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Chairman : Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand).

Opening remarks by the Chairman  
of the Committee

1. The CHAIRMAN said the achievement of international co-operation in economic and financial matters was not only one of the essential purposes of the United Nations which must be pursued in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, but also an indispensable means or maintaining international peace and security. Accordingly, action in that direction helped to relieve the anxieties of the peoples of the world.

2. In view of the particular importance of the Committee's work, he expressed his gratitude to the members of the Committee for having called upon him to conduct their business, and, in particular, he thanked the representatives of Chile and the Philippines for having respectively proposed and seconded his nomination. He would do everything in his power to ensure the success of the work of the Committee.

## Election of the Vice-Chairman

3. Mr. STADNIK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) nominated Mr. Vavricka, the representative of Czechoslovakia. Mr. Vavricka, a member of the Executive Council of the Czechoslovak Trade Union Congress, had collaborated in drafting the economic clauses of his country's Constitution; he held the post of Director of the economic branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He had represented Czechoslovakia at several ILO conferences and had represented his country on the Second Committee at the fifth session of the General Assembly.

4. Mr. BORIS (France) seconded the nomination of

Mr. Vavricka. Czechoslovakia was a member of the Economic and Social Council, and its representatives had therefore been able to acquire great experience in economic matters. He also paid tribute to Mr. Vavricka's personal qualities.

*Mr. Vavricka (Czechoslovakia) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

## Election of the Rapporteur

5. Mr. CARRILLO FLORES (Mexico) nominated Mr. Chauvet, the representative of Haiti, a country where the United Nations had done particularly fine work in the field of economic development. Mr. Chauvet had followed that work from the beginning.

6. Mr. MANSFIELD (United States of America) seconded the nomination of Mr. Chauvet, who had represented Haiti on the Second Committee since its early days. The election of a representative of Haiti seemed particularly appropriate, since it was in that country that the United Nations' work of technical assistance had been inaugurated.

7. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile), warmly supported the nomination.

*Mr. Chauvet (Haiti) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

8. The CHAIRMAN congratulated the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur on their election and invited them to take their respective seats at the Committee table.

9. Mr. VAVRICKA (Czechoslovakia) thanked his colleagues for electing him Vice-Chairman and said he would do all in his power to ensure that the problems

submitted to the Committee received a satisfactory solution.

10. Mr. CHAUVET (Haiti) thanked the members of the Committee for electing him Rapporteur. At a time when mankind had everything to fear and everything to hope for, the Committee must do what it could to ensure that the hopes of mankind were not disappointed and that the standard of living was raised.

#### Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Economic Affairs

11. Mr. OWEN (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Economic Affairs) said he wished to inform the Committee of the work done by his Department as it related to the Committee's business, and to draw the Committee's attention to the relevant documents.

12. In connexion with economic developments which had been described as an urgent problem both at the third and at the fourth sessions of the General Assembly, progress had been made in the past three years which should not be under-estimated. The programmes of technical assistance for economic development inaugurated during the 1948 Assembly were placing a broad range of services at the disposal of governments. The scale of that work was shown by the fact that by the end of the year the number of experts made available to under-developed countries by the United Nations and the specialized agencies would reach one thousand, while a thousand students from under-developed countries would be studying in countries other than their own. Furthermore, considerable progress had been made in the understanding of the problem of development and its urgency; factual and analytical studies of specific problems had been made, some dealing with the need for increasing the rate of economic development, and proposals had been presented for action having potentialities not less significant than those of the technical assistance programmes. One of the Secretariat's reports had dealt with land reform. It had been prepared in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization and had led to the conclusion at the last session of the Council that owing to the variations in agrarian structure, the problems differed from country to country. It was therefore impossible to propose the application of standard remedies. Each government must prepare a programme adapted to the needs of its economy with a view to eliminating the defects in its agrarian structure which impeded the country's economic development. Another conclusion arising out of the report was that in many countries reform of land tenure systems was not enough, and to be really effective must be integrated with general economic development plans.

13. The study entitled "The Volume and Distribution of National Income in Under-developed Countries"<sup>1</sup> confirmed the gap between standards of living in the developed countries and those in the under-developed countries, showing that the gap was tending to widen.

14. Another study dealt with the "Relation of Fluctuations in the Prices of Primary Commodities to the Ability of Under-developed Countries to obtain Foreign Exchange"<sup>2</sup>. It revealed the fluctuations in the income derived by the under-developed countries from the

sale of exports were very great and unpredictable and impeded the establishment of long-range development trends in those countries.

15. Admittedly, those studies had not determined the decisive cause of the slow rate of economic development. They had, however, facilitated understanding of the problems, and particularly the realization that, in prevailing circumstances, the under-developed countries had to make a considerable effort merely to maintain their position in relation to the developed countries, which could maintain their rate of development. They had, however, facilitated understanding between the standards of living prevailing in those two groups of countries remained therefore one of the gravest contemporary problems.

16. The group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General to prepare recommendations for the promotion of economic development had proceeded on that premiss in formulating their proposals. Their report *Measure for the Economic Development of Under-developed Countries* and the related recommendations of the Council were before the Committee. They had not understandably enough, received unqualified approval and they must undergo the closest scrutiny. It should, however, be noted that the formulation of proposals for international action to finance economic development was now an established agenda item of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly, and that it would doubtless remain a subject of most urgent international consideration.

17. So far as full employment was concerned, the Council had decided in 1950 in its resolution 290 (XI), after considering the report prepared by a group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General, to discuss the matter annually during at least one of its sessions. In that resolution the Council had addressed a number of recommendations to governments and had requested the Secretary-General to obtain periodic information from governments on their full employment policies. The Secretary-General's analysis of the replies received from governments consisted of two parts. The first<sup>3</sup>, which dealt with domestic economic policies, trends and objectives, revealed that during 1950 economic activity had reached a post-war peak and that, consequently, the problem of unemployment had not aroused serious concern. The second part<sup>4</sup> dealt with balance of payments trends and policies. The relevant replies of governments were for the year 1950 and took only slight account of the repercussions of the events in Korea on foreign transactions.

18. Besides those studies dealing broadly with long-term problems, the Secretariat also presented a comprehensive review of the world economic situation in its annual world economic reports. The *World Economic Report, 1949-50*<sup>5</sup>, published early in 1951, had shown that the crucial economic problem which the world had to face was the threat of inflation and the impending shortages of goods, a problem which was quite different from that which had arisen previously. Although the balance of payments situation had greatly improved during 1950, fresh difficulties could be expected. They had in fact arisen even more quickly than had been

<sup>1</sup> Document E/2041.

<sup>2</sup> Document E/2047 and Add. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Document E/2035.

<sup>4</sup> Document E/2035/Add. 1.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No 1951.II.C.1.

foreseen, as would be explained in the 1951 Report which was under preparation for the next session of the Council.

19. The comprehensive review presented in the *World Economic Report 1949-50* was supplemented by regional studies prepared by the secretariats of the regional economic commissions, which covered the most important events occurring in their regions. Thus, the *Economic Survey of Europe in 1950*<sup>6</sup> had dealt with Europe's shortage of basic materials, the impact of the rise in raw material prices and inflationary developments. The corresponding surveys published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the *Economic Survey of Latin America, 1950*<sup>7</sup> and the *Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East, 1950*<sup>8</sup>, respectively, were complementary to the survey of Europe and covered the economic and financial problems of the raw material-producing areas. The surveys relating to Africa and the Middle East, which the Secretariat had published for the first time in 1951, were of a more general nature.

20. A special effort had been made to increase the relatively scanty information on the under-developed areas. Efforts had also been made to secure a better synchronization of regional and world reports.

21. So far as public finance was concerned, the Department of Economic Affairs had the responsibility of serving as an information centre. Accordingly, public finance information papers on the situation in a number of countries had already been published. Fuller surveys had been inaugurated with the publication of the *Public Finance Survey of Venezuela*<sup>9</sup>, to be followed by another document of the same kind on India which was to be issued in December 1951. A report on the *Budgetary Structure and Classification of Government Accounts*<sup>10</sup>, published at the beginning of 1951 was the first part of a major study of the improvement of public finance reporting for international comparability. That study would also deal with the principles of budget formulation and execution.

22. So far as transport and communications were concerned, the Department of Economic Affairs published the *Transport and Communications Review*, which reported all important relevant developments. An effort had been made to widen the geographical distribution of the authorship and subject matter of the articles included. The growing measure of support accorded to the Review by a number of countries as well as by international agencies seemed to indicate that it was making an important contribution to the Department's work.

23. He drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the fact that the Convention establishing the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization concluded in 1948 at the United Nations Maritime Conference had not yet been ratified by the number of States required to enable that institution to begin its work and become a specialized agency of the United Nations on the basis of an agreement approved by the General Assembly as early as its third session. The Economic and Social Council had repeatedly stressed

the desirability of the Convention's being ratified, and the Secretary-General had brought that wish to the notice of governments. In the memorandum<sup>11</sup> he had submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its twelfth session on his twenty-year programme, for achieving peace through the United Nations, the Secretary-General had also pointed out that the ratifications obtained were all from important maritime countries. He (Mr. Owen) again called the attention of the governments concerned to that point.

24. So far as statistics were concerned, the Department of Economic Affairs tried to collect and publish key statistical series on the economic, social and demographic situation in all countries. For that purpose, it published, in the first place, the *Statistical Year Book*, which provided a comprehensive survey of the situation in the year preceding publication. It was supplemented by three yearbooks dealing with demography, national income and international trade. More up-to-date and necessarily less detailed information was published in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*. Information on international trade was presented in a monthly review, *Direction of International Trade*, issued jointly with the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

25. Although the availability of international statistics was increasing, it should be pointed out that the volume and worth of statistical information varied considerably from one group of countries to another. The Secretariat had tried to fill the gaps wherever what might be called statistical under-development occurred. There were also, however, lacunae in the information communicated by countries which were known to have the data.

26. He would also like to mention the substantial studies and reports published by the secretariats of the regional economic commissions. Besides the annual reports mentioned, reference should be made to the *Economic Bulletin for Europe* and the *Economic Bulletin for Asia and the Far East*, which were published quarterly. The Economic Commission for Latin America was planning to publish a similar bulletin. He would like to mention such valuable studies as that published by ECE under the title *European Steel Trends*<sup>12</sup>, and that of ECLA on *Labour Productivity of Cotton Textile Industry* in certain Latin American countries, as well as a number of reports prepared by ECAFE in the fields of natural resources and flood control. Those studies prepared by the regional economic commissions were an integral part of the work of the Department of Economic Affairs and were produced in close collaboration with the Headquarters Secretariat.

27. That concluded his review of the main work relating to economic affairs carried out by the United Nations Secretariat in the course of the past twelve months. He had wished, firstly, to report to the Committee on the results obtained in matters affecting its future business, and, secondly, to give the Committee some idea of the variety and scope of the Secretariat's work.

28. Lord WAKEHURST (United Kingdom) congratulated the Assistant Secretary-General on his matter-of-fact and detailed report.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No 1951.II.E.1.

<sup>7</sup> Document E/CN.12/217.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No 1951.II.F.4.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No 1951.XVI.2.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No 1951.XVI.3.

<sup>11</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twelfth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 23.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No 1949.II.E.2.

29. Mr. BORIS (France) also thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for his clear and objective report. Though excessively modest, it clearly brought out the scope of the activities of the Department of Economic Affairs, but the representatives, and particularly those who had been sitting on the Economic and Social Council, could also testify to the excellent quality of the Department's work. The studies carried out by the Secretariat both at Headquarters and in the regional economic commissions had contributed to a better understanding of the economic situation and the question of full employment and had done much to promote universal awareness of the problem of the development of under-developed countries.

30. Mr. MATES (Yugoslavia) also congratulated the Assistant Secretary-General on his instructive report on the work of his Department; he was glad to note Mr. Owen's special emphasis on the work to be done by the United Nations with regard to assistance to under-developed countries. The fact that governments attached such importance to and derived such benefit from those activities testified to the competence of the senior officials in charge of them.

31. Mr. MANSFIELD (United States of America) wished to associate himself in the tributes paid to Mr. Owen for his excellent report. He added that his own Government which was one of those which had ratified the Convention setting up the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, would be glad if the Convention were ratified by a sufficient number of governments to enable that organization to assume its functions as quickly as possible; it was to deal with technical matters of great importance in the shipping field, such as safety of life at sea, load-lines, etc, which required to be studied and attended to by an organization in full operation. Its estimated operating expenses were very small.

32. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) recalled that at the most recent session of the Council it had been stated that no organization, whether public or private, had then or in the past enjoyed such complete and accurate documentation as that made available to the United Nations by the Department of Economic Affairs. The studies which the Department had prepared on Latin America and Africa<sup>13</sup>, in particular, represented the first serious research into economic conditions in those continents. In the report<sup>14</sup> which he (Mr. Santa Cruz) had submitted to the General Assembly on behalf of the Economic and Social Council, he had included a paragraph on the high quality of the Secretariat work. He was therefore very happy to join in congratulating the Assistant Secretary-General.

33. Mr. CARRILLO FLORES (Mexico) complimented the Assistant Secretary-General on his report and hoped that the work of the Department of Economic Affairs would be brought to the notice of world public opinion; the result would undoubtedly be to mitigate public scepticism with regard to the United Nations. He further hoped that the specialized agencies which also dealt with economic questions would co-operate still more closely with the Department.

34. ABDEL-RAZEK Bey (Egypt) said that the com-

petent authorities derived great benefit from the excellent publications of the Department of Economic Affairs, both those dealing with world economic problems or the economic problems of regions such as the Middle East<sup>15</sup>, and those dealing with such particular questions as the financing of the development of under-developed countries or statistics of national income. He hoped that the Department of Economic Affairs would continue its efforts for the benefit of mankind in general.

35. Mr. HALIQ (Saudi Arabia) also thanked Mr. Owen for his excellent statement. He pointed out that, in order to reduce printing costs, a number of reports on the economy of the Middle East had been omitted from the study of the economic situation in that region. He hoped that those reports could be mimeographed and distributed at least to delegations.

36. Mr. OWEN (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Economic Affairs) thanked the members of the Committee for their complimentary remarks concerning his Department and himself. The special studies to which the representative of Saudi Arabia had referred would be mimeographed and distributed to delegations; some of them had in fact already been mimeographed.

37. Mr. NARIELWALA (India) also congratulated the Assistant Secretary-General on his valuable review; as leader of the Indian Trade Delegation to South-East Asia last year, he had had an opportunity to see the work of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East at Bangkok and he was impressed with the quality of the work of the secretariat of the regional economic commissions.

38. Mr. WOULBROUN (Belgium) associated himself with the tributes paid to the Assistant Secretary-General, and said that prior to the establishment of the United Nations no comprehensive task had ever been carried out comparable to that accomplished by the Department of Economic Affairs in the world economic field.

39. Mr. YU (China) said the Committee was under a debt of gratitude to the Assistant Secretary-General and his colleagues since, in the course of its proceedings, it would have to solve most of the problems which they had studied and reported upon so competently.

40. The CHAIRMAN associated himself with the remarks made by the previous speakers and said that the Assistant Secretary-General's review was the more useful to him personally in that he had not kept abreast of the Second Committee's work since 1947 and that he had found all the information he needed in that review. On behalf of the whole Committee, he congratulated and thanked Mr. Owen.

**Agenda of the Committee : letter dated 13 November 1951 to the Chairman of the Second Committee from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.2/171), and note by the Chairman of the Second Committee (A/C.2/L.75)**

41. The CHAIRMAN said he had prepared his note (A/C.2/L.75) in order to facilitate the Committee's work by describing the procedure it might follow. He had proposed that item 62 of the agenda should be

<sup>13</sup> *The Review of Economic Conditions in Africa*, United Nations Publications, Sales No. 1951.II.C.2, and *The Review of Economic Conditions in the Middle East* United Nations Publications, Sales No. 1951.II.C.3.

<sup>14</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixth Session, Supplement No. 3*.

considered last of all so as to meet the wishes of the United Kingdom representative who hoped to have received fuller information on the question later during the session. He invited representatives to comment on paragraph 3 of his note concerning the order of items.

42. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) noted that the Chairman proposed that the Committee should first examine item 26 — economic development of under-developed countries — (Chapter III of the report of the Economic and Social Council). Although he regarded that as one of the most important economic and social problems to be solved by the United Nations, he did not believe it was right to dispense with all general discussion on the world economic situation, as had been done at the previous session of the Assembly and a course of action which was apparently proposed once more. Such a general discussion was useful in two ways: it enabled the General Assembly, through the Second Committee, to comment on the manner in which the Economic and Social Council was performing its task of co-ordinating the economic activities of the United Nations; and it gave the various delegations an opportunity of expressing their views on the general world economic situation.

43. As several speakers had pointed out during the general debate now taking place in the plenary meetings of the Assembly, the maintenance of peace was closely linked to United Nations activities in the economic field. It was in the Second Committee that the general debate on the world economic situation and United Nations activities in that sphere should be held. He was not opposed to the Chairman's suggestion, but was interested to know why he had not allowed for broad discussion of the world economic situation.

44. The CHAIRMAN replied that he had proposed discussing Chapter III of the Economic and Social Council's report first so as to enable the Committee to begin work more quickly, since the general debate had not yet been concluded in the General Assembly. Furthermore, in his note, he had not ruled out the possibility of holding a general debate on the world economic situation. In his opening address he had referred to the close ties which existed between the maintenance of peace and economic co-operation between nations. Moreover, the question of the economic developments of under-developed countries was directly relevant to the maintenance of international peace and security.

45. Lord WAKEHURST (United Kingdom) supported the Chairman's proposal concerning the order of items. As regards item 62 of the agenda, concerning Eritrea, negotiations were proceeding between the parties concerned; if they reached agreement, the Committee's work would thereby be facilitated. His delegation would furnish the Committee with further particulars as soon as possible and submit a suitable draft resolution.

46. ABDEL-RAZEK Bey (Egypt) thought that the proposals of the Chairman and the Chilean representative were not incompatible; a compromise solution would be to hold a combined general discussion on Chapters II and III of the report of the Economic and Social Council. General economic questions, and the world economic situation in particular, often had political implications and had a bearing on the economic development of under-developed countries; hence, the latter question could not be treated without discussing the world economic situation and the other general economic questions at the same time.

47. The CHAIRMAN reminded representatives that the had invited comments on the order of items proposed in paragraph 3 of his note. The order in which items were to be taken should be settled before considering the manner of holding a general discussion, whether on all the items referred to the Committee generally, or on each point individually.

48. Mr. MANSFIELD (United States of America) approved the order of items proposed by the Chairman as being logical and rational.

49. ABDEL-RAZEK Bey (Egypt) said he had no objection to the order of items proposed by the Chairman and hoped that it would be adopted.

50. Mr. MATES (Yugoslavia) agreed, and thought that the order of items could be settled promptly by a vote.

51. Mr. WOULBROUN (Belgium) agreed with the United States and Yugoslav representatives that the order proposed by the Chairman was extremely logical. It would be inadvisable to extend the general discussion since, as the Chairman had quite rightly pointed out in paragraph 4 of his note, item 26 in itself provided ample material for discussion.

52. Mr. ZOLOTAS (Greece) also approved the order of items proposed by the Chairman. He was unable to support the Chilean representative's proposal since, if a general debate were first held on item 11 of the agenda, many questions relating to item 26 would be studied twice over and there would be a useless repetition of exchanges of views often involving delicate issues.

53. Mr. CARRILLO FLORES (Mexico) also agreed with the order of items as proposed by the Chairman, but hoped that during the general debate on item 26, delegations would have the right to speak on the general economic questions constituting item 11 of the agenda, and, in particular, the world economic situation. If, however, the order proposed by the Chairman were reversed, the inevitable result would be that many statements would be repeated.

54. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) said he had apparently been misunderstood; he had made no proposal but had merely asked a question. He had spoken merely to suggest a single general debate, whereas the Chairman's note appeared to contemplate two such debates.

55. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) approved the order of items proposed by the Chairman. He agreed with the Belgian representative that item 26 covered many delicate questions which should be considered separately if any rational study were to be made. All economic questions were obviously closely inter-related but orderly work was impossible if certain of those questions were not considered separately. Item 26 of the agenda ought therefore to form the subject of a general discussion during which it would obviously be permissible to raise the question of the world economic situation. Logic and the good conduct of work required a general debate on each of the items referred to the Committee.

56. The CHAIRMAN agreed; as a rule a general debate should be held on each item of the agenda. During the general debate on item 26 he would permit any references and allusions to general economic questions, in other words, to item 11. In this way the general debate on item 11 might perhaps be shorter than that on item 26.

57. Mr. ABELIN (France) thought that separate but orderly general discussions should be held, all useless repetition being avoided. Whatever method was adopted, a general debate on item 11 was essential, since Chapter II of the report of the Economic and Social Council dealt with questions of great importance on which most delegations would undoubtedly wish to speak. The Committee ought to extract the principles underlying Chapter II and the efforts and aims of each State in regard to general economic questions should be set forth clearly.

*The order of items proposed by the Chairman (A/C.2/L.75, paragraph 3) was adopted.*

58. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) wondered what would be the scope of a general debate confined to the economic development of under-developed countries, inasmuch as the Chairman was also proposing a detailed discussion of the question of financing that development, the questions of land reform, and technical assistance.

59. The most rational procedure would be to open a general debate on all the general economic questions, covering the economic development of under-developed countries and most of the questions dealt with in Chapter II; the Committee would then consider the particular problems raised in the Chapter.

60. There was little appreciable difference between the solution he was proposing and that proposed by the Chairman, but it had the advantage of dispensing with a general debate.

61. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Re-

publics) said that many delegations would have difficulty in expressing their views on all the questions covered in Chapters II and III of the report of the Economic and Social Council in a single statement. Debate on items 26 and 11 should be kept quite separate, as the French and Belgian representatives had proposed. His own delegation reserved the right to examine the general economic questions raised in Chapters II and III of the report separately.

62. The CHAIRMAN said the following conclusions emerged from the exchange of views: the Committee would first hold a general debate on the economic development of under-developed countries (item 26) and all delegations would be entirely free at the same time to comment on certain sections of Chapter II of the report of the Economic and Social Council (item 11). On the conclusion of that general debate the Committee would consider any proposals which had been submitted with regard to item 26. A general debate would then be opened on item 11, in the course of which members of the Committee would be able to express their views on that item.

63. It was possible that after the general debate on item 26 some delegations would feel that they had little comment to offer on item 11; however that might be, he intended to be very liberal and to allow the debate to be as thorough as speakers wished. He would merely ask all representatives to be concise and to avoid all unnecessary repetition.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.