

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

SIXTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



**THIRD COMMITTEE, 1105th
MEETING**

Wednesday, 15 November 1961,
at 3.30 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 12:</i>	
<i>Report of the Economic and Social Council</i>	
<i>(chapters VI and VII)</i>	
<i>General debate.</i>	225

Chairman: Mr. Salvador P. LOPEZ (Philippines).

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters VI and VII) (A/4820 and Corr.2, A/C.3/L.947 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.950)

GENERAL DEBATE

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to turn its attention to the next item on its agenda, which covered those parts of the report of the Economic and Social Council which had been referred to it for consideration. Those were chapters VI and VII, on social questions and human rights respectively, with the exception of paragraph 489 which concerned the development of co-operatives among farmers.

2. The Committee would recall that the question of education and training in Africa (agenda item 22 (c))—the subject of paragraph 648 in chapter VIII of the report—had originally been on its agenda but had subsequently been referred to the Second Committee instead. Some of the topics dealt with in the Council's report formed separate items on the Committee's agenda. One of them, the draft Convention and draft Recommendation on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age of Marriage and Registration of Marriages (agenda item 85), discussed in paragraphs 629 to 633 of the report, had already been disposed of. The other two, the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (agenda item 34), the subject of paragraphs 534 to 549, and manifestations of racial prejudice and national and religious intolerance (agenda item 86), discussed in paragraphs 599 to 600, would be considered later in the session. He would therefore suggest that, although it was open to representatives to refer to any point covered in the relevant chapters of the Council's report, it was not necessary to undertake a detailed consideration of those three topics under the present item.

3. The Committee had before it two draft resolutions, a twenty-Power draft (A/C.3/L.947 and Add.1) on the subject of human rights fellowships, and a draft resolution submitted by the Czechoslovak delegation (A/C.3/L.950) on the problem of balanced economic and social development.

4. Mr. GREEN (New Zealand), speaking as Chairman of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), referring to chapter VI,

section III, of the report, recalled that, since its inception in 1946, UNICEF had played an important part in restoring hope in human progress. At the outset, it had been one of a small number of international organizations assisting in the economic and social reconstruction of war-devastated areas, and its attention to the care of the minds and bodies of the new generation had helped the communities concerned, not only to enjoy the fruits of material progress, but also to regain their cultural and spiritual heritage

5. By 1950, when UNICEF's emergency objectives had been attained, a greater number of agencies had been manifesting increasing interest in the development of under-developed countries and, in keeping with that new trend, UNICEF's charter had been revised by the Third Committee. During that "project stage", UNICEF had concentrated on disease control and maternal and child health projects, and had taken an increasing interest in nutrition problems. It had also built up fruitful relations with other agencies, particularly WHO, FAO, the United Nations Bureau of Social Affairs and a large number of non-governmental organizations.

6. During that second stage, many of the less developed countries, especially those which had recently achieved independence and had not yet fully built up their administrative cadres, had had difficulty in deciding how best to utilize and integrate the variety of assistance, both multilateral and bilateral, offered to them. Although there were some countries still to achieve their independence, that phase was now generally past, and UNICEF had reached the third stage of its evolution. It now had a reasonably clear picture of the number of countries it must serve and of the international agencies working in the same field; thus there existed a basis for rationalization and integration of efforts in the future development of United Nations assistance activities.

7. Many United Nations bodies had been bringing their programmes more consciously into harmony with plans worked out by the developing countries themselves. For UNICEF, that new emphasis and approach was an extension of existing thinking rather than a change of policy. Through its field offices, UNICEF had always worked in close consultation with recipient Governments, while also striving to co-ordinate its activities with those of other agencies, and it was developing effective work relationships with Resident Representatives of TAB. UNICEF had been almost the first United Nations agency to accept the idea of helping a Government in drawing up a programme for a complete sector of its economy, preferably on a long-term basis, within the framework of the country's over-all social and economic planning.

8. It was in that light that UNICEF had adopted a broader view of service to children. Child welfare

schemes were regarded not as something outside economic and social development, but as an essential part of it. Unfortunately, investment in children had tended to be neglected because its advantages were not so immediately apparent as the visible elements of development, such as roads, bridges and factories, which had absorbed the resources of developing countries. The penalties of neglecting nutrition, disease control and child care, and of failing to remedy the appalling social conditions in which millions of children grew up, had been consistently underestimated. If, therefore, the under-developed countries were encouraged, with special assistance from UNICEF, to survey their child needs and to draw up long-range programmes of effective action to deal with the highest priorities within the framework of their over-all economic and social development plans, not only would the scope and impact of UNICEF aid be intensified, but a lasting impetus would be given to balanced productive economic growth.

9. In embarking on the third stage of its development, UNICEF had been inspired by the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (General Assembly resolution 1386 (XIV)), recommended by the Third Committee. In its resolution 827 (XXXII), the Economic and Social Council had welcomed the opportunities provided by the new approach and had noted with satisfaction that UNICEF was translating the objectives of the Declaration into practical programmes for the benefit of children. He also drew attention, on behalf of the Executive Board, to the significant policy decisions described in the Board's report.^{1/}

10. On the question of co-ordination, the very process of surveying child needs on a nation-wide basis would facilitate integrated effort at the country level. The long-term programmes which countries would be encouraged to draw up should further enhance co-ordination between child welfare and other sectors. Countries would be encouraged to make long-term assessments of their particular child needs, and on that basis international assistance could be offered with a clearer view of objectives.

11. Implicit in the new approach was the belief that the time had come for UNICEF to adopt a more flexible attitude towards the types of aid it offered. The preliminary survey of the needs of children (E/ICEF/410 and Add.1-2), which was recommended as suitable for distribution to agencies dealing with national child welfare problems, offered numerous stimulating ideas on solutions to child development problems and showed conclusively that priority needs in one country could differ greatly from those in another. It followed that UNICEF should be increasingly prepared to offer new types of aid and that in time the shape of that aid would be moulded by the pattern created from the surveys carried out by the less developed countries themselves.

12. The emphasis which the Executive Board had recently laid on social services for children and on training was indicative of a trend which the General Assembly had been increasingly endorsing in all United Nations aid programmes. The lot of children could often be vastly improved without elaborate capital expenditure. Much malnutrition could be eliminated through education of mothers and many diseases could be prevented by the spread of know-

ledge of public health techniques and the better training of those responsible for existing services.

13. On the basis of an administrative survey of UNICEF's headquarters and field structure, certain functions were at present being transferred to area or country offices, a new office of Resident Director for Africa South of the Sahara had been established, a similar office had been set up in India for certain Asian countries and certain staff and salary changes had been authorized. Those measures would promote greater operational effectiveness and a maximum use of resources for actual programme work. The budget currently presented by the Secretariat provided for no net increase in the international staff employed, despite a significant growth in the workload.

14. The Executive Board had also decided to discontinue the practice of placing in reserve the funds required to complete whole projects or significant parts of projects. Funds now held in reserve against the completion of projects were to be brought down to an approximate level of expenditure for the next eight months. The decision, which would be reviewed from time to time, would have the effect of permitting UNICEF, in the coming two or three years, to spend more than its current receipts, thus enabling it to give special attention to countries wishing to survey their child needs and elaborate long-term programmes and to assist newly independent countries to a greater extent than would otherwise be possible. If, as was expected, UNICEF's income continued to rise by \$2 million a year, the process of temporarily spending more than was received could be accomplished without any undue fluctuations in the workload of the Secretariat.

15. It was believed that UNICEF's proven ability to adapt itself to the changing requirements of the world's children would encourage the supporters of UNICEF to increase the resources they placed at its disposal. The Third Committee might, for its part, wish to reiterate the hope it had expressed in previous years that Governments would increase their support. Government contributions were basic to UNICEF and must remain so, but it was noteworthy that interest in private fund-raising was increasing in several countries. In 1960, collections made by children in the United States and Canada during the annual Halloween drive had produced over \$2 million for UNICEF. Currently, a campaign by the Swiss Committee for UNICEF had already resulted in the collection of over \$400,000. In several other European countries it was planned to follow the Swiss example of making special UNICEF collections on International Milk Day. The people of Australia and New Zealand had plans to raise large sums of money in 1962 from private sources as a contribution to the Freedom from Hunger Campaign, the proceeds of which would be shared by UNICEF and FAO. Private fund-raising activity spread knowledge of UNICEF and its work and laid a firm basis for governmental support. It was entirely appropriate that the Declaration of the Rights of the Child should carry its message not only to Governments, but to private citizens everywhere.

16. Miss HENDERSON (Director, Bureau of Social Affairs), introduced chapter VI, sections I and II, of the report of the Economic and Social Council and gave an account of the work of the United Nations in

^{1/} See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 13 B, paras. 49-73.

the social and demographic fields and of the main trends which appeared to be developing.^{2/}

17. The 1961 edition of the Report on the World Social Situation^{3/} contained a brief survey of trends throughout the world, although it was devoted primarily to the problems of planning for balanced economic and social development. In assessing recent trends, account had to be taken of the fact that population growth was proceeding at a rate exceeding earlier forecasts, the highest rates occurring mainly in regions with low per caput incomes and the poorest social services. Steady progress had continued in health matters, particularly in the conquest of mass diseases, and the increase in the proportion of children receiving some instruction had been encouraging, although much of the schooling was too short, too poor in quality or too unrelated to the needs of children to be really effective. New housing construction had not kept pace with the growth of cities, and more people had been crowded into slums each year.

18. Where agriculture and the rural population were concerned, both the economically developed countries and the rest of the world were struggling with intractable, although completely different, problems. In the former, although the number of farming families had dwindled, attempts had to be made to limit food production and to maintain the incomes of farmers who could not find a market for their products, while other countries were unable to feed themselves satisfactorily, although rural families comprised a large proportion of their populations. The problem was related to many other questions of social policy, and United Nations technical assistance programmes must stimulate the trend apparent in the policies of many Governments towards integrated measures of agrarian reform, education adapted to rural needs and large-scale community development in rural areas.

19. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1161 (XII), calling for intensified efforts in the study and recommendation of measures to effect a balanced and integrated economic and social progress, the Bureau of Social Affairs had been studying the experience of countries at different levels of development with a view to finding guiding principles for the interrelation of social and economic programmes.

20. Part II of the Report was based on those studies and on other material. Chapter II represented an attempt to analyse the concept of balanced development as an appropriate relation between economic and social factors, giving to each sector of development the attention it deserved in the total complex. Chapter III gave an account of social-economic patterns in many countries which, although the basic data were inadequate in many cases, indicated wide imbalances in a number of instances. She drew attention to the conclusions reached and remarked that the central problem apparent at the present stage was that of the distribution of income within countries where discrepancies existed between the economic and social indicators. Chapter IV analysed expenditures for social purposes and, despite the limitations of expenditure data as indications of allocation

of national resources, much information had been amassed on actual expenditures for health, education and housing and their relationship to expenditures for economic objectives and general administration. Chapter V dealt with methods for the co-ordination of social and economic development planning and programming, and chapter VI summarized the conclusions on the subject as a whole.

21. As indicated in the Report, the Bureau was interested in the problem of balanced development, both at the planning level and with regard to the implementation of programmes and the actual levels of development achieved. The results of the debates on the Report were available in the reports of the Social Commission^{4/} and of the Economic and Social Council; the latter body had indicated its views on future activities at both levels in its resolution 830 A (XXXII). The approved work programme for the next two years included such varied projects as the relation of education to economic development, distribution of income in relation to economic growth, and a comparative study of the machinery and methods used in determining allocations for social objectives.

22. United Nations work in the population field was closely related to its work on social policy and economic development, because planning for education, health and housing must all rely on population projections. The work done on labour force estimates, international and internal migration and methods of making demographic projections had proved of great interest and importance to the regional economic commissions and to national planning authorities. Chapter VI, section II of the Council's report outlined the results of the eleventh session of the Population Commission. In addition to United Nations studies and publications, major efforts had been made to increase the supply of trained demographers through the establishment of regional planning and research centres, in India for the Far East, and in Chile for Latin America; two more centres were planned for Africa. In the coming years, the Bureau would concentrate on assisting countries to analyse the results of recent censuses; it would work with ECAFE in preparing for an Asian population conference and would begin preparations for a world population conference in 1964 or 1965. It also planned to bring up to date the basic report on Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends.^{5/}

23. Where programmes of concerted action in the social field were concerned, the Council had decided, in its resolution 830 B (XXXII), that such action should now be applied to the problem of urbanization. The rate of movement of populations from rural to urban areas since the war had been such that many cities had doubled or tripled in size and, even in countries where industry had achieved a high level and the necessary jobs were being created, there arose the physical and financial problem of providing housing, urban facilities, teachers and health and welfare personnel. The Bureau had already begun to implement the approved programme for a comprehensive attack on the problems which were enumerated in the Secretary-General's proposals for concerted international action (E/CN.5/351, para. 10); meetings of experts had been held and others were planned, and negotiations had been initiated for

^{2/} The complete text of the statement made by the Director of the Bureau of Social Affairs was circulated as document A/C.3/L.954.

^{3/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 61.IV.4.

^{4/} See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 12.

^{5/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 53.XIII.3.

several pilot projects on urban development in Nigeria, Mexico and Japan. A project originated by the Japanese Government was already in operation and was showing interesting results. Although demographic studies of rural-urban migration were continuing, the United Nations had definitely moved to an action stage with regard to urbanization, and Latin American countries had shown great interest in the Council's recommendation for the establishment of national centres. The debate in the Committee would broaden the Bureau's knowledge of the experience of Member States in coping with urbanization problems and would acquaint delegations with the possibilities of assistance from one country to another through the United Nations.

24. The older programmes of concerted action, relating to community development and low-cost housing respectively, were continuing. The aim of community development was to combine the efforts of the people themselves with the technical and material support of Governments in raising levels of living, particularly in the rural areas, and the United Nations had provided assistance to forty-six countries, mainly in the form of planning and organizing national community development schemes and training community development personnel. The United Nations had also established demonstration centres in a number of the countries concerned. As an illustration of what had been done, Afghanistan had extended its programme from one pilot project with one United Nations adviser to ten project areas helped by four United Nations advisers, and by 1966 there would be twenty-five such projects affecting approximately 3,000 villages. Each project covered agriculture, public health and sanitation, small industries, education for children and adults, social welfare, housing and home management, and the concerted effort assured the people of services not otherwise available to them and, at the same time, taught them to direct their limited resources to the most urgently needed improvements. The expansion of the programme was now an integral part of Afghanistan's national planning.

25. In the south Cameroons, now a part of the Federal Republic of Cameroun, two community development experts had been assigned to experimental areas in order to demonstrate the applicability of community development principles. Significant progress had been made in building up a programme, beginning with the creation of local operational machinery with the aim of extending it to divisional, regional and national levels. The construction of roads and bridges under the programme had encouraged other improvements, such as the building of health clinics, and the change in attitude of the people and the growth of strong local institutions might be even more significant in the long run than the physical achievements. Community development organization was now a part of the national programme.

26. On the research side, a number of community development studies had been completed at Headquarters and, in the light of the variety of experience over the past ten years, the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Social Commission, had decided in principle, in its resolution 830 F (XXXII), to convene an *ad hoc* group of experts to advise it and the Commission on the relation of community development programmes to national development programmes, including land reform (the latter was considered an inseparable partner of com-

munity development), on ways of increasing the economic and social impact of such programmes, and on effective organizational and administrative arrangements to carry them out in countries with differing economic and administrative systems.

27. The programme of concerted action on extension of low-cost housing and community facilities was now in effect and enjoyed the co-operation of the ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO. Nineteen joint projects were under way, including particularly interesting ones at Mogadiscio in Somalia, Bogotá in Colombia, and in Panama. There, too, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 830 C (XXXII), had decided to convene an *ad hoc* group of experts, which would meet in New York in February 1962.

28. The most important trend in the social welfare programme had been the growing interest in family and child welfare services. Much of the new demand for technical assistance in that area was due to the growing number of joint projects by UNICEF and the Bureau to assist Governments in promoting social services for children. Many new African countries had given the highest priority in their technical assistance programmes to family and child welfare services, which also continued to enjoy high priority in Asian countries. There had been a steady demand for help in setting up schools and training programmes for social welfare personnel, and the Bureau was engaged in examining, with the home economics branch of FAO, the best methods of training workers to help rural families in the less developed countries.

29. Examples of the types of projects in which the Bureau was co-operating with UNICEF were those in Turkey and the Philippines. In the former country, the Government was being helped to develop a training programme for the staff of children's institutions, which had already resulted in major changes in child welfare methods, some children now having permanent foster homes instead of being brought up in institutions. In the Philippines, a social welfare board had been set up to assure national planning of welfare services for families and children, facilities had been provided to train 210 workers, and a technical assistance adviser had been furnished by the United Nations. To assist Governments in developing welfare programmes and the training of personnel, a number of studies were under way, dealing, for instance, with programmes for the rehabilitation of the handicapped and the use of grants-in-aid for the promotion of social services programmes, and an attempt was being made to analyse more closely the place of social welfare services in the broader programmes concerned with housing, community development and urbanization. Most countries attached great importance to youth problems, which had been aggravated by the number of young people among migrants to the cities who were separated from their families and without schools or employment. Studies of juvenile delinquency continued to enjoy high priority, and an agreement had been signed with the Government of Japan as host to the Regional Institute for Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders for Asia and the Far East, where training courses were expected to start before the end of the year.

30. On the question of the strengthening of the work of the United Nations in the social field, she drew attention to paragraphs 497 to 503 of the report of the Economic and Social Council and paragraphs 93

to 118 of the report of the Social Commission. Referring to the hope expressed by the Council in its resolution 830 J (XXXII) that all necessary provision would be made to enable the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to discharge effectively its responsibilities in the social field, she pointed out that such provision was a matter not only of funds but of the willingness of Governments to contribute some of their best qualified personnel to United Nations service.

31. The Prime Minister of Senegal had pointed out recently that technical assistance, to be an effective means of development, must in future be comprehensive and not designed to carry out isolated projects dictated by the policy of the giver. The Committee's

task, therefore, was to construct a perspective of development, with full attention to both the social and the economic aspects and with the full participation of both recipients and donors. Fortunately, in the social field, all countries had riches of culture and tradition, as well as needs and problems, to share with one another.

32. Mrs. DELLA GHERARDESCA (Italy) and Mrs. AFNAN (Iraq) expressed their appreciation of the statement just made by the Director of the Bureau of Social Affairs, which they were sure would serve as an important basic document in the discussion of that item.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.