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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Twentieth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND PART* OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND
EIGHTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 2 March 1967, at 10.30 a.m.

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United Nations assistance for the advancement of women
(E/CN.6/L.519/Rev.1, L.520, L.524) (continued)

* The summary record of the first part (closed) of the meeting has been issued
as document number E/CN.6/SR.487.

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mrs. SIPILA	(Finland)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mrs. JADRESIC	Chile
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. BENSON	Australia
	Miss PROBST	Austria
	Mrs. MARINKEVICH	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
	Miss WANG	China
	Mr. TÖRNUDD	Finland
	Miss CHATON	France
	Miss ADDISON	Ghana
	Mrs. CHICAS de GARCIA	Guatemala
	Mrs. SOUMAH	Guinea
	Mrs. de BROMLEY	Honduras
	Mr. GYARMATI	Hungary
	Mrs. NAVHI	Iran
	Mrs. AL-RADI	Iraq
	Miss FUJITA	Japan
	Mrs. KIGONDA	Kenya
	Mrs. STEVENSON	Liberia
	Mrs. AISHAH	Malaysia
	Mr. CHEIKH ABDALLAHI	Mauritania
	Miss LAVALLE URBINA	Mexico
	Miss de VINK	Netherlands
	Mrs. ROBERTSON de OTAYZA	Peru
	Mrs. SAN DIEGO	Philippines
	Mrs. DEMBINSKA	Poland
	Mrs. CHATER	Tunisia
	Mrs. DINCMEN	Turkey
	Mrs. BYENKYA	Uganda
	Mrs. NIKOLAEVA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mrs. HUSSEIN	United Arab Republic

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PRESENT (continued):

<u>Members:</u>	Miss RICHARDS	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mrs. TILLET	United States of America
	Mrs. ALMOSNY	Venezuela
<u>Observers for Member States:</u>		
	Mrs. HARTE de BARRIOS	Dominican Republic
	Mrs. RAOELINA	Madagascar
	Mr. NICA	Romania
	Mr. LAZAREVIC	Yugoslavia
<u>Observers for non-member States:</u>		
	Mrs. FRANDSEN	Federal Republic of Germany
<u>Representatives of specialized agencies:</u>		
	Mrs. JOHNSTON	International Labour Organisation
	Miss FRIDERICH	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mrs. BRUCE	Chief, Status of Women Section
	Mrs. SANTANDER-DOWNING	Secretary of the Commission

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UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (E/CN.6/L.519/Rev.1, L.520, L.524) (continued)

Miss RICHARDS (United Kingdom) recalled that, at the previous meeting, her delegation has asked for a postponement of the vote on the draft resolution on the item because it wondered whether the inquiries requested in two of them could be related to the questionnaire on the role of women in economic and social development which was to be sent to Member States in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1133 (XLI) and whether that questionnaire would include any questions on the needs of women in rural areas.

Mrs. BRUCE (Secretariat) observed that draft resolution E/CN.6/L.520 merely requested the Secretary-General to forward the preliminary report on the participation of women in community development to Member States, and to the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned. While she could not yet say precisely how the questions to be included in the questionnaire would be worded, she assured the Commission that in formulating the questionnaire the Secretariat would take account of the inquiries requested and would, in particular, be guided by the sub-paragraphs of operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.519/Rev.1, if adopted, although there might not be a specific question corresponding to each of those sub-paragraphs.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to vote on draft resolution E/CN.6/L.519/Rev.1.

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the delegations of Chile, Kenya and Liberia had become sponsors of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.520 and that operative paragraph 1 (b) had been amended to read "the nature and extent of women's contribution to such projects and programmes". She invited the Commission to vote on the draft resolution in that form.

The draft resolution was adopted by 26 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that her delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.519/Rev.1, but had had to abstain in the vote on draft resolution E/CN.6/L.520 because its position on the non-governmental organizations remained unchanged.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.524. The measures it recommended would follow up the action requested in draft resolution E/CN.6/L.519/Rev.1. In its resolutions 961 F (XXXVI) and 1068 D (XXXIX), the Economic and Social Council had drawn attention to the value of national commissions on the status of women and the time had come to ascertain how many such commissions existed.

In the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, reference was made to the establishment by Member States of long-term programmes for the advancement of women. If possible, the programmes should be established before the end of 1967, so that they would be linked with the International Year for Human Rights, which was to be observed in 1968. If the programmes were to achieve rapid results, it would be important to enlist the co-operation not only of the specialized agencies but also of non-governmental organizations, which were doing valuable work to promote the advancement of women.

In paragraph 2 of the draft resolution recommended to the Council, the attention of Member States was drawn to certain specific measures. The appointment of women to policy-making posts in the Government, which was mentioned in paragraph 2 (b), was one effective way of promoting the establishment of long-term programmes for women. In connexion with paragraph 2 (c), it should be recalled that, at the Manila seminar on measures required for the advancement of women, with special reference to the establishment of a long-term programme, the consensus had been that one reason for the backwardness of Asian women was that Governments did not include projects directed towards women's advancement in their programmes for the general advancement of the population. The measures recommended in paragraph 2 (d) would facilitate the attainment of that goal. It had also been felt at the Manila seminar that group studies might be more useful than individual fellowships in promoting the advancement of women.

In paragraph 3, the Secretary-General was requested to examine the possibility of the establishment of regional offices, which would co-ordinate the activities of the national commissions and work with the Commission on the Status of Women. The creation of such offices would reduce duplication and ensure more rapid progress.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (United Arab Republic) asked whether the regional offices would be established under the auspices of the United Nations.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) replied that the sponsors of the draft resolution did not exclude the possibility of the regional offices being financed from outside sources, as well as by the United Nations. Non-governmental organizations might wish to make donations.

Mrs. BRUCE (Secretariat) pointed out that paragraph 3 would have financial implications. No detailed statement of such implications was required at the present stage, however, since the Secretary-General was requested simply to examine the possibility of establishing regional offices. The Secretary-General should perhaps also be invited to report to the Commission or to the Economic and Social Council on the result of his examination. It was her understanding that the offices would be established under the auspices of the United Nations Secretariat.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) said that the sponsors agreed to add an invitation to the Secretary-General to report on the result of his examination.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regretted that the sponsors of the draft resolution had not been able to submit a text which would command general support. The views of the USSR delegation on the subject of non-governmental organizations were well known and were shared by other delegations in the Commission. The United Nations was composed of Member States and not of non-governmental organizations. Her delegation therefore could not accept paragraph 1 of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Council.

While paragraphs 2 (a) and (b) were acceptable, she could not support paragraphs 2 (c) and (d), because the resources of the United Nations should be spent on more important activities of benefit to the entire population of a country, including women. Rather than creating new centres or offices, the Organization should provide substantial assistance in such matters as industrial development.

The establishment of regional offices, which was mentioned in operative paragraph 3, might make Governments feel that they had been relieved of their responsibility for ensuring the advancement of women. Yet the Governments bore

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(Mrs. Nikolaeva, USSR)

primary responsibility in the matter and it was they which had to adopt social and legislative reforms and long-term plans to improve the status of women. In the Soviet Union, the Government's Five-Year Plan was designed to ensure the well-being of the entire population, with certain specific provisions to improve the status of women.

For those reasons, her delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) explained that paragraphs 2 (c) and (d) were addressed to Member States and that the measures recommended would have to be financed by national Governments. The only costs for the United Nations would be those relating to the co-ordination of the activities of the proposed regional offices with those of the regional economic commissions. The regional offices would provide an opportunity for consultations between Member States in a particular region, which often had similar problems.

The draft resolution did not confer any official status upon the non-governmental organizations. The sponsors felt, however, that those organizations were doing excellent work, particularly in the developing countries, and were persuading Governments to give more attention to programmes for the advancement of women.

Mr. BENSON (Australia) said that programmes to assist women and children should be integrated within a country's over-all development plans. He therefore suggested the addition of the words "in the context of over-all national development plans" after the words "greater priority", in paragraph 2 (c).

Mrs. DEMBINSKA (Poland) felt that the draft resolution had been submitted too late in the session for full consideration of its financial and organizational implications. Rather than proposing the establishment of new and costly institutions, the Commission should formulate principles and make recommendations which would assist Governments in launching their own programmes for the advancement of women.

If women were granted fellowships under the provisions of operative paragraph 2 (c), there would have to be some kind of control by the Secretariat to ensure that such fellowships were really used for the benefit of the country concerned. The proposal to establish regional offices which would place a heavy

(Mrs. Dembinska, Poland)

burden on the already strained resources of the United Nations, was unacceptable to her delegation. At best, such offices could exert some slight influence on individual Governments, and it was difficult to see how they could co-ordinate national activities at the regional level.

The USSR representative had rightly objected to any reference to non-governmental organizations, and steps should be taken to prevent those organizations from submitting slanderous reports.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) pointed out that the draft resolution had been submitted late in the session simply because the item to which it related was the last on the Commission's agenda.

Miss ADDISON (Ghana) proposed that the word "women" in operative paragraph 2 (b) should be replaced by the words "qualified women", since the appointment of women to policy-making posts in the Government would not be useful unless they were competent to fill such posts. Programmes directed towards the advancement of women must form part of over-all development plans, and she therefore supported the Australian amendment to operative paragraph 2 (c). The proposal to establish regional training institutes and regional offices was also acceptable, since it would be for each region to decide whether or not such organizations should be established, depending on the available resources and general conditions.

Her delegation would vote for the draft resolution on the understanding that the provisions of operative paragraph 2 would not deprive individual Member States of the freedom to formulate their own policies in the light of their needs and resources.

Mrs. STEVENSON (Liberia) said that her delegation, as a sponsor of the draft resolution, could accept the Ghanaian amendment to operative paragraph 2 (b). She regretted that there had been some objection to the draft resolution, since its sponsors had wished merely to focus attention on the need to improve the status of women and to suggest ways in which Member States could implement General Assembly resolutions 1777 (XVII) and 2059 (XX). It was with that aim that they had put forward the proposal to establish regional offices, which would in no way impinge on the authority of Governments.

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Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) remarked that some of the recommendations contained in the draft resolution appeared somewhat Utopian. National commissions were often ineffectual, and the role and structure of the national commissions on the status of women referred to in operative paragraph 2 (a) should be specified if they were to do useful work. A few advanced countries might be able to found multi-purpose training centres and regional training institutes, but in general resources for the establishment of such institutions were simply not available.

Miss CHATON (France) stressed the importance of integrating programmes directed towards the advancement of women into national development plans, and supported the Australian amendment. She proposed that the words "within the context of over-all national development plans" should also be inserted after the words "for the advancement of women" in the introductory sentence of operative paragraph 2.

Although multi-purpose training centres already existed in some countries, it was doubtful whether such centres could undertake research as well as training activities. The establishment of regional offices might prove difficult and costly, and it would be better to open offices in the existing regional commissions. If such offices were to be established as early as 1968, there was no point in requesting the Secretary-General to report to the Commission's twenty-first session.

Miss FUJITA (Japan) supported the Australian amendment to operative paragraph 2 (c). She would not oppose the draft resolution, although she was concerned about the financial implications.

Mrs. SOUMAH (Guinea) supported the French and Australian amendments. Guinea would vote for the draft resolution with two reservations: Governments should be free to choose the priority they accorded to projects and programmes for the advancement of women, and they should not be bound by the recommendation to establish regional training institutes, since the purpose of such institutes appeared vague and their value doubtful. She agreed that the Secretary-General should not be asked to report on the possibilities of establishing regional offices during 1968 to the Commission's twenty-first session.

Miss RICHARDS (United Kingdom) also felt that the purpose and functions of the regional training institutes should be elucidated. She agreed with many of the ideas contained in the draft resolution, but would have to abstain in the vote because many of the recommendations in operative paragraph 2 required consideration by her Government and consultation with dependent Territories.

Mrs. TILLET (United States of America) endorsed the Australian and Ghanaian amendments.

Experience in the United States had shown that the activities recommended in operative paragraph 2 were useful in promoting the advancement of women. A National Commission on the Status of Women had been established in the United States in 1961, and its recommendations were now being carried out. There were more women in policy-making Government posts in the United States and programmes for the advancement of women had been greatly expanded.

The recommendations in the draft resolution left Governments completely free to choose the methods by which their efforts to establish national long-term programmes for the advancement of women should be intensified. Moreover, the Commission need not decide whether the regional offices should be set up before the Secretary-General's report had been submitted.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) moved the suspension of the meeting to allow time for consultations.

The meeting was suspended at 12.10 p.m. and resumed at 12.30 p.m.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines) announced that the sponsors of the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.524) had agreed to accept the Ghanaian amendment to operative paragraph 2 (b) of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. In order to meet the point raised by the Australian and French representatives, they would insert the words "within the context of over-all national development plans" after the words "long-term programmes for the advancement of women" in the introductory part of paragraph 2. The sponsors had also revised operative paragraph 2 (d) and operative paragraph 3 to read as follows:

"(d) The establishment of national multi-purpose training centres or programmes, or the use of existing facilities, to undertake surveys on matters relating to the advancement of women, to serve as clearing houses for the collection and dissemination of information, and to provide training or retraining for women in various fields;

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(Mrs. San Diego, Philippines)

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to examine the possibility of the establishment during 1968, in the context of the International Year for Human Rights, of regional offices or sections within existing offices to be responsible for the advancement of women at the regional level, and to report the result of his examination to the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-first session."

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that the changes made in the draft resolution failed to improve it. The text was confused and confusing, and could only lead to misinterpretation. Her delegation was opposed to the establishment of centres which would merely compile and disseminate information, first, because such a decision could only lead to increased expenditures beyond the financial possibilities of the United Nations, and, secondly, because clear and reliable information could be obtained only from Member States.

Mrs. SAN DIEGO (Philippines), supported by Miss ADDISON (Ghana), pointed out that, in its revised form, paragraph 2 was addressed solely to Member States and would involve no expenditure whatever on the part of the United Nations.

Mrs. BRUCE (Secretariat) said that she understood the words "or sections within existing offices" in the revised version of operative paragraph 3 to mean sections within the secretariats of the regional commissions.

Mr. BENSON (Australia) requested a separate vote on operative paragraph 2 (d), on which his delegation intended to abstain.

Mrs. SOUMAH (Guinea) requested a separate vote on operative paragraph 2 (c), because her delegation felt that the responsibility for according priority to any particular projects or programmes should be left to the States concerned, and on operative paragraph 3.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to vote on draft resolution E/CN.6/L.524 as amended.

Operative paragraph 2 (c) was adopted by 23 votes to 4, with 5 abstentions.

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Operative paragraph 2 (d), as amended, was adopted by 18 votes to 1, with 13 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 3, as amended, was adopted by 18 votes to 4, with 10 abstentions.

The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 20 votes to 4, with 8 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.