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President: Mr. Juan I. COOKE (Argentina)

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, India, Norway, Pakistan, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following Member States: Brazil, Chile, Indonesia, Israel, Netherlands, Uruguay.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization, World Meteorological Organization, Interim Commission for the International Trade Organization.

Statement by Mr. Mendès-France, Président du Conseil des ministres de la République française, Ministre des affaires étrangères

1. The PRESIDENT, welcoming Mr. Mendès-France, Président du Conseil des ministres de la République française, Ministre des affaires étrangères, expressed the gratification that all members of the Economic and Social Council felt at the presence in their midst of a distinguished figure who was, moreover, by no means unknown to them. The debt the Council owed to Mr. Mendès-France for his contribution to its work in the economic and social field—and particularly in the spheres of technical assistance and the regional economic commissions—was known to all; he (the President) had only to mention his service during four years as head of the French delegation and his contribution as Rapporteur at the third conference of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) in 1950. Mr. Mendès-France's friendly presence at such a grave moment in world affairs was deeply appreciated.

2. He would recall his own hopes expressed at the end of the Council's seventeenth session that the eighteenth session would open at Geneva in an atmosphere clarified by the statesmen who were striving for world peace. The present session had not yet seen the clear sky of

international peace, which was the basis of the whole United Nations endeavour and on which were centred the hopes of all. The Council was watching with profound emotion the noteworthy efforts being made by Mr. Mendès-France to contribute to the laying of the foundations of universal peace, and he was convinced that he was voicing the feeling of all its members in expressing the lively desire that those efforts should be crowned with success.

3. Mr. MENDES-FRANCE (Président du Conseil des ministres de la République française, Ministre des affaires étrangères), after expressing his pleasure at finding himself in the company of so many old friends, said that the reasons for his presence in Geneva were related closely enough to the ideals set forth in the Charter to make his visit to the European Office of the United Nations quite natural. Moreover, he had represented France in the Council for four years, and had taken part in its activities with ever-growing interest; he had at first been bewildered by the Council's procedure and methods, but now realized that what had appeared to be purely formal discussions were in fact concerned with substantive questions. He had very soon become aware of the inevitable obstacles to the discussion of problems in bodies made up of representatives of such a variety of countries. He might add that the Council's function was not so much to raise conflicting theories as to endeavour to make continuous progress towards concrete goals.

4. In his view, participation in the Council's activities was a valuable apprenticeship for a politician, and he personally had not forgotten what he had learned in the Council and had taken full advantage of it. It had been a great pleasure to him to see members of the Secretariat again and to greet the Secretary-General, whom he congratulated on the vigorous action he was taking to assist the Council.

5. The Council and all the organs within its orbit, whose mission under the Charter was an almost universal one in the economic field, had experienced serious difficulties in trying to adapt their activities to contemporary realities. It was all too easy to draw up a list of failures, to point to the initial errors of perspective, the hesitations and reservations. For the time being the United Nations had undoubtedly lost much of the ground entrusted to its care by the San Francisco Conference. That ground could be regained only by patient and clear-sighted efforts to build the edifice the original plans for which had perhaps been too ambitious.

6. The Council's progress was, in the circumstances, remarkable. It had tackled long-term problems resolutely and realistically, and the central place in its deliberations occupied by the economic development of the under-developed countries was revealed by its agenda. Substantial progress had been made in that field, and

the Technical Assistance Programme, of which the Council was rightly proud, was bound to expand and flourish. The influence of the regional economic commissions had steadily increased; he recalled in that connexion his own work with ECLA. Lastly, the Council's activities in all spheres of economic and social development had helped to awaken the world to a sense of its responsibilities as regards the solution of a problem the basic factors of which it had for too long ignored.

7. By reason of its very composition and functions the Council could not take a narrow view of economic and social problems. The Council was of course well aware that neither technology nor the influx of foreign capital, essential though they were to economic development, could be superimposed on age-old structures without immediately causing strain, and sometimes acute strain; the Council would doubtless continue to devote attention to all such aspects.

8. Hence the Council's guidance was as valuable in shaping national efforts as in planning joint action through the United Nations.

9. He would certainly bear in mind the lessons learned from the work accomplished by the Council, so that, when peace was restored, the under-developed countries of Indo-China might receive assistance which would enable them to pass as rapidly as possible through the various stages of their reconstruction and economic development. Needless to say, France intended to contribute substantially to such aid. He wished to suggest that it was mainly through its persistent and systematic efforts to promote the economic and social development of the under-developed countries that the Council would be found to have made its mark during the first ten years of its existence.

10. In conclusion, if the French Government successfully surmounted the first obstacles with which inevitably its path was strewn, it would have no more steadfast aim than to assist the magnificent work the Council was doing.

11. The PRESIDENT, thanking Mr. Mendès-France for his generous remarks, said that nothing could have given the Council keener pleasure than praise from a man of such wisdom and experience. The point of view that he had so movingly and forcibly put forward would strengthen the constructive spirit of international co-operation which, despite his own comparative lack of experience, he (the President) believed was increasing day by day throughout the whole United Nations. Since the opening of the session, the conviction had been growing in his own mind that there was an increasing desire in the Council to bring the thoughts of all peoples together in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and, furthermore, that it was becoming more and more widely realized that the basis for definite and lasting peace lay in the economic and social progress of the under-developed countries.

Mr. Mendès-France withdrew.

Farewell statement by the Secretary-General

12. The PRESIDENT said that, before the Council resumed its consideration of the Eighth Report of the

International Labour Organisation (E/2577), he would like, on its behalf, to take leave of the Secretary-General, who was obliged by the pressure of his duties to leave Geneva that afternoon. He felt that he would be fulfilling the unanimous wish of the Council in conveying its gratitude to Mr. Hammarskjöld for his continuing and effective co-operation in the Council's work. Members had already had an opportunity of appreciating the Secretary-General's interest in and application to the subjects under review. He would reiterate his conviction that Mr. Hammarskjöld had established a new climate in the Council's deliberations and had, moreover, in the opinion of delegations with long experience in that body, created a spirit of close co-operation by introducing new methods of work which could only reinforce the Council's ability to set in motion concrete and realistic procedures for the accomplishment of its tasks. He would ask the Secretary-General to carry on the excellent work he had begun.

13. Mr. HAMMARSKJÖLD (Secretary-General) said that it had been a privilege to participate in the work of the Council. He had no need to stress his appreciation of the importance of its work. The Council's contribution to the general United Nations effort to secure peace was fundamental, because there could be no peace without sound economic and social progress. But he counted his participation in the Council's deliberations not only a privilege, but also a duty. In that connexion, the Soviet Union representative had said at the 797th meeting that it had laid a basis for lasting tradition. He was in cordial agreement with that definition of his own participation, which would certainly give his own work a clearer perspective. He welcomed and echoed the hopes expressed by the President for the future; and could assure the Council that he would devote all the time and attention he possibly could to its work.

Report of the International Labour Organisation (E/2577) (resumed from the 807th meeting)

[Agenda item 18]

14. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Soviet Union, realizing the importance of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), was giving considerable attention to the field in which it was active, and, as a member of the Organisation, desired to offer its collaboration to other countries in the search for solutions to the problems which lay within the Organisation's competence under its Constitution.

15. He wished to note certain positive achievements in the Organisation's work. With regard to the future work of the ILO, it was desirable to focus attention on the basic problems and, in particular, on the implementation of decisions already taken. He would recall that at the 37th Session of the Conference many delegations had complained that the adoption of constructive recommendations had not been followed by their practical application.

16. With regard to the basic problems, his delegation considered that the ILO should further develop its activities, in particular in respect of unemployment, the raising of wages and the standards of living of the

workers and the safeguarding of trade union rights, for those were of paramount importance for the welfare of workers all over the world. It would be unreasonable of the ILO to fritter away its resources on matters of minor concern.

17. He would refer to the statement made by the United States representative at the 807th meeting, in which he had repeated hackneyed tales of forced labour and violation of trade union rights in the Soviet Union and had referred disrespectfully to the countries friendly with the USSR. Did the United States representative really fail to see that the reaction in the Council to such statements was not what he anticipated? He found it difficult to believe that the United States representative himself could take them seriously.

18. He hoped that the consideration of the ILO's report at the current session of the Council would help the Organisation to improve its work and achieve practical results.

19. Mr. HARRY (Australia), while paying a tribute to the work of the ILO as reflected in its eighth report, said that the fundamental question—raised at the 807th meeting by the representative of Argentina—of the maintenance of a proper balance in the ILO's programme between research, legislation and field operations called for comment.

20. It had been suggested that the reduction of the amount of work devoted to legislation and procedure had been hampered by the introduction of new methods. Any methodological changes effected, however, had been due to fundamental causes. In the early days of the ILO it had been natural and right that in shaping policy emphasis should have been laid above all on the legislative aspect of the work, but a very different situation had obtained after the Second World War. The same impulse that had brought the Council into being had also been responsible for the Declaration of Philadelphia, with its emphasis on full employment and economic and social progress as the basis for peace. The membership of the ILO had not only expanded, it had also changed in character, and many of the new members were not only under-developed countries, but had at first been under-experienced in administration.

21. That situation had called for new techniques, the development of which had been steady and satisfactory. Prominent among such were, first, regionalization, a system which included the holding of conferences that had been expanded to take in Asia and the Far East, Latin America and Europe. That new approach was in harmony with the idea underlying the activities of the Council's own regional commissions. There was, however, some danger of the system's being carried too far. For it must not be forgotten that the primary aim of the ILO lay in the development of universal standards.

22. The second innovation was the setting up of the industrial committees, in which representatives from individual groups of industries met to discuss fundamental problems. That procedure had brought in touch with the ILO a large number of representative individuals from many countries, and had had considerable influence in the formulation of standards.

23. Thirdly, there was the provision of technical assistance, which was hardly an innovation, because even before the war the ILO had already been giving assistance to many governments in the entire field of economic and social welfare. The Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, however, had made it possible to complement the work of standard-fixing, and he would stress the fact that the ILO's role in that field was of vital importance. Among the various objectives that had been reviewed at the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference, his delegation welcomed in particular the emphasis placed on vocational training. The enacting of legislation was of little value if the various technical services for its implementation were inadequate. That did not mean that he underestimated the value of the legislative function. On the contrary, it was of basic importance. He considered that the new system of dual discussion had proved itself. The more careful the preparation of a convention, the better its results were likely to be. To adopt conventions which were not subsequently ratified by a sufficient number of States to bring them into force, or, even when they were, were never implemented, was of little value. Those dangers could be largely avoided by dual discussion.

24. With regard to the problem of co-ordination, it seemed that the trend in the ILO was towards a fuller integration into the general United Nations economic and social framework. He had referred to the link between the regional conferences and the Council's own regional commissions, and the same observation applied in the field of research. Now that the need for close co-ordination was fully recognized, his delegation believed that full recognition could be given to the independence of the ILO without cause for worry about separatist tendencies.

25. Mr. TRUJILLO (Ecuador) associated himself with the tributes that had been paid to the Director-General of the International Labour Office, on the excellent reports, both written and oral, he had submitted to the Council.

26. First among the questions which had particularly engaged the attention of the Government of Ecuador was the study of the social situation of indigenous peoples. That question was also of interest to Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru, although their indigenous populations had very different characteristics. So far, though much work had been done in that field by ILO experts, by other United Nations agencies and by the study centres set up in Latin America, no definite conclusions had been reached as to how the vestiges of indigenous culture could be assimilated to modern culture. It was essential to persevere in the efforts that had been made, since the social backwardness of their peoples impeded the development of the countries concerned in all fields. While it was true that world peace depended largely on the solution of the economic problems of the under-developed countries, it was no less certain that human problems had to be solved first. The indigenous peoples too must enjoy the benefits of civilization.

27. The widest possible circulation should therefore be given to the very valuable material published by the

International Labour Office in that field. It might also be hoped that ILO experts would continue to give those problems their full attention, and that they would be assisted in their work by all governments whose experience in the matter might be valuable.

28. Turning to the national labour departments mentioned on page 34 of the report, he reminded the Council that the countries he had mentioned had for many years past been devoting attention to the setting up of specialized departments which had tried to help in solving problems connected with indigenous peoples. The valuable work done by the ILO in that sphere would undoubtedly be partly wasted unless the various countries possessed national labour departments to give practical effect to the conventions, conclusions and recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference and to the conclusions reached in the International Labour Office's technical studies. He agreed absolutely with the Venezuelan representative's remarks on that subject at the 807th meeting. To put it briefly, the Office's publications should not be left lying on library shelves, but should serve as tools for those responsible for dealing with labour problems in the various countries.

29. On the other hand, the national labour departments, helped by International Labour Office experts, should try to impress on the toiling masses that social security, which had happily made great strides in Ecuador, should not have the effect of discouraging individual initiative or putting a brake on individual effort.

30. He expressed his country's satisfaction, in general, with the various decisions taken at the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference.

31. Mr. SMETS (Belgium) also joined in the congratulations addressed to the ILO, whose eighth report reflected the maturity and wisdom which had enabled the Organisation to overcome its difficulties and to bring into the fold those who had for a time stayed outside.

32. The ILO was a model type of international body, and as such naturally maintained excellent relations with the other international organizations; the Belgian delegation was particularly gratified to note the happy relations that existed between the ILO and the Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration. It was to be hoped that such co-operation would help in increasing measure to solve the problem of surplus population.

33. The Belgian delegation would once more emphasize that legislative action was the ILO's main task. Hence it would again express the hope that in future a special chapter of the report would show the progress made in that direction. Such a chapter should bring out what had been achieved, and would constitute a solemn and urgent appeal to all member countries which could widen the scope of those achievements. The Belgian Government would shortly be submitting for parliamentary approval international labour Convention No. 81 concerning labour inspection in industry and commerce, and Convention No. 102 concerning minimum standards of social security.

34. Like the French and United States representatives, he felt that the international conventions were a kind of technical assistance. It was the ILO's function to

fix targets which, though they might be already surpassed in many countries, helped in others to raise living standards, increase production and ensure the welfare of the masses. Unquestionably, the technical assistance supplied by the ILO had been effective, but the salutary effects on the development of a country of drawing up satisfactory social legislation could not be over-estimated. In any event, it was greatly to the credit of the ILO that it had almost immediately succeeded in identifying itself with the good work of technical assistance.

35. The Belgian delegation was sorry to see that the freezing of the ILO budget since 1950 had obliged it to hold up the implementation of schemes of unquestionable importance. In the Governing Body, Belgium had declared its willingness to make a further financial contribution provided other countries did the same. The slight increase in the budget for 1955 would obviously not enable the ILO to develop its programme of concrete action. Yet the scale of its task should essentially be commensurate with the social needs of the world.

36. The Belgian delegation also regretted the suspension of sessions of the industrial committees, which played an extremely useful part, as they brought together workers, employers and government representatives with direct experience of industrial and social problems. Such "meetings of minds" brought to light situations which could often be dealt with without difficulty. Thus, the industrial committees were the logical complement to the sessions of the International Labour Conference.

37. Five years ago the Belgian Government had expressed regret that the resolutions of the industrial committees had no real standing within the ILO's sphere of activity, and had suggested studying how their work might be integrated, and how their resolutions could be made into recommendations without going through the formal procedure governing the International Labour Conference. The Belgian delegation hoped that that suggestion would be taken up.

38. On the question of working hours, the Belgian Government had welcomed the decision at the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference. In its resolution the Conference had expressed the opinion that the reduction of working hours within reasonable and appropriate limits was an important aspect of any policy aimed at raising the standard of living, and was a problem of international as well as national import, since it could affect foreign trade policy. The Belgian delegation hoped that the study referred to in that resolution would be started without delay, and that, if possible, it would be placed before the Conference as early as 1955.

39. In conclusion, he hoped that the report of the ILO would continue to be submitted to the Council every year.

40. Mr. LOUTFI (Egypt) associated himself with the tributes paid to the Director-General of the International Labour Office.

41. The Egyptian Government was following the ILO's various activities with great interest, and had been glad to note that the Eastern European countries

had taken part in the work of the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference, thus contributing towards the more co-operative and harmonious solution of many and varied problems.

42. In recent years, the ILO had made great efforts to help the under-developed countries to solve their economic and social problems; the Egyptian delegation congratulated it on those activities, and hoped that it would intensify them in future to enable those countries gradually to adapt their social structure to the provisions of the many international labour conventions. Though certain countries had unfortunately not yet been able to ratify those conventions, they had nevertheless been guided by them in framing their social policy.

43. The greater part of the ILO's work in the field of technical assistance had been carried out in the countries of Asia and, more recently, the Middle East. A centre of activity and vocational training would soon be functioning in Egypt, thanks to the joint action of the ILO and the Technical Assistance Administration. It was to be hoped that those activities would be progressively extended to other African countries, including the Sudan. So far, Africa appeared to have been somewhat neglected, but the Egyptian delegation was convinced that the ILO, in accordance with its characteristic spirit of universality, would extend its work to that vast continent, which was in greater need of its assistance than any other.

44. He would support the Argentine draft resolution.

45. Mr. NUÑEZ PORTUONDO (Cuba) congratulated the Director-General of the International Labour Office on his introductory statement, in which he had so rightly stigmatized the slavery and forced labour which unhappily had still not been abolished in some countries. The records of the discussions in the Council and the General Assembly showed that it was Cuba's constant desire to devote all its energy to solving those distressing problems, as well as to securing respect for trade union freedom. His Government had every confidence in the ILO's ability to find ways and means of abolishing those scourges.

46. Cuba itself had made great progress in the social field. Thus, since 1940, workers were entitled to one month's leave a year on full pay. In the sugar industry a minimum wage had been fixed which was related to the trend of world sugar prices, so that workers were always assured of an adequate wage however prices might fluctuate.

47. In recent years, the Cuban authorities and trade union organizations had been facing serious difficulties as a result of the infiltration into trade unions, often into key posts, of subversive elements which had no arguments other than force, which were subservient to foreign Powers and whose interests were manifestly opposed to those of the working class.

48. His Government had taken measures to ensure that the trade unions should not become offshoots of the Communist Party, for it wished at all costs to avoid the fate suffered very recently by a sister republic in Latin America. A special committee of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office had examined those measures very closely and had concluded that the

Government had acted in legitimate defence against foreign infiltration. It was therefore not surprising that the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) should criticize the activities of the ILO in the matter of defending trade union freedoms.

49. His delegation would wholeheartedly support the Argentine draft resolution.

50. Mr. ISIK (Turkey) also congratulated the Director-General on the ILO's excellent report and on his brilliant introductory statement. The report showed once again that the ILO's great experience had enabled it to adapt its activities to circumstances.

51. His Government was following with great interest the ILO's efforts in the field of technical assistance, and was sure that their scope would be extended in the future.

52. With regard to the ILO's legislative work, the Turkish delegation too regretted that a large number of governments had not ratified the various international labour conventions. Still, there were no grounds for excessive pessimism, since most of those governments had taken those conventions as a basis in framing their own national legislation.

53. The assistance which the ILO gave to other international organizations was really effective and fruitful, and undoubtedly contributed to the smooth working of all of them. The direct aid given by the ILO to various countries was also most valuable. His own country, he was glad to say, was one of the countries which received that aid and was hoping that it might be increased in the future.

54. His delegation would therefore give its unreserved support to the Argentine draft resolution.

55. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) wished to stress the enhanced importance the ILO had assumed since three States Members of the United Nations, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, had joined it. There were a number of major tasks facing the Organisation, arising out of its basic mission, which was defined in its Constitution as the maintenance of peace on the basis of social justice. Those tasks included the fight against unemployment, the improvement of cultural, social and working conditions for the broad masses of working people, and measures of technical assistance to be taken in collaboration with the United Nations. The primary concern of the ILO must always be the interests of working people, who would be most directly affected by measures to ensure peace and social justice.

56. His delegation wished to emphasize the importance of the utmost objectivity on the part of the ILO when considering allegations of the infringement of trade union rights. That such objectivity was not always achieved was demonstrated by the fact that a complaint about alleged infringement of trade union rights in Czechoslovakia was included in the annex to the report. Even though the complaint was not included in the report itself, he wished to point out that the Czechoslovak Government had rejected it as pure slander. Trade unions enjoyed full freedom in Czechoslovakia and

participated in the solution of all economic and social problems, some of which—social insurance, for example—fell entirely within their competence. Economic and social policy in Czechoslovakia was in complete harmony with the interests of the working people. It was not only the right, but the duty of the Council to deal with the problem of trade union rights, and in so doing it should give full consideration to all the economic and social aspects involved.

57. His delegation hoped to see an improvement in the work of the ILO in the spirit of its Constitution, and was willing on that understanding to support it.

58. Mr. PATTEET (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the PRESIDENT, said that he was glad to note that all the States which were Members of the Council were now members of the ILO.

59. For the most part, speakers had confined their remarks to an examination of the problems directly linking the work of the ILO with that of the Council. But some representatives had touched on problems of general policy, method and structure the detailed examination of which was more properly the sphere of the ILO itself, where the views of governments could and should be compared with those of the employers and workers.

60. His own remarks would be confined to the questions arising out of chapter IV of the report, especially the problems of technical assistance. He would like to reiterate the misgivings he had already expressed at the 74th meeting of the Technical Assistance Committee about the new system of allocating the funds of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance. Moreover, the Director-General of the International Labour Office himself, in introducing his report at the 807th meeting, had expressed the view that if it was to provide suitable technical assistance and decide what were the best means of doing so, the ILO must be in a position to work out long-term programmes. Again, as the representative of Ecuador had just pointed out, the International Labour Office's studies should not be kept on library shelves, but should be put to practical use.

61. The United Nations as a whole should take up the distressing problems of forced labour, slavery and other forms of human indignity which cried out to be abolished at the earliest possible opportunity, in accordance with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

62. Only too often, the various organs of the United Nations had bandied those problems from one to another, only to conclude finally that it would be advisable to ask the ILO to study them, and unfortunately on many occasions the studies thus produced had simply been pigeon-holed as soon as received.

63. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was most anxious that the Council should put an end to that state of affairs and, when it asked one or other of the specialized agencies to carry out a specific task, should itself draw the necessary conclusions from it, which would thus serve as a basis for effective action.

64. The ILO's report also brought to light another aspect of that collaboration between the Council and

the ILO which was so essential—namely, the safeguarding of freedom of association. But as that question constituted a separate item on the Council's agenda, all he would say was that it was one of the most delicate of all those with which the Council had to deal. Happily, the continuous action taken in that field suggested that the ultimate goal might well be reached.

65. ICFTU was sorry to find that, owing to the attitude of certain governments, the ILO had been unable to accomplish very much in Africa, where its assistance was urgently needed. The United Nations should therefore urge upon governments, who were responsible for the decisions taken by the ILO, the necessity for extending the scope of the Organisation's work in Africa.

66. On the other hand, ICFTU had been glad to find that non-metropolitan territories had taken part in the work of the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference. He paid a tribute to the United Kingdom Government, which at short notice had implemented a decision on the subject taken in March by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office. There again, the Council could exert a decisive influence.

67. In conclusion, he hoped that the spirit of co-operation with which the discussion of the ILO's report had for the first time been imbued would be no less evident in the future.

68. Mr. DELAGGI (World Federation of Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the PRESIDENT, said that he would confine his statement to the question of trade union rights. He recalled that the President of WFTU had said, at the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference, that if the trade union movement were to accomplish its glorious work, trade unionism must be free and all the freedoms of association must be effectively recognized, without any restriction or governmental interference.

69. The Council should therefore give careful attention to reports Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Governing Body Committee on Freedom of Association. At the Council's sixteenth session, WFTU had already had occasion to criticize the manner in which the ILO performed its duties in the field of trade union rights.

70. Since that time there had been changes in the Committee's procedure, but they did not appear to have brought any marked improvement; the Committee's reports showed the same inadequacies as before. The dilatory nature of its procedure was clearly evident from case No. 16, in the Committee's twelfth report, concerning the violation of trade union rights in Morocco. That case had been repeatedly referred back, from January 1952 to March 1954, when the Committee had informed the Governing Body that a new report would be submitted when it received the necessary information from the French Government concerning the introduction of a new trade union system in Morocco.

71. The same comment applied to cases in Italy, Cuba and various African territories under French administration. Moreover, complaints concerning Uruguay, Italy, Cuba, Greece and various African territories under French administration had been rejected on the pretext that the facts complained of no longer existed.

72. It was therefore essential that the Council should do more effective work in the defence of trade union rights—in particular, the procedure for examining complaints must be speeded up.

73. Moreover, the Committee on Freedom of Association systematically rejected complaints made against certain governments when the latter affirmed that the trade unions in question were engaging in political activities or had caused a breach of the peace; that had been the case with the complaints concerning Uruguay, Italy, France, Greece, Costa Rica, Cuba, India, Iran, Morocco, Tunisia and various territories under French administration. In accepting such arguments, the Committee was embarking on a course which made any effective defence of trade union rights impossible. He also referred to pages 35 to 37 of the ILO's report, where the work of the Committee was examined.

74. The working classes knew that attacks on freedom of association were being intensified, in order to keep their standards of living as low as possible and to assure employers of the maximum profits. In Tunisia, attacks on trade union rights were increasing and the trade union movement had the gravest difficulties; but so far the activities of the Committee on Freedom of Association

did not appear to have been of any assistance whatever to the Tunisian workers. WFTU was therefore fulfilling the expectation of workers of all political tendencies by concentrating its attention on that problem. The third World Trade Union Congress had decided to organize a large-scale international campaign—which had opened on 1 May 1954—for the promotion of trade union rights and the preparation of a charter of the workers' trade union rights. To that end, WFTU was carrying on widespread consultations with trade union organizations in all continents, and the draft charter would be submitted to the General Council of WFTU in November 1954.

75. The Economic and Social Council clearly had an important part to play in the field of freedom of association. Many trade union organizations asked WFTU to approach international bodies, especially the United Nations, thus proving that the workers had faith in the Council, which should not disappoint their expectations, since respect for trade union rights was necessary for social progress, economic development, the independence of nations and the maintenance of peaceful relations between them.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.