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ACTION TAKEN UPON DECISIONS REACHED BY THE SEVENTH SESSION  
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

16 March - 3 April 1953

(Report prepared by the Secretary-General)

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The present report indicates briefly the action taken upon the decisions reached by the Commission on the Status of Women at its seventh session where these decisions called for action by other bodies of the United Nations or by the Secretary-General; it also furnishes references whereby the action so taken may be studied in greater detail.
2. Frequent reference is made throughout to document E/2401, which is the report of the seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Economic and Social Council.

### I. NATIONALITY OF MARRIED PERSONS

3. The action taken by the Economic and Social Council on the resolution containing the text of the draft Convention on the Nationality of Married Persons, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its seventh session, is described in a separate document which will be submitted to the Commission at its eighth session.

### II. STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW

4. The action taken by the Economic and Social Council on the resolution adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its seventh session, recommending that the Council request the Commission on Human Rights to include article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the Draft Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is described in a separate document which will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its eighth session.
5. In the field of private law, the Commission also adopted a resolution (E/2401, para. 36) in which it decided to give particular attention to the status of the wife during marriage in many countries, such as the limited authority of the mother over her children, the non-participation of the wife in the choice of the family domicile, and the restrictions imposed upon the right

of the wife to administer and dispose of her property and to engage in independent work. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to prepare detailed comparative studies of these and related questions for its future sessions. In accordance with this request the Secretary-General has prepared for the eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women separate analyses of the question set out above, as well as a comparative study on matrimonial regimes, in accordance with a wish expressed by the Commission at its seventh session (E/2401, para. 34).

6. The Commission on the Status of Women also adopted a draft resolution for the Economic and Social Council (E/2401, para. 36) which recommended that Governments take all possible measures to ensure (a) equality of rights and duties of husband and wife in family matters, and (b) full legal capacity for the wife, as well as the right to engage in work outside the home and to acquire, administer, enjoy and dispose of property on equal terms with her husband.

7. The Economic and Social Council adopted this resolution at its sixteenth session (resolution 504 D (XVI)).

### III. POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

#### (c) Memorandum of the Secretary-General on the Advancement of Political Rights of Women

8. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted two resolutions (E/2401, paras. 42 and 45) in which it requested the Secretary-General to add the following to his Annual Memorandum on Constitutions, Electoral Laws and other Legal Instruments relating to the Franchise of Women and their Eligibility to Public Office and Functions:

- (i) Information on as many countries as possible, together with information as to whether women who have been granted the vote had had an opportunity to participate in an election;
- (ii) The list of governments who have signed and ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women;



- (iii) A table showing suffrage grants originally involving limitations on grounds of sex, such as limitations to certain areas within a country, or to certain types of elections, or on the basis of educational or property qualifications not required of men, and legislative changes subsequent to such grants in relation to the achievement of equal suffrage for women.

9. In accordance with these requests, three new tables were added to the revision of the memorandum which the Secretary-General presented to the eighth session of the General Assembly (document A/2462). This revision furthermore reveals that since the publication of the previous memorandum (A/2154 and Add.1 and 2) women in Mexico and Syria have received equal voting rights with men.

10. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its seventh session, also requested the Secretary-General: (i) to provide it with information on fellowships and other assistance available to governments through the United Nations or the specialized agencies for the training of persons interested in improving the status of women through legislation, education or other constitutional means, and (ii) to summarize suggestions made by the Commission or received from other appropriate sources on ways in which equal political rights for women can be achieved and made effective, with particular attention to the situation in countries where women have not or only recently have been granted political rights (document E/2401, para. 45). Separate reports on the above-mentioned subjects will be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at its eighth session.

(b) Convention on the Political Rights of Women

11. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a draft resolution for the Economic and Social Council (E/2401, para. 42) in which the Council recommended that the General Assembly invite non-member States which are or become (i) members of any of the specialized agencies or (ii) parties to the statute of the International Court of Justice, to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, in accordance with articles IV



and V of the Convention which provide, inter alia, that such invitation may be extended to any state, not member of the United Nations, by the General Assembly 12. The Economic and Social Council adopted this resolution at its sixteenth session (resolution 504 E (XVI)). The General Assembly, at its eighth session, adopted a resolution (793 VIII) by which, taking note of resolution 504 E (XVI) of the Economic and Social Council, it decided to request the Secretary-General to issue an invitation to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women to non-member States fulfilling the above-mentioned qualifications. The invitation, in accordance with the request of the General Assembly, was sent by the Secretary-General on 10 November 1953 to 22 non-member States who are members of the specialized agencies or parties to the International Court of Justice.

(c) Status of Women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories

13. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution (E/2401, para. 48) noting that certain suggestions made by the Commission had been incorporated into the Trusteeship Council Questionnaire and inviting the Secretary-General to continue to transmit information supplied by the Administering Authorities concerning the status of women in Trust Territories together with the documents and records of the Trusteeship Council relating to this subject. The Commission also requested the Economic and Social Council to draw the attention of the Trusteeship Council to this resolution, which it did by resolution 504 K (XVI).

The Secretary-General, in accordance with the invitation, has prepared a report for the eighth session of the Commission, containing excerpts from the annual reports of the Administering Authorities relating to the status of women, together with a reference to Trusteeship Council documents and records in which such information can be found.

Measures leading to the development of political rights of women in territories including Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories where women do not enjoy these rights fully

14. The action taken by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly is described in a separate document which will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its eighth session.



#### IV. EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

15. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women decided to submit to the Economic and Social Council a draft resolution (E/2401, para. 59) in which it urged increased efforts, by appropriate means, toward widespread implementation of the principle of equal remuneration in all countries, and invited the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, to furnish the Commission on the Status of Women annually with information on the progress made in the various countries towards the implementation of this principle.

16. The Economic and Social Council adopted this draft resolution at its sixteenth session (resolution 504 G (XVI)). In accordance with the request contained in the resolution, a report on the progress made in implementing the principle of equal pay for equal work will be submitted to the eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the International Labour Office.

#### V. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

##### (a) Part-time Work for Women

17. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women, after studying preliminary reports by the Secretary-General and the International Labour Office concerning part-time employment of women, requested the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the International Labour Office, to prepare for the eighth session of the Commission the documentation necessary for a full discussion of the question, and to give special attention to the work of women in cottage industries and handicrafts and in seasonal agricultural work in the economically under-developed countries of the world (E/2401, para. 67).

Since the publication of his report for the seventh session of the Commission which, inter alia, was based on information supplied by non-governmental organizations interested in the problem in response to an invitation circulated by the Secretary-General, further replies have been received from the following

organizations: International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Young Christian Workers, and Open Door International. The information contained in these replies, together with other relevant material collected from dependable sources, is included in the report which will be submitted to the eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in accordance with the resolution referred to above.

(b) Older Women Workers

18. At its seventh session the Commission on the Status of Women was informed by the Secretary-General's representative that he had been unable to prepare a report on this subject as requested by the Commission at its sixth session, but that he hoped to submit to it a report at its eighth session. The Commission therefore decided to postpone consideration of this item until that session.

The Secretary-General has since received information from the following non-governmental organizations: International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, International Organization of Employers, Catholic International Union for Social Service, International Co-operative Women's Guild, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, World's Young Women's Christian Association, and St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance. This information, together with other relevant material collected from dependable sources, is included in the report which will be submitted to the eighth session of the Commission.

## VI. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

19. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a draft resolution (E/2401, para. 81) for the Economic and Social Council, which drew "the attention of the Governments and of Specialized Agencies to the need of ensuring the identity of basic school curricula for pupils of both sexes". The Economic and Social Council, at its sixteenth session, adopted a resolution with an amended text (resolution 504.H (XVI)) drawing "the attention of Governments



and Specialized Agencies to the need of ensuring that pupils of both sexes have the same opportunity to take basic school curricula, including curriculum choices".

At its seventh session, the Commission also adopted a resolution (E/2401, para. 84) in which it took note of the information gathered by UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education for the Fifteenth Conference on Public Education and looked forward to continued reports by UNESCO on these matters. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General in collaboration with UNESCO (i) to provide the Commission with information on the number of scholarships and fellowships granted to men and women students respectively in primary, secondary, higher and technical education, and (ii) to advance opportunities for education of women, and to assure full consideration of the needs of and participation by women in all programmes relating to education on equal terms with men.

In accordance with this request, reports will be submitted to the eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women by the Secretary-General in collaboration with UNESCO. The Commission will also have before it a note on the access to apprenticeship prepared by the International Labour Office as suggested by the Commission at its seventh session (E/2401, para. 78).

#### VII. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

20. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution (E/2401, para. 92) inviting the Secretary-General to continue to make annual reports, inter alia, on the number and employment status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and on the participation of women in the principal organs and commissions of the United Nations, in the International Court of Justice and in conferences of the specialized agencies.

In accordance with this invitation, a report by the Secretary-General will be submitted to the eighth session of the Commission.



VIII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES IN RELATION  
TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN

21. The action taken by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on this resolution is described in a separate document which will be submitted to the Commission at its eighth session.

IX. QUESTION OF ACCESS TO HEADQUARTERS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CONSULTATIVE STATUS

22. At its seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women, having been informed of the delay in the admission to the United States of the representative of a non-governmental organization in consultative status who wished to attend the seventh session of the Commission, adopted a resolution (E/2401, para. 9), calling the attention of the Economic and Social Council to the situation, and requesting it to examine the question at its fifteenth session, which was then in progress. The Council decided to add this item to its agenda accordingly. In the course of its discussions, the Council was informed that the United States Government and the Secretary-General had entered into negotiations which had not been concluded concerning the application of the Headquarters Agreement as provided for in article 21 of the Agreement. The Council, therefore, decided to include the question in the agenda of its sixteenth session and requested the Secretary-General to report on the results of the negotiations.

The Secretary-General presented his reports (E/2492 and E/2501) with oral comments thereon to the sixteenth session of the Council, which unanimously adopted resolution 509 (XVI), taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General and his oral statements to the Council, and trusting that any remaining questions would be satisfactorily and expeditiously resolved within the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement.

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