, migration, literacy rates, vocational and technical training policies and the role of women in rural and urban areas; opportunities for formal and mass education in agriculture, community development and small-scale industries; information on formal education at all levels, assessment of drop-out rates; information on the wage-earning labour force and participation of women in that group. The country studies were on a continuing basis, and would be brought up to date for the regional meeting on the integration of women in development, with special reference to population, to be held in 1974 at ECA headquarters. ECA considered it necessary to supplement current national data with a revision of the assessment of women's participation in the active labour force, in order to determine the economic activities of women, and with information on the division of the rural labour force by sex and on both de jure and de facto heads of households. In general, all statistics should be broken down to show participation according to sex.

Commenting on the status of women in rural areas, she said that women were currently holding up the pace of rural development. Although they had major responsibilities in farm work and in the home, they were denied access to knowledge and the means to better themselves, which they were frequently prevented from doing by sheer physical exhaustion. The life of rural women had always been difficult, and was often cruel. That was why ECA and FAO had undertaken an itinerant training programme for home economists and family-oriented workers in rural areas. That

/...

(Mrs. Snyder, ECA)

programme had been carried out in five countries in 1973, and there were plans to extend it to all countries in the coming years. Representatives of various ministries and voluntary agencies working in rural areas had participated in it. The programme included nutrition and home economics, but also stressed the importance of labour-saving technologies for the farm and the home, and of income-generating activities for women. In the report of the international trainers, special emphasis had been placed on intensifying efforts to promote labour-saving technology and income-producing activities.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines) said that both private and governmental bodies were fully aware of the need to give due consideration to women in their rural and agricultural development plans. Various governmental departments sponsored projects aimed at improving the status of women in rural areas: the Department of Agrarian Reform, the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Department of Health, the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Education and the Department of Labour. The Department last mentioned had endeavoured to resolve the problems arising from the exploitation of women's labour, and had established more than 60 employment offices throughout the country. Moreover, in 1973 it had collaborated in the promulgation of a presidential decree increasing the wages of housemaids. It was also concerned with the provision of free training for girls, to make it easier for them to find subsequent employment. Rural women made up 34.5 per cent of the total number of women in the labour force. The total number of rural working women was 1,374,000, of whom 64.2 per cent were unpaid family workers. Of the total of 270,000 unemployed women, 53 per cent or 144,000 lived in rural areas. She agreed with the representative of the Economic Commission for Africa on the need for a study of the productivity of rural women. The main non-governmental organization working in that field was the Young Women's Christian Association, the President of which had been elected Chairman of the current session of the Commission. The League of Puericulture Centres and the National Federation of Women's Clubs were also taking part. Despite the activities of the Government and the organizations mentioned, much remained to be done. She drew the Commission's attention to the need for intensified action aimed at raising the level of education of rural women, without which they easily became the victims of

/...

(Mrs. Alday, Philippines)

exploitation. She announced that she would submit a draft resolution on the subject of supplementary education through television, radio and the communications media in general.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that her country attached special importance to all questions relating to the improvement of the status of rural women, and commended the representatives of the ILO, UNESCO, WHO and ECA for the interesting documents submitted, which demonstrated the urgent need for the United Nations specialized agencies to continue the search for solutions to the problems of rural women. Political and economic planning should always include the solution of rural problems as part of general development programmes.

With reference to the report on women agricultural workers, she emphasized the need to promote small rural industries. It was also of fundamental importance to give women an incentive to work in such areas. Little or nothing was being done to encourage rural women to remain in their area instead of migrating to the cities to confront all the evils of contemporary urban society.

Moreover, when men migrated to the cities, the women and children often remained in the country, and it was necessary to provide them with better health services and education. In that connexion, it should be stressed that, while the teaching of manual skills was important, more sophisticated programmes were also required, involving the establishment of small rural industries and the provision of strong incentives for greater participation of women in such industries.

In conclusion, she expressed the hope that UNESCO would undertake further studies in that field.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND THEIR INTEGRATION IN DEVELOPMENT (agenda item 7) (continued):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued)
(E/C.9/NGO/1, E/CN.5/481, E/CN.6/577)
- (b) STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN, ESPECIALLY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (continued)
(E/CN.6/566/Rev.1, E/CN.6/583 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/NGO/253 and 256)

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that in his report (E/CN.6/577) the Secretary-General had clarified the role of the Commission on the Status of Women in the International Development Strategy. The concept of development had been broadened to include qualitative humanitarian and social processes and to mean growth plus change. Thus, the work being done by the Commission could be integrated into the work being done by other United Nations bodies within the framework of the International Development Strategy. Her delegation was grateful to the Secretary-General for having drawn attention to the manner in which the targets of the Strategy were linked with the targets for human and social development which were of special interest to the Commission. It was no coincidence that the International Development Strategy and resolution 2716 (XXV) containing the Programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women had been adopted by the General Assembly in the same year.

The Commission should act upon the suggestion in the report concerning the need to develop a set of social indicators measuring the progress of women and their integration in development.

Her delegation also welcomed the Secretary-General's suggestion that the Commission should, particularly for the 1975 mid-term review and appraisal of the goals and targets of the International Development Strategy, examine over-all procedures for review and appraisal and consider how it wished to review progress made both in its own programme and internationally to integrate women in development and promote equality of men and women. The check-list summarizing the various policy objectives and targets for use in over-all appraisals at the national, regional or international level was most useful. It might be useful if the Commission were to adopt a resolution emphasizing the need for it to co-ordinate its review and appraisal work with the work being done by the chief bodies involved in the mid-term review, namely, the Committee for Development Planning and the Committee on Review and Appraisal. The information given in the report concerning

(Mrs. Hussein, Egypt)

the manner in which Governments had been assisted in evaluating policies and progress was most interesting and would prove useful to the Commission in its appraisal of progress made in integrating women in the development process.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that Economic and Social Council resolution 1684 (LII) and General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV), both adopted on the initiative of the Commission, would promote the integration of women in social development, a process made necessary by the level of modern social development and the needs of society. The item under consideration should remain on the Commission's agenda, because it was in the field of concerted international action that the Commission had met with the greatest success.

The report of the Secretary-General on the Interregional Meeting of Experts held in June 1972 - the only document which her delegation had received in good time - could serve as a basis for discussion of the item. Unfortunately, the report did not always take into account differences in levels of development, and did not reflect participation by women in society, especially in economic and social development, in the USSR. Her country's experience could be of interest to others. Nevertheless, many of the conclusions in the report were correct and deserved support.

The group of experts had stressed that the participation of women should be considered within the framework of the over-all development process: the involvement of women in development was a sine qua non of progress for women and for the development of the country concerned. The group of experts had called for the elimination of obstacles to the integration of women in the fields of literacy, training, access to scientific and technical institutions, equal pay, child care and so on. According to the report, obsolete views were a major obstacle to the training of women. That was true to some extent, but the principal obstacle to the integration of women in development was the criterion of maximum profit. Her delegation supported the main conclusion of the report calling for governmental measures to guarantee employment to women, ensure equal pay for equal work, establish a network of State-run child care centres and improve social and community services. It also agreed that more attention should be given to the participation of women in such international programmes as UNDP, which would help to make those programmes more effective.

/...

(Mrs. Nikolaeva, USSR)

In the Soviet Union, the State had adopted measures to ensure that women received equal pay. In the national economy as a whole, women constituted 51 per cent of all workers, with considerably higher percentages in such sectors as communications, trade, teaching, health and social security. The State provided child care centres at concessionary rates, housing equipped with all modern facilities and other social measures which lightened women's burdens.

In many countries, women assumed the greater part of the work in the vitally important agricultural sector, yet were often regarded as no more than assistants. Consequently, the group of experts had been correct in urging member States to provide social services for women, educate them in modern agricultural methods, integrate rural women in political life and provide the necessary conditions so that married women could reconcile their duties as wives and mothers with their participation in social development.

Another important task was to prevent the exodus of manpower from rural areas. Her country had experienced that phenomenon after the Second World War, due to war damage, heavy work, low pay and an absence of social security and cultural amenities. As a result, the State had had to adopt extraordinary measures to raise agricultural production, increase investment in agriculture and improve living conditions. Following increases in food prices, collective and State farms had been able to introduce cash wages and raise agricultural incomes. In addition, agricultural workers now received social security benefits equivalent to those enjoyed by urban workers, in accordance with the general policy of bringing conditions in the agricultural sector into line with those of urban workers. The State had recently adopted measures to ensure that all rural inhabitants had easy access to education. Furthermore, women occupied responsible posts in collective and State farms.

The establishment of conditions in rural areas which would promote the integration of women in development could raise their social status, and develop their talents, cultural level and education. Decisive action on the part of the State was essential if such conditions were to be established. The Commission should be more persistent in raising such matters with States where discrimination continued, and ensure true equality in all areas. Her delegation attached great importance to the draft Convention now under consideration, which should help to ensure that women occupied their rightful place in society.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) welcomed the suggestions made in document E/CN.6/577 concerning the role to be played by the Commission in ensuring that the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy and the Programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women were achieved. As was pointed out in paragraph 36 of the document, the International Development Strategy made no detailed reference to the integration of women in development, and neither the Committee for Development Planning nor the Committee on Review and Appraisal had given any special attention to the subject of women in their reviews to date. In that connexion, it would be interesting to know whether Member States referred specifically in their national development plans to the integration of women in development and whether Governments consulted non-governmental organizations when preparing their development plans. The Commission should try to ensure that women were invited to participate in the preparation of their country's national plans.

Her delegation was interested in the Secretary-General's suggestion concerning the development of a set of indicators relating to women. The check-list in the appendix to annex I would facilitate the Commission's work. Her delegation wished to propose, however, that a technical study group should be set up to review the check-list and ensure that it could be used efficiently by all Member States, developed and developing alike. In Japan, the Government, in co-operation with experts from non-governmental organizations and labour and employers' organizations, had recently conducted a survey on the status of women, but had run into some difficulty in determining the most suitable matters to be examined under the survey. The Japanese Government would be interested in comparing the results of its survey with those obtained by other countries. Studies on the status of women should be practical, so that developing as well as developed countries could contribute to them and make use of them. Technical co-operation to improve statistics on the situation of rural women in developing countries was necessary. It was to be hoped that the representatives of developing countries would comment on that point. It was to be hoped, too, that the Commission would continue to study ways and means of improving the status of rural women and ensuring that they were afforded the same opportunities for advancement as women in urban areas.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) stressed that the integration of women in development was linked with national objectives and that it was difficult to work out a definition of development applicable to all countries.

A development policy supposed an increase in employment which, in turn, implied the provision of greater opportunities to women. There was no greater impediment to the integration of women in development than a declining labour market. On the other hand, it was not possible, in any concept of development, to ignore human resources. Accordingly, priority must be given to the training of such resources. In Argentina, development implied industrialization not only in urban areas but also in rural areas where factories were being built. The integration of rural areas in the process of expansion was regarded as the only way of stemming the exodus of men and young people from the countryside. Steps were being taken to improve schools, increase the literacy rate, reduce the number of school drop-outs, promote basic technical education for men and women, improve wages and provide better social services. However, difficulties attributable to the country's farming systems were encountered. Women played a varied role in farming activities. Various State bodies, such as the National Institute of Agricultural Technology, helped women to market their farm produce or to set up co-operatives through which they were able to sell their handicrafts. Non-governmental organizations were also participating in that work. Child-care centres were being developed to provide mothers with instruction in such subjects as nutrition.

Mrs. COCKCROFT (United Kingdom) said that the Commission's meetings provided its members with an opportunity to improve their knowledge of the problems facing developing countries. The statements by the representatives of India and Thailand had been particularly stimulating.

In the United Kingdom, there was considerable interest in the question of women in development both within the Government and within women's voluntary organizations. On behalf of her Government, she wished to state that the division in the Aid Ministry responsible for the role of women in development was ready to consider any requests from developing countries for assistance in, say, the development of research or other projects relating to the better integration of women in development.

/...

(Mrs. Cockcroft, United Kingdom)

In reading the report of the Secretary-General on the integration of women in development (E/CN.5/481) she had been struck by the extent to which the problems of women in development, particularly those of rural women, were common to all women living in isolated communities. The challenge was to provide them with access to education and employment and to introduce them to the concept of change which could help to improve their lot. Largely as a result of the work of the United Nations, much more information on those problems was now available. Her delegation welcomed the revised version of UNESCO's study on the equality of access of girls and women to education in the context of rural development (E/CN.6/566/Rev.1); care was required to ensure equality of access to appropriate education for both men and women.

Mrs. SAARINEN (Finland) said that in Nordic countries women enjoyed equal status with men in many respects, but were not fully integrated in development. They received the same schooling as boys, but their position in the labour market was not equal. Women in Finland tended to choose, or were guided into, traditional female occupations. When they did work in the male-dominated industries, they usually performed unskilled routine tasks. There were, of course, several women in managerial positions in various sectors - in Finland, 5 per cent of women occupied such positions - but it would not be possible to say that women were equal until the vast mass of them had been really integrated in the labour market in every area and at every level. Education was needed with a view to changing the attitudes of both men and women. Women must also make use of the opportunities available to them. They must become active members of trade unions and political parties. They must be made to realize the importance of becoming a stable and qualified group in the labour market. They should take their part in the planning of schools, day care centres and similar facilities. They should also play their part in the planning of road networks and the location of industries, for those were matters which affected their own possibilities of finding employment. Perhaps the Commission should propose that, until such time as women were fully integrated in development, there should be special government units or officials to defend women's interests. A similar type of official was perhaps needed in bodies responsible for development aid in donor and

/...

(Mrs. Saarinen, Finland)

recipient countries. Perhaps, too, there was a need for national equality commissions to study, report and make proposals on the status of men and women and progress towards equality between them.

The full integration of women in the total development effort was one of the goals of the Second Development Decade. It would not be achieved unless women's status was improved in every sector of society. It would not be until women had a better status in their own countries that delegations to the United Nations would be composed of as many women as men and that women would occupy high posts in the Secretariat. There were very few women at the decision-making level in the United Nations system.

The fact that the objectives of the Second Development Decade greatly affected the status of women had not been taken into account in the review and appraisal of the objectives of the Decade. In order to make the review and appraisal more meaningful, the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in his report (E/CN.6/577) should be acted upon as soon as possible.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the Secretary-General's report was an attempt to bring the Commission into the picture with respect to the procedure for the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy. It was important to remember that the current session was the Commission's last chance before the mid-term review and appraisal in 1975 to recommend revisions in the Strategy to the Committee for Development Planning and the Committee on Review and Appraisal. Any recommendations would, of course, have to be made through the Economic and Social Council.

Miss CHATON (France) said that she would confine her comments to the question of the status of rural women, especially agricultural workers. She congratulated UNESCO on its excellent study on the equality of access of girls and women to education in the context of rural development (E/CN.6/566/Rev.1).

In many countries, rural activities were still an essential feature of life, but in others they were declining. France, for instance, had become highly urbanized. Rural activities were still pursued, but they were undergoing change. A significant feature of that change was the decline in the number of women farmers;

/...

(Miss Chaton, France)

there were now only 16,000 of them in the country. There had also been a steep decline in the number of salaried rural workers, for they were lured to the towns by the higher wages. Nevertheless, the Government was trying to preserve rural areas and to stem the exodus from the countryside. One of the main difficulties was the provision of educational facilities in rural areas, where some children had to travel long distances to school. There were semi-public transport services for children at the secondary school level, for which parents had to pay a small charge. But it had not yet proved possible to provide such services for children between the ages of two and five. There was a need to provide suitable boarding-schools for children who otherwise would have to travel more than 20 kilometres a day. However, problems relating to the fees to be paid at such schools were not easy to solve. Another difficulty encountered with respect to rural schools was that very often teachers were unwilling to work in isolated regions.

The vocational training provided for rural women and girls had been modernized and many courses were available to them. In addition to the usual courses, those who wished could take courses in farm management, farm accounts, taxation and so forth. They were also taught how to negotiate loans. Women could also become veterinary surgeons or assistants to veterinary surgeons. The establishment of production and marketing centres provided facilities for training women technicians, some of whom assumed important functions in factories.

An attempt was being made to develop rural areas, particularly mountain areas, as tourist resorts and thus enable rural dwellers to work as, say, ski instructors. Attention was also being paid to the development of equestrian sports. In areas such as the Massif central both men and women worked at handicrafts, such as pottery and weaving. Mechanization had done much to reduce the isolation of rural areas. Many women drove cars and were thus able to use their leisure time in a far more interesting manner than before.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that her country's national development plan gave priority to agricultural and rural development, and to the improvement of irrigation systems and transport. Indonesia's most urgent problem was functional literacy. Non-governmental organizations had been very active in pursuing literacy programmes, but there was a need for training in the implementation of

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

such programmes, and considerable problems had been encountered so far. Another urgent problem was the lack of sufficient schools and teachers, which prevented young people from attending school. Consequently, a programme of non-formal education had recently been adopted, in which non-governmental organizations would play a central role. The Government had also introduced a pilot project of "development schools", whose curricula focused on special skills and handicrafts.

In the field of health, the country planned to expand its network of community health centres, especially in rural areas. "Community medicine", a new subject, would cater to the needs of the rural community. There were also plans to introduce training in mothercraft, nutrition education and environmental education. Indonesia's second development plan provided for a considerable increase in the number of elementary schools and community health centres and raises in the salaries of teachers and nurses, who had previously found their incomes quite inadequate.

The field of community development was the one in which there was the greatest participation of women and, in rural areas, 90 per cent of all handicrafts were produced by women - although only as a seasonal activity between harvests. Accordingly, the Government and non-governmental organizations were laying stress on special training in handicrafts, and the Government had set up a special export promotion institute - headed by a woman - to promote the handicraft industry, introduce new techniques and encourage the establishment of co-operatives.

The Commission might give greater attention to government pilot projects, as instituted in her own country, especially in the fields of non-formal training, "family life education" and education in population problems. In Indonesia, the existing training centres were in great need of assistance from other Governments or United Nations specialized agencies. In addition, the Commission might adopt a resolution urging the regional economic commissions to introduce women-oriented programmes which, as far as she knew, did not exist in the ECAFE region. She had in mind, for example, regional projects covering instruction in running training centres, and the introduction of such subjects as marketing, management and so forth.

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

Another vital area of concern to women throughout the world was the consumer movement. The Commission might also devote attention to that matter.

Mrs. LI Su-wen (China) said that, in pre-revolutionary China, hundreds of millions of women in rural areas had been weighed down by the triple oppression and exploitation of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism, and had been under the four-fold feudal bondage of political authority, clan authority, religious authority and the authority of the husband. In the family, women had been regarded as domestic slaves and had had no opportunity to take part in social production and no personal income. However, poor peasant women had had more say and even been able to join in family decision-making, because they had taken a greater part in productive labour. Since they had been the most down-trodden, working women had felt a keen desire for liberation.

Chinese women had actively participated in the national and social liberation of China, displaying great heroism and contributing to great achievements, in the production and cultural fronts as well as in military mobilization and administrative work. After the revolution, women peasants had been lifted from their former status of appendages. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Communist Party, comprehensive agrarian reform had been carried out and collective ownership established throughout the country, and now all able-bodied women were participating with vigour and vitality in various branches of agricultural production.

The masses of women peasants in China were also actively engaged in social and political activities in the countryside. They had enhanced their political consciousness and ability, used to the full their wisdom and intelligence, and contributed in the management of collective undertakings and the affairs of State. Today many outstanding women had been elected to leading organs of the Party and Government at various levels and some held posts in the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and Central People's Government.

In order to change the backward state of affairs in education which had resulted from prolonged aggression and oppression by imperialists and reactionaries at home, a literacy campaign had been carried out in the countryside. The rural masses of women peasants were endeavouring enthusiastically to raise their

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

educational and political levels. A number of amateur painters and cultural and art workers had come to the fore. Especially in recent years, hundreds of thousands of educated young girls had gone to the countryside every year. They had become active on the cultural front in the rural areas, and they had taken the lead in conducting scientific experiments and learning agricultural techniques. In the process of mechanizing agriculture, large numbers of women peasants were taking up many kinds of technical work which used to be considered beyond the ability of women.

Peasant women in China had won the esteem of the people by their deeds. Since, like men, they had personal incomes, they now had an equal say in family matters. A new social atmosphere had emerged in which the husband and wife worked and studied, loved and respected each other and lived in harmony.

In order to enable women to take a greater part in production and political activities, the State and the people's communes had shown great concern for the protection of women. Great attention was given to applying the principle of equal pay for equal work and to assigning suitable work to women, while taking into account their specific problems and needs. Every possible effort was made to run nurseries, kindergartens and nursing rooms well. Health centres had been set up in the people's communes and production brigades. Large numbers of women doctors went from house to house to treat patients, so that maternal and child care was carried out effectively. Furthermore, planned parenthood was promoted, and men were encouraged to share domestic chores, thus freeing women from household drudgery and enabling them to take part in production and community activities.

The participation of the women of China in the socialist reconstruction and revolution had advanced their status in society and in the family and broadened their mental outlook. They were aware that, by leaving the confines of their homes and participating in collective production, they were not merely acquiring an income for their families and advancing their own status but were helping the motherland and contributing to human progress.

/...

(Mrs. Li Su-wen, China)

As a result of over 2,000 years of feudal rule in China, vestiges of feudal ideas still persisted and further efforts had to be made to eliminate old ideas and customs and to foster a new socialist spirit and morality and develop the role of women.

The women of China, like the women of numerous Asian, African and Latin American countries of the third world, shared the bitter experience of being exploited and oppressed by imperialism and colonialism. They were convinced that, as long as the women of different countries were united and engaged actively in the struggle to oppose imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism and in efforts to safeguard and develop the national economy, they would be able to advance their own status, further develop their potential and promote the cause of the emancipation of women in all countries.

Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) said that the Interregional Meeting of Experts in June 1972 on the Integration of Women in Development had marked the first discussion of that subject by experts on the status of women and experts in the field of development. Their observations and recommendations would serve as useful guidelines for Governments in identifying obstacles to the integration of women in national development and in promulgating measures appropriate to their needs and in effecting fundamental changes in the participation of women in all areas of national life and development.

There was an urgent need to review and reassess programmes and measures relating to the advancement of women in modern society. International Women's Year would provide an excellent opportunity for Governments, the United Nations system, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to make a critical appraisal of their achievements in the human rights field and to establish goals relating to the fuller utilization of labour potential and talent for economic, social and cultural progress.

Those countries which had not yet done so should introduce laws guaranteeing equal rights for women. However, national development and the promotion of the rights of citizens required more than legislative measures, which were of little value unless implemented. Therefore, the need to implement the various action programmes as well as the international instruments on the advancement of women could not be over-emphasized.

/...

(Mrs. Stevenson, Liberia)

The obstacles to the integration of women in development also needed to be examined. It had been proved that in many countries a close correlation existed between women's education and their participation in the labour force. It was important for women to avail themselves of the opportunities to engage in occupations other than those traditionally considered suitable for them. It was equally important for parents to avoid sex roles in the home. Girls and boys should be given equal responsibilities and duties in order to eliminate the deep-rooted conviction that a woman's place was in the home.

It had also been established that sex roles existed in agriculture. Where primitive manual methods were employed, women did most of the work, but where there was an extensive plough cultivation system, women performed less farm work than men. The suggestions in paragraphs 7 and 8 of document E/CN.5/481 would undoubtedly increase the productivity of women in agriculture and rural society in general and ensure their participation in the development of their countries in a meaningful and practical way. Her delegation supported the views expressed concerning the need to educate women not only in methods of production but to enable them to assume their role as responsible consumers. It was also necessary to make credit facilities and information available to enable women engaged in small-scale businesses to expand and improve them.

Women had an essential role in community development, and the participation of women and women's organizations was essential for the success of community development.

It was an established fact that the greatest obstacle to equality in opportunities, rights and responsibilities was the attitude of society as a whole. It was important to integrate women's programmes into national development plans and to involve men in their implementation.

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) said that her delegation wished to submit a number of recommendations to strengthen the role of the Commission in integrating women in development. The Commission should participate more actively in the review and appraisal process for the mid-term review of the Second Development Decade. In particular, her delegation wished to suggest that the Commission should be represented on the Committee for Development Planning when

(Mrs. Hutar, United States)

it came to work on the preparation of its report for the mid-term review, so that it would reflect accurately the situation regarding the achievement of the goals established for the integration of women in development in General Assembly resolutions 2626 (XXV) and 2716 (XXV). In addition, her delegation felt that the Commission should ask the Secretary-General to request all United Nations specialized agencies to review the impact of their regular programmes on women, to include consultations with the Commission in that review, to discuss reports at their next scheduled meetings, and to include the Commission in the final review and analysis of the reports. The Commission should also request the Secretary-General to provide it with a report on the allocation of funds and personnel designated for programmes on the integration of women in development. The report should indicate the percentage of the budget spent on those programmes for the current year and the proposed increases for the following year. Furthermore, her delegation recommended that the Commission should request the Secretary-General to ask the United Nations Secretariat and the specialized agencies to prepare action plans for increasing the number of women in policy-making positions and to submit those plans to the Secretary-General, who would set up a committee to monitor them and to report annually to the General Assembly. In addition, the Commission should ask the Secretary-General to request all member Governments to extend full co-operation to non-governmental organizations, so that they could gather information and have access to existing data.

Her delegation was pleased to announce that, as a result of action organized by women's groups, the Congress of the United States had recently added the Percy amendment to the Foreign Assistance Bill. The amendment would ensure that particular attention was given to those programmes, projects and activities which aimed at integrating women in the national economies of their countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development efforts. Her delegation would be submitting a draft resolution embodying all of those points. In conclusion, her delegation wished to recommend that a working group should be established to consider further recommendations on the integration of women in development.

Mrs. SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that her country had a very considerable rural population. A programme of land reform had recently been

(Mrs. Sanchez-Torres, Colombia)

formulated and it was hoped to implement it in the context of Colombia's over-all development programme.

With regard to education, women had the same opportunities as men in urban as well as in rural areas, and the school drop-out rate was about the same for women as for men. Primary education was compulsory, but in some underpopulated mountainous regions, children were unable to take full advantage of the various services.

There had been considerable discussion on the need to integrate women in development and particularly rural women, who had to overcome greater difficulties than urban women. It was recognized that rural women constituted a valuable potential for development and primary education programmes were being offered in the rural areas through a network of schools which offered courses on housing, recreation and agricultural techniques suited to each particular region. Primary, secondary and even university-level programmes were also televised, thanks to the extensive network which covered practically the whole country. Some private institutions also offered educational opportunities to children who lived in isolated mountain regions and who had difficulty in attending primary schools.

Efforts were being made to neutralize the attractions offered by the cities, although propaganda was unfortunately creating ever-greater expectations and needs among the rural population, which culminated in an exodus to the cities. In tropical zones, rural work was particularly unrewarding because of the unpredictability of climatic factors.

It seemed that the economic differences between rural and urban areas had to be overcome. Machinery was needed at the national and international levels to stimulate agricultural production, in view of the ever-increasing demand for food, although the insufficiently remunerative prices did not always offer an incentive to the rural population in that respect. The encouragement of small rural industries and agricultural co-operatives and the promotion of rural crafts would result in greater employment opportunities and improve the quality of rural life. Those and other measures could be adopted within the development plans and educational programmes. However, there was an urgent need to take positive action to correct the existing imbalances; improvements in the rural sector would have

/...

(Mrs. Sanchez-Torres, Colombia)

favourable repercussions on all other sectors. It was necessary to encourage intermediate technical studies and training courses suited to rural needs.

Non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to implement programmes for the rural sector, for example, in the area of education. In addition, developing countries should stress the role of women in society, their political rights and their equality, since discrimination was more prevalent in less developed sectors and the weight of tradition was heavier.

Mrs. HOOGSTOEL-FABRI (Belgium) said that in her country women accounted for over half of the population and more than 30 per cent of the active population. Various international legal instruments, including ILO Convention No. 100, article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, article 23 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which proclaimed the principle of equal pay for equal work, had either been ratified or taken into account by the authorities of her country. However, it seemed that discrimination was still directed towards women workers, not because of non-implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work, but because of a different type of evaluation and classification for equal work for a whole range of jobs which seemed to be the prerogative of one sex. A further problem was the concentration of women in certain employment sectors.

Her Government had set up a national advisory committee to deal with the vocational education of women. The Department of Labour and Employment, together with employers' and workers' representatives, were studying problems of the remuneration of women and the possibility of offering them accelerated vocational training. Moreover, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Employment had recently launched a campaign of information with regard to vocational guidance centres.

A royal decree of October 1971 had introduced new arrangements under which benefits paid to unemployed persons were based on the wage they had formerly earned. The decree thus eliminated the disparity which had previously existed between unemployment benefits for male and female workers. However, the principle of equality had not been entirely realized because of the lower salary rates frequently existing for women.

(Mrs. Hoogstoel-Fabri, Belgium)

Early in 1973, the Belgian Minister of Labour and Employment, in his capacity as Chairman of the Conference of Ministers of Social Affairs of the European Economic Community, had entered into a formal commitment to improve conditions for women workers. Her country's delegation had proposed various measures at the Community level to resolve a number of urgent problems raised by the employment of women. The proposals took account of the ever-increasing number of women in the working population, the growing number of working married women and the high proportion of women who had to support their families. Noting that the legal instruments which the Community had at its disposal for the achievement of equal pay were not fully effective, her Government had proposed that new legal instruments should be elaborated, at the national as well as at the Community level.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

611th meeting

Tuesday, 22 January 1974,
at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND THEIR INTEGRATION IN DEVELOPMENT (agenda item 7) (continued):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued)
(E/C.9/NGO/1, E/CN.5/481, E/CN.6/514/Rev.1 and Add.1, E/CN.6/577)
- (b) STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN, ESPECIALLY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (continued)
(E/CN.6/566/Rev.1, 583 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/NGO/253 and 256)

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that from the statements made at previous meetings it appeared that the situation of agricultural workers was comparable in most countries. The exodus of rural workers to the towns resulted in the formation of poverty belts around urban centres and pushed women into prostitution. That exodus, which represented an obstacle to rural development, was caused by various factors, including inadequate schools. In that connexion, she welcomed the adoption by the Commission at its twenty-fourth session of resolution 14 in which the Commission had decided to include an item on the status of women in rural areas, particularly agricultural workers, in its programme of work, with a view to studying the ways and means by which such women could be helped to achieve their maximum potential. It was also necessary to consider carefully the types of programmes to be prepared with a view to integrating women in rural areas. In Costa Rica, population growth in the past few decades had been accompanied by a strong current of migration to the metropolitan area of San José and to other large towns in the central plateau. The economy of Costa Rica, which was an agricultural country, had suffered considerably from that situation and, as an example, she mentioned the lack of manpower for the coffee harvest.

Internal migrations to the metropolitan area, caused by the concentration of land, by the slow pace of development in rural areas and urban areas in the interior of the country, and by demographic pressure, exerted a strong influence on the phenomenon of marginality, since such migrants did not succeed in adapting themselves to the pattern of urban life. Marginal groups could not participate in the decision-making process either at the national or the local level.

Governments did not make enough efforts to reach the rural population, which in general lacked elementary services and the economic resources necessary to

/...

(Mrs. Curling, Costa Rica)

meet their needs and solve the problems of food, health, housing, education, nutrition and leisure.

For that reason, many sectors of the population remained underemployed, devoted themselves to unproductive activities or were employed only sporadically. Her delegation therefore suggested that Governments should immediately take measures aimed at the decentralization of services, land reform and community development and should promote the development of genuine trade unionism. It was also important that International Women's Year should coincide with the intensification of programmes directed towards rural areas in order to place the women of those areas on an equal footing with men.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) observed that the definition of "rural areas" varied from one country to another but that the situation of working in agriculture and finding oneself isolated from modern life was a common denominator. As in most countries of the third world, the majority of the Egyptian population lived in rural areas where there was very often a problem of overpopulation and it did not have access to modern technology. It should also be pointed out that the exploitation of the rural population by foreigners over many years had influenced the mentality of agricultural workers. The modernization of the pattern of rural life was not solely a question of social justice, but was essential for the economic development of the country. For that reason, Egypt had taken fundamental measures without which rural development would only be a mockery. For instance, the authorities had carried out land reforms in order to effect a more equitable distribution of land and enable agricultural workers to own the land they tilled. The construction of the Aswan dam had made it possible to irrigate more land and to promote the industrialization of the area through electrification.

Egypt had also embarked upon a policy of decentralization, a measure whose importance had been emphasized by the representative of Costa Rica, in order to ensure a greater degree of participation by the population in development.

She observed that it was impossible to speak of the role of women in development without describing the background and the history of rural development.

(Mrs. Hussein, Egypt)

In that connexion, Egypt had also embarked upon the creation of the necessary infrastructure for education, the establishment of health groups and the institution of family planning services. But the transition from one stage of development to another had been marked by certain short-comings: for instance, medical services had been developed but the attitudes of the population had not changed. That uneven development had moreover been undermined by a problem of overpopulation, which had been recognized only at a late stage when the country had already embarked on a policy of economic planning. Lastly, the attacks on Egypt's national security had delayed the implementation of a large number of projects which the Egyptian Government now hoped to undertake.

With regard to the role of women in rural development, she supported the ideas which had been put forward in the Commission. Subsistence agriculture encouraged a healthy division of labour between men and women which disappeared with the passage from one stage of development to another, when women noted that they were insufficiently productive since they were not integrated in the various projects undertaken, particularly those relating to training. She added that women, who naturally tended to make sacrifices, were not recognized as having a right to remuneration.

It was only in 1963 that there had come a realization in Egypt of the role that rural women could play as community leaders. But since the 1940s, efforts had been made through self-help programmes to give the rural population an opportunity to express its views, whereas before that time it had been believed that the majority of the inhabitants of the countryside were happy and did not wish to advance. The experiments carried out in the early 1940s had marked the beginning of community development. She herself had played a part in that field by trying to encourage the participation of the rural population, which was accustomed to an emotional negativism as a result of centuries of oppression, in self-help programmes. The Government had endeavoured not to force its views on the rural population and to provide it with technical and financial assistance. Until the 1950s, women had never been asked to act as leaders in community development programmes.

/...

(Mrs. Hussein, Egypt)

But women in Cairo had acted as catalysts in the execution of a project for the establishment of day-care centres in rural areas, the importance of which had been recognized by the Government. The Government had then realized that the success of that project had been due to the contribution of women's groups. It had therefore set up programmes to train women community leaders and in 1964, with the co-operation of UNICEF, a further advance had been made through the "professionalization" of the programme which had enabled one thousand girls to be trained. But in certain areas, particularly in Upper Egypt where the population was of a more conservative mentality, women had not had the reaction expected. In any event, she emphasized that it was impossible to envisage the true development of a community without the participation of women and she regretted that the implementation of other projects had been impeded by financial problems.

In conclusion, she observed that the women's clubs in Cairo welcomed the co-operation of the Egyptian Government and organized training courses for the members of women's clubs which had been set up in the villages, for social workers and for teachers, and she once again stressed the importance of mobilizing volunteers in community development.

Mrs. SEKELA KANINDA (Zaire) commended the Secretary-General on the report on the implementation of a programme of concerted international action (E/CN.6/577) and said that she shared the views expressed therein. She realized that it was difficult to give a precise definition of the concept of development since such a definition depended on the political, economic and social circumstances in each country. In Zaire, the Government understood development to mean any effort designed to enhance the well-being of the population, believing that it would be unfair for the concepts of gross national product and per capita national product to be considered sufficient to measure the well-being of the population satisfactorily. As had been pointed out, development presupposed industrialization and the National Executive Council of Zaire was endeavouring to diversify industry. But since 1967, agriculture had an important place in the country's development programme. In Zaire, as in many developing countries, women worked in the

(Mrs. Sekela Kaninda, Zaire)

agricultural sector and in the tertiary sector. Very few women in fact worked in the processing industry because of lack of training and African tradition. But the Zairian authorities were organizing literacy campaigns to improve the status of women.

She emphasized the important contribution women's work made to the rural economy. Agriculture had suffered more than other sectors as a result of the domestic troubles following Zaire's accession to independence, which had been one of the causes of the exodus from the countryside. In order to stem that exodus, the National Executive Council had first pacified the interior of the country and then endeavoured to improve the peasant's well-being. It had paid the greatest attention to agriculture, as was proved by the size of UNDP's agricultural programme in Zaire, and Sino-Zairian co-operation in that sector. Furthermore, the Department of National Education required all university graduates to serve in country areas, as did the Department of Public Health in the case of doctors. Such attention to the problems of rural areas would in the long run contribute to the improvement of the status of rural women.

Mrs. JURADO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the views expressed emphasized the need to study the status of rural women in the context of total development. The data obtained should be reflected in national development plans. There also seemed to be a need to develop guidelines for innovative forms of education for rural women which would recognize not only their traditional domestic role but also give emphasis to their role in the economy. In that connexion, several representatives had stressed the importance of income-generation activities. The guidelines in question should be appropriate for different levels of development and take account of cultural traditions affecting change in the status of women.

Moreover, specific technical assistance programmes aimed at improving agricultural production, the marketing of agricultural products and the role of women in the economy in rural areas must be developed. Information should also be developed on changing social attitudes to the status of women in agriculture. Cultural restraints and the failure to take full account of the division of labour in rural areas when planning rural development projects made it difficult to change the economic status of women.

(Mrs. Jurado, FAO)

In conclusion, she requested members to endorse the list of suggestions given in the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.6/577).

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) said that she, too, wished to congratulate the Secretary-General on his report; the organizations which had contributed to the report were also to be congratulated. The Commission on the Status of Women had a very important role to play in improving the status of women in rural areas; indeed, it could facilitate the task of country women by, for example, teaching them to use machines and thus be able to spend more time on leisure and education. In many cases, the independence of developing countries did not mean much to rural women who, as a rule, continued to do everything manually using antiquated methods. As was known, however, they could make a valuable economic and social contribution to society. She hoped, therefore, that the Commission would set up one or more committees to improve women's lot and that International Women's Year would not prove an empty word for the millions of rural women.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that it must not be thought that the problems considered under agenda items (a) and (b) concerned developing countries only. They were found in industrialized countries as well, although to a lesser extent. In Norway, for example, the population tended to emigrate to urban centres because it was difficult to find satisfactory work in the countryside and because young people were attracted by the more modern lifestyle of the cities. It was true that in a country like Norway country life could be very pleasant, but it was also true that distances posed a grave problem. Men and women who did not wish to work on a farm often had to take jobs very far from their home with the result that they had very little time for family and community life. Her Government was thus grappling with a two-fold problem: how to provide adequate work opportunities to rural populations and how to ease the pressure on urban areas where the population was constantly increasing and problems such as housing, pollution and so forth, growing.

The problem of employment in rural areas was even more acute for women than for men. Often, the only possibility open to women was the heavy iron industry, to which they were not traditionally attracted.

It was necessary, therefore, for local communities to become real social, cultural and educational centres where men and women could find satisfactory work. The problem was of the greatest interest to the Commission which should pay particular attention to it in 1975.

Mrs. STABILE (Argentina) said that if rural women were to be totally and definitively integrated in the development process in developing countries and if production and marketing structures were to be modified, it was absolutely essential to industrialize and electrify rural areas, extend the use of machines, such as tractors, in those areas and build roads which would promote transport and communications between one point and another. That was the only way in which rural life could be changed; all other measures could only be termed palliatives.

Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) said that members of the Commission were not fully satisfied with the progress made by various United Nations bodies in integrating women in development. Her delegation therefore wished to formulate a recommendation. In its opinion, any plan relating to the integration of women in development programmes should take account of the fundamental role played by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. Accordingly, her delegation recommended that the Commission should request the Secretary-General to invite ACC to set up a sub-committee, under the chairmanship of the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, whose main task would be to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-ninth session a detailed report on the following aspects of the status of women: What were the organizations of the United Nations family doing at the administrative and programme level to ensure equal opportunities for women? What were their future plans with respect to programmes for women during the next planning period? How were the Commission's resolutions which had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council applied to the Organization's current and future activities? What had the Organization done so far, in its recruitment practices, to appoint more women to decision-making posts? Her delegation would submit a draft resolution on the subject to the Commission.

Mrs. BESSEL (United Nations Children's Fund) said that, as it was aware of the need in developing countries to promote intensive action to reach women and girls in rural and urban areas who needed help to fulfil adequately their role as mothers and to achieve their own advancement, UNICEF had established community centres, women's clubs and mobile units and had contributed to various community self-help activities. It was in the community centres that women received training and had access to various welfare and health services. In many cases,

(Mrs. Bessel, UNICEF)

non-governmental organizations and volunteer groups participated in the development of such centres. She cited East Pakistan, Senegal and Brazil as examples. Where the population was widely dispersed in rural areas and communications were poor, the mobile units took the place of community centres.

Women must be liberated from chores that absorbed all their time and energy and limited their possibilities for acquiring education. The first step in that direction was literacy, which should be integrated within areas where training was needed and desired. Literacy was also an important element in enabling women to be better mothers in their concern to improve the status of their family and the health of their children.

In order to promote awareness, at different levels, of that state of affairs, UNICEF had organized regional conferences, at all of which participants had stressed the need to improve the status of women. The difference between those Conferences and other similar meetings had been that UNICEF and the countries had jointly studied the problems facing the population and agreed on action programmes aimed at drawing attention to those problems at the country level.

UNICEF was becoming increasingly involved in national development country programming. Its advocacy on behalf of children served to heighten concern for social development and to further a unified long-range approach. That line of action coincided with the idea that investment in programmes would yield greater results if the programmes were closely associated with larger programmes to raise family and community levels of living and if they were set in the context of national development plans.

It would be impossible to enumerate the many channels that UNICEF had experimented with to reach women in the lower economic bracket in the developing countries.

Both the Executive Director and the Executive Board of UNICEF were very much aware of the need to have more women in higher posts and were recruiting accordingly.

She sincerely hoped that representatives of both the developed and developing countries would join forces with UNICEF to serve the cause of the Commission when they returned to their own countries. Women in the developed countries might find in UNICEF National Committees enthusiastic groups deeply concerned in mobilizing available resources to educate the public to the needs of the developing countries to which the Commission must dedicate itself in its efforts to create a world of peace and social justice.

Mrs. TYABJI (India), referring to chapter III of document E/CN.5/481, said that from the point of view of the developing countries, the type of small-scale business mentioned did not correspond to reality. In those countries, some women could have small businesses, but they did not have the necessary knowledge to manufacture goods - embroidery, for example, - which would suit the taste of the customers for whom they were intended.

She made a similar comment on chapter V, which did not cover the millions of women to whom remuneration would have to be offered to persuade them to leave their homes. If efforts were limited to organizing training courses, few of those women would be likely to follow them. What was needed was to set up centres where women would have paid employment while receiving vocational training.

Miss CHATON (France) drew attention to document E/CN.6/577, particularly paragraphs 25, 30 and 32, and stressed the need to consider the preparation of development plans and the mid-term review and appraisal.

In order to promote the advancement of women and their integration in the development process, one safeguard was necessary, namely, a change in attitudes towards the role of women in development. People must stop seeing women as a marginal factor whose participation was encouraged at times of intense development and who could be sent back to their homes at other times. Female employment must be of a permanent nature.

The social indicators mentioned in the paragraphs to which she had referred should make it possible to set up a proper typology of women in terms of their activities, marital status, family situation, life expectancy and so forth. Women must be classified increasingly in cohorts of five or 10 years, according to choice.

It was also important to clarify, within the concept of social indicators, what was meant by economically active women - women directors, women wage earners or women engaged in unpaid activities at home.

In assessing social indicators, attention must be drawn to the idea of the development of remuneration. There were a number of nuances in that idea which would have to be examined if the Commission wanted to consider the value of work. The size of family allowances and of single incomes must be taken into account; in practice, it would be necessary, when dealing with social indicators, to refer to various cultural models. That was one way in which the regional economic commissions could act very directly.

/...

(Miss Chaton, France)

For some of the major regions, if not for the whole world, some social indicators could be drawn up based on surveys that could be undertaken by such specialized agencies as UNESCO, the ILO, and so forth. She was thinking in particular of the idea of a time budget developed by the International Social Science Council on the basis of a survey covering a large number of countries.

In her view, all those concepts of social indicators should be used and transmitted to the regional economic commissions.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that, since her country was an agricultural developing country, assistance to technical co-operation activities for the advancement of women was particularly important.

In 1969-1970, technical and financial assistance from UNESCO had enabled the National Council of Women of Thailand to set up a supplementary programme to train women for leadership in the villages. About 20 boys and girls in their teens had taken part in the programme and had been taught theoretical and practical principles of improving living conditions, hygiene, first aid and child care.

In 1971, another programme for child health development had been set up, which provided information on family planning and preventive medicine and an experimental day care nursery. A team of volunteer women doctors visited the villages once a month and sometimes advised women on family planning matters. The Asia Foundation had provided financial assistance amounting to about \$1,500; for 1974 a grant of \$15,000 had been allocated for the population education and family planning project of the National Council of Women of Thailand.

Adult education classes had been organized because the percentage of literacy was still not very high in Thailand. In 1972 a pilot health service had been set up with the main objective of promoting the physical and mental health of the community. Its activities covered the following areas: medical care, health education, nutrition, drug toxicity, first aid, family planning, ante-natal care, and the encouragement of greater involvement in all those activities.

The pilot health service sent teams consisting of two to four doctors and one to three assistants three times a month to visit various centres where they treated 40 to 100 persons.

She hoped that better understanding and the collaboration of all concerned would make it possible to improve the life of the rural population in all countries.

/...

Mrs. ASIYO (Kenya) said that the reports submitted by FAO, UNESCO and the ILO on the status of women in rural areas eloquently depicted the struggle in which the women of all countries were engaged. The statement by the representative of the Economic Commission for Africa had described the situation of women in Africa and had shown the obstacles they encountered, particularly in rural areas. Interesting suggestions and recommendations had been made during the debate to promote the advancement of women and their integration in the development effort. That integration was particularly important in the case of female agricultural workers who accounted for a very large percentage of the population in most of the developing countries.

In Kenya, women played an essential role in the family and in society, because, apart from their normal domestic duties, they also did agricultural work. The problems they had to face were numerous, mainly because they were not familiar with new agricultural techniques, they did not have labour-saving and time-saving tools, or adequate financial means, or quite simply because the amount of work they had to do each day was beyond their physical capacity. For all those reasons, it was extremely difficult for them to take part in any other activities, to acquire an education or to aspire to a different way of life. As had been pointed out in the FAO report and in the statement by the representative of ECA, what was most needed in Africa was to attack poverty on all fronts. In Kenya efforts were being made to reach the heart of the problem and that was the objective of its agrarian policy and of agricultural and other types of training. The National Women's Organization, which had more than 2,000 clubs throughout the country, had set up co-operatives which sold handicrafts made by women in order to supplement their incomes, and had organized courses in agricultural training, nutrition, home economics, literacy and family planning. The Kenyan Government had established an agricultural college which was open to women as well as men, and women who obtained the requisite qualifications could then be put in charge of agricultural extension services in their region with a view to helping to bring about a general improvement in working conditions and production. There were other programmes organized by the Government or the National Women's Organization which were designed to integrate women in the development effort. However, much still remained to be done in that field.

(Mrs. Asiyo, Kenya)

Her delegation supported the suggestion made by the Economic Commission for Africa concerning the establishment of a fund (African Women's Development Fund) which would be used in the first instance to finance the setting up of a special team of volunteers (African Women's Development Task Force). The establishment of a Pan African Women's Centre was also contemplated: such a centre would offer training courses at various levels.

Her delegation hoped that various useful suggestions, such as that of the Indonesian delegation concerning the establishment of a consumers' organization in the developing countries, would be implemented during the Second Development Decade and would help to improve the status of women in rural areas, particularly in Africa.

The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, she would invite the representative of the Women's International Democratic Federation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (category I), to make a statement.

It was so decided.

Mrs. BROWN (Women's International Democratic Federation) said that her organization attached particular importance, pursuant to resolution 14 (XXIV) of the Commission on the Status of Women, to the examination of the status of rural women, as was clear from document E/CN.6/NGO/256, to which she drew the Commission's attention.

The Women's International Democratic Federation believed, like the Indian delegation, that the desire to improve their level of living was the strongest motivation likely to encourage women in rural areas to raise their educational level. That desire was shared equally by the husband and the parents, whose agreement and co-operation were essential to enable women to attend literacy courses. In that context, it was of particular importance that literacy classes should have a very direct relationship to daily life and that the textbooks used should focus on matters of great relevance to the students. In that connexion, she quoted two highly symbolic examples: in Mauritius, she had seen women learning to read from books written for English schoolchildren in the nineteenth century, which naturally contained texts bearing no relation to the experience of the women concerned. On the other hand, in Cuba, the textbooks used for adult literacy classes were about land reform, which was of crucial significance to the population.

/...

(Mrs. Brown, Women's International
Democratic Federation)

WIDF considered that the provisions of the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education should be applied to women in rural areas in the same manner as to those in urban areas. It proposed that special attention should be given to all the ILO conventions concerning the working and living conditions of women working in agriculture in order to eliminate all discrimination against them; that the observance of International Women's Year should provide an opportunity for that.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission had concluded the general debate on item 7 (a) and (b) relating to the programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and their integration in development and she requested the Deputy Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs to introduce item 7 (c).

(c) TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (E/CN.6/569)

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that for its consideration of item 7 (c), the Commission had before it one document only (E/CN.6/569), dated 30 January 1973, which described the activities carried out up to that date under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights. She wished to point out to the Commission that some slight changes had been made in the distribution of funds financing those activities since the Section on the Status of Women no longer formed part of the Division of Human Rights.

In paragraph 1 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1680 (LII), the Secretary-General had been invited, in discharging his responsibilities for the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, to make every effort, within the existing resources available to him, to ensure that: (a) two seminars on subjects relating to the status of women were held each year; (b) at least one of those seminars was an international seminar on a matter directly related to the work programme of the Commission on the Status of Women; (c) increased attention should be given to securing the appointment, as human rights fellows, of more women

/...

(Mrs. Bruce)

and persons involved in activities designed to eliminate discrimination against women. As indicated in document E/CN.6/569, two seminars had been held in 1972, including an international seminar on the status of women and family planning in Istanbul, Turkey. Also, in 1972, an increased number of fellowships had been awarded. In July 1973, an international seminar had been organized in London on the subject of the family in a changing society and the problems and responsibilities of its members, and seven fellowships had been awarded for the study of those aspects of civil law relating in particular to the family, legislation guaranteeing equality between men and women, etc. There were plans to organize one or two seminars in 1974, as part of the preparations for International Women's Year; one would be held in Canada and would be combined with a training course. Funds had also been allocated for fellowships.

Moreover, three seminars on the status of women and family planning had been organized in 1972 and 1973 and financed by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities; others were also planned for 1974 and 1975 as part of World Population Year and International Women's Year. One of the seminars would be held in 1975 in the ECAFE region, at the request of the regional economic commission.

In conclusion, she indicated that there had been very few requests in 1973 for the services of experts.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia), referring to a point raised by her delegation at the twenty-fourth session of the Commission, said that she would like to know whether the procedure for the recruitment of experts had been changed.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that she was not in a position to reply to the question immediately, but would try to obtain the necessary information and transmit it at a later meeting.

In reply to a question by Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the term "expert" had not, in effect, been clearly defined. Naturally, an expert was recruited in the light of the request submitted by the Government concerned and the services it required of him. The time available in which to recruit the expert

/...

(Mrs. Bruce)

was also an important factor. Apparently, the difficulties which arose in some cases were also due to the fact that the services of experts were at first financed under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, and then subsequently by UNDP. The problem certainly merited consideration.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

Tuesday, 22 January 1974,
at 3.10 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND THEIR INTEGRATION IN DEVELOPMENT (agenda item 7) (continued):

- (c) TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (concluded) (E/CN.6/569);
- (d) ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (E/CN.6/579, E/CN.6/580)

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation), introducing the ILO's report (E/CN.6/579), said that, since the report had been prepared, there had been one important development: in November 1973 the Governing Body of the International Labour Office had decided to place on the agenda of the 1975 session of the International Labour Conference the question of equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers. That would provide an opportunity for full and free discussion of that question by Government, employer and trade union representatives, and would no doubt lead to a series of resolutions or declarations for national, regional and international action to promote the advancement of women in economic life. That discussion and its conclusions would doubtless constitute the ILO's main contribution to International Women's Year. The 1975 session of the Conference would also have before it a world survey of the application of the principle of equal pay in countries which had ratified Convention No. 100 on that question and in those which had not, and that report would be examined critically by the special Conference committee on the application of international labour standards. The Conference discussion on equality of opportunity would be preceded by a meeting of the ILO's tripartite panel of consultants on women workers' problems, to be convened in all probability for the end of May 1974 to review the preliminary report on women workers. At that time it was proposed to hold a meeting on the same question with international non-governmental organizations concerned with women workers' problems. Many of those organizations had made an important contribution to the campaign for equality of opportunity and treatment for women and had taken many practical initiatives to stimulate real progress towards that end.

At the regional level, the same question of equality of opportunity for women had been put forward as a possible item for discussion at the next session of the Asian Advisory Committee. Since other items had taken priority it had not been

(Mrs. Johnstone, ILO)

chosen, but perhaps next time it would receive higher priority. The Committee would, however, be discussing the question of human resources development in rural areas and would, it was to be hoped, take full cognizance of the key role played by women in agriculture and in rural development generally. The previous session of the Inter-American Advisory Committee, held in September 1973, had also discussed the improvement of the conditions of life and work of peasants and agricultural workers. Progress had also been made under the ILO's discrimination programme. The symposium on equality of opportunity in the American region, held in Panama in October 1973, had submitted a report which had been approved by the Governing Body and which contained a passage stating that, with regard to discrimination against women in employment, there was no longer a problem of legal recognition of rights but rather one of ensuring equal opportunities for women in all fields. The report also drew attention to the insidious form of inequality represented by the underpayment of women in jobs occupied primarily by women, for example in the garment industry. Moreover, it noted that women were less well organized than men and that their true interests were not taken sufficiently into account in collective bargaining. The next symposium on equality of opportunity in employment would be held in Geneva during the 1974-1975 budget period. It was interesting to note that its agenda made specific reference to problems of equality of opportunity and treatment arising with regard to women.

Further progress had also been made under the World Employment Programme (WEP). Moreover, in 1973 the ACC had unanimously adopted a report on employment policy in the Second Development Decade, which included the results of the first full-scale interagency evaluation of the first four country employment-strategy missions under the WEP.

As already indicated, the ILO's standards relating to the employment of women were kept under review in order to ensure that they were up to date and reflected technological and scientific advance. The standards restricting the employment of women at night were currently under review and Governments, employers' and workers' organizations were being consulted about their revision.

A further step forward has also been taken to improve the conditions of work of nurses - men and women. A joint ILO/WHO meeting had been held in Geneva in November 1973 and had reached a series of decisions on the employment and

/...

(Mrs. Johnstone, ILO)

conditions of work of nurses which, once approved by the governing bodies of the two organizations, would be regarded as a guide for Governments, employers and workers, and might eventually be **incorporated** in an international labour instrument. The conclusions laid down a series of general principles and conditions for effective nursing practice and covered such matters as education, training and careers, freedom of association and collective bargaining, hours and conditions of work, remuneration, social security and occupational health protection.

Plans were far advanced for an ILO/ECA/YWCA African workshop on the participation of women in handicrafts and other small industries, to be held in the second half of 1974. Plans were also being made to hold, with the generous assistance and hospitality of Japan, a seminar **on the role of women's bureaux in** pinpointing women workers' needs and problems and in co-ordinating measures to meet them.

Technical co-operation activities were expanding and the ILO hoped to be able to strengthen its regional machinery with special advisers on women workers' needs and problems. It was convinced that a regional approach was the only one that made real sense.

The analysis of government replies to the questionnaire on part-time employment had been completed, and copies of the report were available in English only. There had been an interesting evolution in that field over the past 10 years, as could be seen from the report: more part-time workers - men and women, but predominantly women - more attention on the part of Governments to the regulation of part-time employment, greater willingness of employers to experiment with that type of employment. The trade unions maintained their basic reservations with regard to any generalization of part-time work; they felt that part-time work was not good for careers and promotion, that there tended to be exploitation, and that there were risks for full-time workers entailed in any tendency to generalize part-time work. They maintained that, with some exceptions, the real solution lay in shorter working hours for all.

Mrs. JURADO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that within FAO's mandate for agricultural and rural development, the participation of rural women in development efforts was regarded as part of its programme for the mobilization of human resources. FAO's policy of giving more

/...

(Mrs. Jurado, FAO)

concrete form to the concept of integrated rural development included measures for enhancing women's participation as an integral part of an over-all programme of action. Special efforts had been undertaken to harmonize the various units of the newly created Human Resources and Institutions Division with a view to bettering the conditions of the rural population.

Education and training of women within the context of integrated rural development was being largely oriented towards its home economics programmes in particular. The Home Economics Service had now expanded into a Home Economics and Social Progress Service. Programmes of action starting at the grass-roots level had provided opportunities for women to participate in the development process.

FAO had attached great importance to the problems of agrarian reform, which had been considered as a starting point for a broader framework of rural development efforts. To cope with changing conditions in rural areas, women had been included in training programmes in modern farming techniques, cash crop production, basic management skills, co-operatives and marketing.

Family-oriented programmes had been successfully integrated in irrigation projects and settlement schemes. The participation in the development process of the farmers' families required the involvement of the entire family. Programmes of training to acquire the skill essential to the greater integration of men, women and youth in the development programme were essential components in such development schemes.

FAO was devoting special attention to the integration of women in national development programmes. Assistance had been provided to countries to ensure, through the offices of ministries of agriculture, the greater co-ordination of efforts towards the implementation of programmes oriented towards the family and women and aimed at improving the conditions of the rural population.

Likewise, in its agricultural education activities, FAO had emphasized the training of women in agriculture and home economics.

Special efforts were being made to develop an appropriate population strategy combined with measures to promote the equitable distribution of the benefits derived from increased food production and their implications for employment.

FAO intended to participate more actively in the United Nations programmes for the advancement of women and intended to increase co-operation with ECA in

(Mrs. Jurado, FAO)

the implementation of training programmes in Africa. More regional and national meetings would be held in 1974 which would introduce the population component into the agricultural training programme.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) expressed appreciation of ILO's great contribution to the advancement of workers. The specialized agencies must take account of the advances in science and technology and the increase in the number of women who worked. Those developments should be studied by ILO with a view to the revision of existing conventions and the adoption of new ones. Together with other delegations, the Hungarian delegation would in due course submit a draft resolution on the item under discussion.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines) thought that ILO had submitted a very full report and hoped to comment in detail on some of its conclusions at the following meeting.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) thought that sections II and III of the ILO report were of capital importance for Asia and, in particular, for countries such as Indonesia. The training of workers must be improved because it was currently not at a sufficiently high level to meet the exigencies of the world market. Such training must be general in scope and extend to a knowledge of marketing and design. Furthermore, the existence of intermediaries in the process of acquiring raw materials made the final product more expensive. Governments should endeavour to distribute such materials themselves to reduce the cost of production. Co-operatives should be organized to promote awareness of the problems.

She thought that the problem of wages was particularly relevant in the private sector because the remuneration paid there to a woman for work which was of the same or higher value as that performed by a man was always lower than that of the man and was particularly low in work which men did not do. She regretted that she had not had the time to study the other reports but would comment on them in due course.

Mrs. ZAHRAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) introduced the study on UNESCO activities of special interest to women (E/CN.6/580) and said that according to the latest statistics available to UNESCO, 43 per cent of all persons currently enrolled in schools at all levels

/...

(Mrs. Zahran, UNESCO)

were female, although that figure had been the same since 1960. Similarly, at the first and second levels the figures of 44 per cent and 43 per cent respectively had not changed since 1960. The biggest increase was found in Africa at the first level and in the Arab States at the second level. The General Conference of UNESCO, at its fourteenth session in November 1966, had adopted two resolutions making equal access of girls and women to education one of the five priority areas in the education sector. During the period covered by the report (E/CN.6/580), the movement for equality of access of girls and women to education had necessitated its vigorous reorientation, which had taken the form of going beyond equality of access to equality of training and employment opportunity. At its seventeenth session in November 1972, the General Conference of UNESCO had strongly favoured and supported that reorientation through a resolution promoting new approaches to the achievement of equal access and opportunity of girls and women to all levels of education, training and employment in all phases of life, taking due account of their role in the family and society. That resolution had been a turning point in UNESCO's activities for the promotion of girls and women and its approval had been influenced by the fact that 10 per cent of the representatives at that General Conference had been women. To formalize that change and reorientation, the General Conference had changed the title of the programme from "Equality of access of girls and women to education" to "Equality of educational opportunity for girls and women". Another distinguishing feature of the programme during the same period had been an attempt to involve member States more closely in its activities, through increased contacts at the official and private levels and through UNESCO National Commission in some member States. Accordingly, in some countries the National Commissions were undertaking an investigation into education, training and employment. In Nepal, the National Commission would participate in the evaluation of the experimental project and the National Commission in the United States of America was hosting and participating with UNESCO in organizing and financing collective fellowships in rural education which, beginning in April 1974, would be held by 10 women from Africa and Asia. Another facet in the reorientation of the programme had been to change the granting of fellowships of individual women into collective fellowships for training courses in member States.

(Mrs. Zahran, UNESCO)

The UNESCO report covered only the agency's activities for the advancement of women in areas where there was inequality in their treatment by comparison with that of men, and did not refer to the many activities which were equally beneficial to men and women. UNESCO, in co-operation with the ILO, had undertaken an investigation into the relationship between education and training opportunities open to girls and women and their employment. That investigation was being carried out in five countries, one in America, one in Asia, one in the Arab States and two in Africa. UNESCO had continued its activities undertaken in previous years for the three experimental projects in the Upper Volta, Chile and Nepal and continued to provide technical assistance for women's education to five other projects which received financial support from the United Nations Development Programme in the fields of technical education in rural areas, rural education, technical and commercial education and teacher training. Chapter V of the report listed UNESCO's activities with regard to the training of women for responsible posts and chapter VI dealt with areas in UNESCO activities concerning education of women, including co-operation with UNRWA and UNICEF. Chapter VII covered collaboration with non-governmental organizations and chapter VIII dealt with various relevant conferences and meetings held under UNESCO auspices.

The UNESCO projects concerning women which were mentioned in the report did not by any means give a complete picture of all the activities undertaken by the agency during the period under consideration. It was merely a selection of areas considered to be of particular importance in the implementation of the programme. The programme for the equality of educational opportunity for girls and women was to be the subject of a study in depth by a special committee by UNESCO's Executive Board and, in 1975, would be evaluated by a committee of experts. One of the trends of the programme was an integrated approach to the advancement of women within the United Nations system. Another important trend was an increased involvement of member States in UNESCO's activities for the advancement of women.

As the report showed, the programme was fulfilling some of those objectives at various levels: acting as a catalyst, a stimulator of activities for the promotion of women and as a liaison and centre of exchange for the various official and non-governmental bodies interested in the advancement of women; stimulating

/...

(Mrs. Zahran, UNESCO)

research activities on the question, and assisting operational projects in priority fields and areas where women were most discriminated against. The system of contracts with the National Commissions, which had made it possible to get better results from the resources allocated for those activities, was of particular importance.

The long-term objective of the programme, namely the equality of educational opportunity at all levels, must not be forgotten, and accordingly obstacles impeding that equality were to be identified on a global basis in the near future. The concentration of the programme on priority areas in women's education in developing countries did not exclude its future involvement with obstacles to equality of educational opportunity in industrialized societies. It was expected that 1975, as International Women's Year, would help to focus world attention on the promotion of women. There was no doubt that the movement for the promotion of women was gathering strength and momentum in member States, and UNESCO should not only keep pace but should be in advance.

Mrs. SANCHEZ TORRES (Colombia) commented favourably on the UNESCO report, singling out the part which referred to plans for developing primary education, which was of special importance for developing countries.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said it was unfortunate that the ILO report on women workers in a changing world had not been distributed until the day of the meeting, as she would have liked to refer to it. Turning to the UNESCO report, which she deemed excellent, she regretted that there had been little time to study that document too. She requested that documents should be distributed sufficiently early to facilitate discussion. Referring to chapter III of the ILO report (E/CN.6/579), she felt it was important that all available resources should be utilized in the study of problems faced by women workers in the world of today. She hoped that the Commission would give careful study to the draft resolution to be submitted by Hungary, and that it would adopt it.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) agreed with the comment made by the representative of Romania concerning the late distribution of documents, and she regretted that she had been unable to study the reports, particularly the ILO

(Mrs. Noor, Indonesia)

report which dealt with the most important questions concerning women. With regard to the UNESCO report, she requested more information on the new methods of assistance employed, particularly the system of contracts and the collective fellowships programme. She particularly welcomed the policy of collaboration with non-governmental organizations. In most developing countries, and especially in her own country, it was non-governmental organizations that really initiated education programmes, but, while they had the necessary dedication and enthusiasm to carry on their activities, they lacked adequate resources. She asked the UNESCO representative to explain the modalities of collaboration with non-governmental organizations. The UNESCO report stressed the importance of non-formal education, integrated with family life, which she considered to be of special importance for developing countries. The representative of UNESCO had mentioned the possibility of providing assistance for training activities at the national level, including those carried out with non-governmental organizations. UNESCO had developed a system of contracts which made it possible to grant more assistance to the UNESCO National Commissions with the same resources. She requested the UNESCO representative to provide the Commission with more information on that question.

Mrs. BRUCE (Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that although some documents had been distributed late, the UNESCO and ILO reports had been ready within the six-week time-limit, and the Secretariat had made special efforts to send the reports to all members of the Commission.

Mrs. ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), replying to the question asked by the representative of Indonesia concerning the work of the National Commissions, said that UNESCO was holding meetings with the ILO to establish guidelines or rules to ensure that the five National Commissions worked in a uniform manner.

When the countries had been selected, contracts had been entered into with each country, setting forth its obligations, working methods and so forth. After the contracts had been signed, officials from UNESCO headquarters had held meetings with the members of the group. In each country the National Commission had selected specialists active in various different fields. If they were officials

/...

(Mrs. Zahran, UNESCO)

they did not receive any remuneration, but if they were not, a subcontract was signed. That method had yielded excellent results, since the people involved were working primarily because they were interested in the project and not for money.

She said that the reports of the five National Commissions could be made available to members of the Commission. She paid tribute to Mrs. Johnstone, without whom the project could not have been completed successfully.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) wished to join previous speakers in congratulating the representatives of UNESCO and the ILO on their excellent reports.

Her country received considerable assistance from UNESCO, but was at present particularly concerned over pre-school education and teacher training plans, and felt that UNESCO's teacher training programmes should be expanded.

Another problem of special concern at the national level was the problem of UNESCO national representatives who were not implementing any special plans to meet national requirements.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that Norway had not had any unemployment for many years and needed manpower, with the result that there was increasing use of part-time work for people who preferred it for various reasons, although it was largely women who took advantage of that system. For example, Norway needed nurses in its hospitals; and as most nurses were married, they needed to be offered refresher courses and given the option of working part-time if they were to return to their profession.

Another new development was the introduction of flexible working hours, which were in operation in various countries, particularly at the present time owing to the energy crisis.

There were still differences between the income of men and women because the pay for some jobs traditionally considered women's work was lower. That situation should be changed and each job should be evaluated according to its merits.

In her country a governmental commission was currently studying the implementation of ILO Conventions Nos. 100 and 111. The Commission would compare the remuneration of men and women for work requiring the same education, training, working hours and so forth, and also the promotion opportunities open to the two groups in their jobs.

(Mrs. Kolstad, Norway)

When the Commission had been established in December 1972, a press release on the subject had been sent to the Commission on the Status of Women and to the ILO with a request for their comments. It had now been discovered that those press releases had never reached their destination and it was evidently necessary to find a more reliable form of communication between sessions, which were held every two years.

Miss CHATON (France) agreed with the representative of Norway about the need for flexible working hours, which were more productive. Germany, Switzerland, Norway and France, inter alia, had introduced flexible working hours for eminently practical reasons.

Commenting on part-time work, she said it was important that it should not be reserved exclusively for women, although women benefited from it most.

In connexion with the question of salaries per se, she said that in France any violation of the rule of equal pay for men and women was punishable. The first decision that would establish a legal precedent on that question was expected shortly.

As for the question of absenteeism, which was always brought up in connexion with women's work, she said that surveys showed that it was more common among men than among women.

Referring to the statement made by the representative of UNESCO, she said that although the Educational Planning Institute had been opened to women recently, women did not hold high-level posts at the decision-making level in the Institute. More professional women should be employed there.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) thanked the ILO for providing a clear picture of its activities in which governments, employers and employees were represented. International conventions should be implemented throughout the world. She appreciated ILO efforts to provide full employment for all. Technical assistance for women should be considered and the ILO should examine that question. Furthermore, there should be greater co-ordination at the regional level. In that context, she asked which bodies the ILO should co-operate with specifically.

Her delegation was particularly interested in the problem of full employment for women. Employment opportunities were not available for everyone. Furthermore,

/...

(Mrs. Foussein, Egypt)

women agricultural workers were not included among other women workers, as shown by the statistics which should be interpreted taking that factor into account. The more education a woman received, the greater her chances of finding employment, because training led to new employment opportunities. There were no women in some jobs because there was no training available for the work required in such posts.

It had been said that too many women went to university and that their numbers exceeded the jobs available. Furthermore, it had been claimed that women workers' output was low, that their rate of absenteeism was high, etc. Undoubtedly, development gave rise to such problems. However, the conclusions were somewhat anti-feminist. It should be established whether or not such problems arose from discrimination against women. Little research had been carried out on women's output, and it might well be better or, at least, equal to that of men. It had also been stated that, in view of the excessive size of the population, women should cede posts involving productive work to men. However, in reply it could be said that the heads of families could not support the large number of persons dependent upon them alone. It was obvious that such outdated criticisms still existed and must be countered with all kinds of arguments.

She also thanked UNESCO and said that the fellowships and the participation by the national committees was useful. UNESCO worked with non-governmental organizations and with the ILO which was extremely helpful.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) thanked the ILO and UNESCO for their reports. The ILO dealt with the problems facing women in employment. The staff of the ILO was insufficient, but nevertheless carried out excellent work. She therefore proposed that the Commission should recommend that more women experts be employed on the staff of the specialized agencies, to work on women's problems.

As for international co-operation by Japan in promoting the advancement of women, mention should be made of the Women's and Minors' Bureau. It was mainly concerned with women workers, particularly young women. Its major objective was to study the problems and conditions of women, particularly working women, and to find a solution to them. It also gathered information from industries, non-governmental organizations, private bodies, universities, etc.; assisted the Department of Labour in applying labour laws and standards; gave publicity to women's problems and provided instruction thereon; developed active international co-operation, together with the International Labour Section of the

/...

(Mrs. Oba, Japan)

Ministry of Labour; and co-operated with non-governmental organizations and ministries. She informed the Commission about legislation introduced in Japan in 1972 concerning the welfare of women workers. The legislation was also intended to solve the problems of shortage of manpower and therefore proposed integrating women in the active population.

Miss TYABJI (India) agreed with the point raised by the representative of the Dominican Republic regarding the training of women teachers for pre-primary education. Her Government gave special attention to education, and in 1973 it had opened 20,000 new schools. However, the problem was so great that such an effort did not constitute a solution. Day nurseries provided jobs for young women and UNESCO should therefore consider that aspect.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) was of the opinion that, if all countries had specialized bodies to deal with women's problems, mutual international collaboration and collaboration with UNESCO and the ILO would be facilitated.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) referred to a specific problem which had arisen in certain developing countries, namely that of engaging nurses to work in developed countries, particularly Europe. The promises made to them when they were engaged were not subsequently fulfilled which led to exploitation, repatriation and other problems. The ILO should look into the matter.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation), referring to a point made by the representative of Egypt, made it clear that the International Labour Organisation had regional action centres.

She said that the ILO had regional action centres which co-operated closely with the regional economic commissions and the regional offices of WHO, etc. The officers of many of the ILO offices were exclusively male and they frequently ignored the problems of women, not out of ill-will, but because that was the way they had been brought up. However, the women's office was principally concerned with a specific type of woman worker, namely the economically active woman. There was therefore no contradiction between the two bodies which were in fact complementary.

Referring to the question raised by the representative of Japan, she said that

/...

(Mrs. Johnstone, ILO)

obviously more experts were needed and it was important that, in regional centres, there should be people trained to identify the needs of each region and find solutions for integrating women in the development process.

With regard to the question raised by the representative of Indonesia, she said that such a concern was shared by the ILO, WHO and the International Council of Nurses. The ILO needed information regarding the terms of the contracts of emigrants from the developing to the developed countries and what subsequently happened to such people, whether they returned to their countries, whether they had studied in developed countries and returned with a diploma, whether they were exploited, etc. There was very little basic information and, if the non-governmental organizations could provide information on that subject, it would be very useful.

She also drew the Commission's attention to a recent study on the emigration of nurses from the West Indies.

Mrs. ZAHRAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that she was pleased to inform the Commission that some UNESCO programmes concerned pre-school children and would come into effect on the occasion of International Women's Year. Five studies would be carried out on cases involving the children of working mothers and the training of mothers and adolescents to look after young children. There was also a training programme for teachers in primary and secondary education.

Mrs. ALDAY (Philippines), referring to the employment of nurses abroad, said that the Philippines had done much to prevent nurses from emigrating. The Ministry of Labour had examined the contracts of those who wished to leave the country and had established a special office to prevent the exploitation of women workers.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that Thailand had received aid from UNESCO for two projects to train rural teachers in the north-eastern zone. Those projects had been completed five years previously and Thailand would like them to be continued.

/...

Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) said that, over the years, the ILO had established several programmes and adopted innumerable instruments for the protection of women's rights and the integration of women in development.

Educational opportunities must be provided in the third world and her delegation congratulated UNESCO on its efforts to eradicate illiteracy throughout the world by providing teachers for the developing countries. Liberia was grateful for UNESCO's invaluable contribution in that sphere.

Her delegation welcomed the new trend in UNESCO programmes concerning equality of educational opportunities for girls and women, and its co-operation with other United Nations bodies to eliminate the obstacles to the advancement of women in the economic, social, educational and cultural fields. It should also be emphasized that member States and non-governmental organizations were actively interested in UNESCO activities for the advancement of women. It was to be hoped that the ILO, UNESCO and other specialized agencies would continue their programmes of action to promote the advancement of women so as to enable them to achieve their maximum potential as a vital force in society.

Mrs. ZAHRAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), in reply to the representative of Thailand, said that the request should be made by her Government, through the resident representative. She would inform UNESCO that such a request was to be made imminently.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.
