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President: Mr. Hernán SANTA CRUZ (Chile).

Present: Representatives of the following countries: Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies:

International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women (fifth session) (E/1997/Rev.1): report of the Social Committee (E/2072)

1. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider in turn each of the draft resolutions contained in the report of the Social Committee (E/2072) on the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/1997/Rev.1),¹ as well as the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union delegation (E/L.209).

Resolution A was adopted unanimously.

2. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) said that her delegation, which had voted against draft resolution B in the Social Committee, felt obliged to vote against it again in the Council. She considered that the request, contained in the operative part of the draft resolution, for comments and suggestions by Member States on the draft convention on the political rights of women was in contradiction with the desire expressed in the second paragraph that the extension to women in all countries of equal political rights with men should be expedited by every appropriate means. The adoption of such a resolution would not only fail to implement the action recommended at previous sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, but would also considerably retard the final adoption of the draft convention—already accepted

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*, thirteenth session, *Supplement No. 10*.

twice by the Commission by a large majority. It should be remembered in that connexion that no decision had as yet been taken with regard to the date of the sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which would not, in any case, take place less than twelve months after the previous session. The view which had been put forward, that the Council could not, on account of its limited membership, take a decision on the draft convention did not seem to her a valid consideration, since, if the draft convention were to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixth session, all Member States would have an opportunity of expressing their opinion.

3. Mr. HADI HUSAIN (Pakistan) wished to explain his change of position in the Social Committee with regard to the item under discussion. At the outset of the debate in the Committee, he, together with the Chilean representative, had favoured the adoption of a draft resolution which would expedite in the fullest possible measure the extension of full political rights to women. The draft resolution which had been submitted in that connexion by the United States delegation (E/AC.7/L.92/Rev.1) would, in his view, have delayed speedy action and would, furthermore, have reopened certain fundamental questions. He had consequently submitted a draft resolution (E/AC.7/L.97) which aimed at a compromise solution. It was true that his own delegation's draft resolution would also delay action on the draft convention, and he regretted that fact, but it did at least have the merit of not reopening the question of principle.

4. Mr. REYES (Philippines) recalled that, in the Social Committee, his delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution since it had been in favour of referring the draft convention directly to the General Assembly in accordance with the original recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women, since that would be the quickest way of determining the position of Member States. He would, therefore, also abstain from voting on the draft resolution in the Council.

5. He emphasized that his decision was based on his Government's wish that the political rights which women in the Philippines already possessed should be extended

as speedily as possible to women in other countries where such rights had not yet been accorded, by means of an international convention accompanied by other measures.

6. Miss LISSAC (France) considered that the members of the Commission on the Status of Women should be congratulated on their perseverance which had made possible a further advance in the question of the political rights of women. Whereas in the previous year the Council had not seen its way to adopting the Commission's recommendation concerning the framing of a draft convention on the political rights of women, at the current session the principle of the draft convention was no longer questioned, even though the draft resolution envisaged its further improvement. That was valuable encouragement to the Commission on the Status of Women.

7. Mr. ZONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, although the Soviet Union delegation had voted for resolution A, it had, as the Social Committee had already been informed, certain criticisms to make of the work of the Commission on the Status of Women. In the first place, the Commission had rejected the Polish delegation's draft resolution on women's endeavours on behalf of peace. Secondly, the draft convention on the political rights of women proposed by the Commission was unsatisfactory, since it did not contain any provisions for safeguarding those rights. Furthermore, the text adopted by the Social Committee represented a retrograde step in comparison with the recommendations of the Commission on the Status of Women, since it proposed referring the draft convention back to governments, a procedure which would involve at least a year's delay. Lastly, draft resolution H on equal pay for equal work seemed equally unsatisfactory to the Soviet Union delegation.

8. By the terms of the preamble and Article 1 of the Charter, equal political rights for men and women constituted one of the fundamental purposes of the United Nations and, as early as October 1946, the General Assembly had adopted its resolution 56 (I) on the political rights of women. The Soviet Union delegation had, however, pointed out to the Social Committee that, in practice, the principle of the equality of men and women, even though laid down in the Constitution, was not wholly applied in many of the States Members of the United Nations. Moreover, in the colonies and Trust Territories women usually had no political rights whatever.

9. In that connexion, he would recall the fact that in Japan, six years after the victory of the United Nations, women were still being bought and sold and were compelled to work more than ten hours a day for wages 53 per cent lower than those earned by men.

10. For those reasons, though wholly in favour of a convention to safeguard the political rights of women, the Soviet Union delegation would have to abstain from voting on a draft resolution which it regarded as totally inadequate.

11. The PRESIDENT declared the discussion closed.

Resolution B was adopted by 11 votes to 1, with 5 abstentions.

Resolution C was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

Resolution D was adopted unanimously.

12. Mr. REYES (Philippines) proposed that the word "appoint" in the operative paragraph of draft resolution E on the status of women in Trust Territories be amended to read "consider appointing". That amendment made no change of substance, its only purpose being the use of a more appropriate wording to take account of the fact that the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council were co-equal organs of United Nations.

13. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the amendment of the Philippines representative.

The amendment was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

Resolution E, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

Resolution F was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

14. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) said that her delegation would have voted in favour of draft resolution G in the Social Committee: it had, however, voted against the amendment to insert the words "as far as possible" in paragraph (5) and had abstained from voting on the draft resolution, thus amended, as a whole. She felt that, as paragraph (5) began with the words "expresses the hope", the draft resolution did not bring any undue pressure to bear on governments and that to include the amendment adopted in the Social Committee would seriously weaken the resolution. Her delegation would therefore abstain from voting on it in the Council.

15. Mr. MICHANEK (Sweden) said that his delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution in the Social Committee since, although his Government exercised the widest possible measure of non-discrimination with regard to the status of women in law, it considered that there were, in theory, obstacles to the admission of women to a few branches of the public services. His delegation would, however, vote in favour of the draft resolution in the Council, as it believed that Sweden compared favourably with other countries in regard to the employment of women in public services.

16. Mr. KRISHNAMACHARI (India) recalled that his delegation had been responsible for submitting the amendment to paragraph (5) to which the Chilean representative had referred. Although, under its Constitution, India was pledged to non-discrimination in the appointment of women to public services, he considered that in a few instances there were difficulties in the way of employing married women. He therefore believed that some form of reservation was desirable since, otherwise, governments might find themselves committed to a course of action which they were unable to pursue.

Resolution G was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

17. Mr. ZONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that, in his delegation's opinion, draft resolution H was not wholly satisfactory, since it contained no provisions guaranteeing the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

18. The question was not new. From 1948 onwards, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)—in the interest, not of women only, but of all workers—had drawn the attention of the United Nations to the importance of the principle of equal remuneration. The discrimination often made against women workers was not merely an attack on the dignity of women, but a means of lowering the earnings of men, as had been recognized in the report of the Director-General of the International Labour Office to the thirty-third International Labour Conference.

19. Whereas the Soviet Union delegation strongly supported the recommendations of WFTU, other delegations were doing their best to avoid implementing them; indeed, in some countries, the principle of equal remuneration was still unknown. To give a specific instance: though the last Trade Union Congress at Brighton had adopted a resolution proposing equal pay for all British civil servants, irrespective of sex, the United Kingdom representative on the Social Committee had stated that his Government was unable to guarantee equal pay. A similar situation existed in other countries—e.g., Australia, Greece, the Netherlands and the Union of South Africa—whereas in the Soviet Union and the other People's Democracies, women were entitled to equal pay for equal work.

20. In the circumstances, while intending to vote for draft resolution H, the Soviet delegation wished to make clear its reservations in the matter, since the draft resolution seemed to it inadequate.

21. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) said that her delegation was particularly anxious to clarify its position on draft resolution H. In the Social Committee, the Belgian delegation, supported by the Chilean delegation, had submitted an amendment (E/AC.7/L.99) proposing that the words "equal pay for equal work" should be replaced by the words "equal remuneration for work of equal value". That proposal had not been made solely because it used a more satisfactory and accurate terminology, but also because it did in fact involve very important considerations.

22. In her country, equal treatment for equal work existed under the law and, to a large extent, in practice, but the terminology used at present had given rise in a certain number of cases to non-compliance with that principle, and that without any infringement of the law, for the reasons that—in some industries where men were not employed, such as textiles and the garment industry in general—there was no standard of comparison, and that in various branches of industries the work done by women, though of equal value, was not identical with that done by men, with the result that the term "equal work" was not interpreted in the sense of "work of equal value". Failure to adopt the revised wording, "equal remuneration for work of equal value", would have serious consequences for women in the implementation of the

draft resolution, particularly for women in the more highly industrialized countries where the ever-increasing diversification of the various branches of industry would give rise to even greater differences in the work performed by women, though the value of such work would remain the same as that of different work performed by men.

23. Furthermore, the words "equal pay" did not, as the words "equal remuneration" did, include all the benefits, such as the all-important social security benefits, which should accrue to those doing work of equal value.

24. It was to be noted that the words "equal remuneration for work of equal value" had been adopted by the International Labour Organisation and also that the Soviet Union delegation had used the words "equal remuneration" in a draft resolution submitted to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, although that same delegation had opposed the Belgian amendment. She was pleased to see that the delegations of France and the United States, at the seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights, had agreed with the principles of the amendment submitted by the Belgian delegation, since they had submitted a joint amendment referring to minimum remuneration and specifically mentioning all those benefits which her delegation considered were embraced in the term "equal remuneration".

25. It followed that her delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution in the Council on the ground that the resolution, as it stood, would place limitations on the implementation of those principles which her delegation strongly upheld.

26. Mr. MICHANEK (Sweden) observed that, in a statement made in connexion with the adoption by the thirty-fourth International Labour Conference of a convention to give effect to the principle of equal pay for equal work, the representative of his Government had said that any form of interference or direct influence in wages policy, other than by setting an example in its own public services, was not in keeping with Swedish national tradition. The Swedish Government representatives at the International Labour Conference had therefore abstained from voting on that convention, and his delegation would also abstain from voting on the draft resolution in the Council.

Resolution H was adopted by 12 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

27. Mr. OVERTON (United Kingdom), explaining his vote, said that his delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution in the Social Committee for reasons which it had explained at the time. He had been unable to support the draft resolution, as it implied that Member States of the International Labour Organisation had undertaken, by virtue of their membership, to give effect to the principle of equal pay for equal work. That was not the case. His Government, however, stood by its recognition of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

28. Mr. ARKADIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), introducing the Soviet Union draft resolution (E/L.209), said that, at the fifth session of the Commission

on the Status of Women, the Polish and Soviet Union delegations had submitted a draft resolution asking for consideration to be given to the proposal of the Women's International Democratic Federation concerning the active participation of women in the struggle for peace. A proposal to that effect, identical with the draft resolution he was moving, had been submitted to the Social Committee by the Soviet Union delegation.

29. Describing the genesis of the draft resolution, he said that, following an investigation in Korea in May 1951, the Women's International Democratic Federation had published a moving document describing the terrible sufferings undergone by the women and children of that country. That memorandum had been communicated to the United Nations and every member of the Council had had an opportunity to study it. Every day the women of the world heard echoes of war propaganda, observed the mounting military budgets of the signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty, and heard accounts of the terrible danger of the atom bomb, which would be launched first against the civilian populations; and every day they watched with concern the decrease in production of consumer goods and the increase in the cost of living consequent on militarization of the economy. That was why the Women's International Democratic Federation, which included among its members 90 million women from sixty countries, had thought it necessary to submit for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women the important question of active participation by women in the struggle for peace.

30. The object was to prevent war so that women and children might be secure in the enjoyment of a peaceful life. The decision of the World Congress of Defenders of Peace to ban the atomic weapon had found vigorous support throughout the world, and more than 800 million men and women of every country in the world had signed the Stockholm Peace Appeal. More than 450 million men and women had signed the appeal of the World Congress of the World Peace Council for a peace agreement between the five great Powers.

31. Procedural arguments had been adduced against the Polish and Soviet Union proposals for examination of the vital question of the struggle of women for peace. No real supporter of peace could understand why the United Nations should refuse to put that question on its agenda. The Soviet Union delegation hoped, therefore, that the Economic and Social Council, in pursuance of the solemn provisions of Article 1 of the Charter, would adopt the Soviet Union draft resolution.

32. Mr. OVERTON (United Kingdom) said that that was not the first time that the Soviet Union delegation had raised again in plenary meeting matters which had been discussed and settled in the Social Committee. The United Kingdom delegation was unable to accept a draft resolution which was designed for propaganda purposes and which attempted to impede the work of the Council and of the Commission on the Status of Women. Such a resolution attempted to put those nations which were not prepared to accept it in a false position, since in that way the Soviet Union delegation sought to imply that those countries were not in favour of peace whereas, in

fact, the contrary was true. Those countries ardently desired peace, but not peace on the Soviet Union's terms.

33. He had, in the Social Committee, attempted to show the true nature of the so-called peace movement. The chief aims set before the Women's International Democratic Federation were, in reality, to prevent men in countries outside the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies from joining their national armies, to stand in the way of men and materials being sent to areas where the so-called "fight for peace" had already led to open bloodshed and to sabotage the production of arms by causing unrest in factories.

34. The draft resolution was a transparent attempt to make the Council the tool of Soviet propaganda. He therefore proposed, under rule 65 of the rules of procedure, that no further action be taken in the matter.

35. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation warmly appreciated the purposes of the Soviet Union draft resolution and would give it full support. The action proposed therein by the delegation of a country which stood in the forefront of the struggle for peace was particularly necessary at the present time when war-mongers were active, when the armaments race and preparations for war dominated every aspect of life in the capitalist countries, when aggressive pacts were being made, when military units of a neo-Nazi character were being formed in Germany, when so many were dying in the colonial countries in their fight against capitalist aggression, and when the World Peace Council was being impeded in its work. At such a time, every peace-loving country should welcome a draft resolution which sought to achieve international security as laid down in the United Nations Charter.

36. The people of his country desired world-wide peace, and a very important part in such peace work was being played by the women of Czechoslovakia, as could be seen from the recent congress of the Czechoslovak Union of Women which comprised some 6,000 women from all sections of the population and had ended in a demonstration in Prague by some 80,000 persons in favour of the defence of peace.

37. His country had particularly welcomed the constructive effort of the Stockholm Peace Appeal to ban atomic weapons and had, on Mother's Day the previous year, initiated an appeal throughout the country. In that connexion, he quoted a letter from a widow who had lost her entire family as a result of the Second World War, calling upon all women to fight against the possibility of a future war. Nine and a-half millions out of the total population of 12.5 millions had signed that appeal.

38. The Soviet Union draft resolution was yet another instance of the peace policy pursued by that country—exemplified by the recent proposal for a five-Power peace pact—which Czechoslovakia welcomed with enthusiasm. Furthermore, the fact that the Berlin Appeal of the World Peace Council had received such overwhelming support clearly showed the will of the peoples of the world to eliminate the danger of war and build a secure peace.

39. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) observed that the word "peace" had not the same meaning for the free as for the Eastern countries of Europe. When the representatives of the Soviet *bloc* spoke of peace, it was easy to see that it was a mere matter of propaganda with the aim of leaving countries undefended against breaches of peace by certain countries.

40. The Soviet Union representative had spoken of the horrors of the war in Korea, but it might be well to enquire who were responsible for those horrors. Besides, the sponsor of the draft resolution knew in advance that it had no chance of being adopted. In reality, therefore, it was a trap, for the intention was, undoubtedly, to use as a propaganda weapon the fact that the Economic and Social Council would reject the draft resolution. The free world, however, with all the information at its disposal, would not be deceived.

41. The Chilean delegation had no objection whatsoever to the study of the question of peace by the Commission on the Status of Women provided, however, that the latter studied that question in all its aspects and did not merely take as a basis a proposal of the Women's International Democratic Federation, which, as was well known, was not an impartial organization. The Commission on the Status of Women might study the problems of peace, including the question of the circumstances which obliged certain countries of the world to re-arm, the causes of prevailing international tensions, the responsibility for the aggression in Korea, etc. If the Soviet Union proposal covered all those aspects of the problem of peace, the Chilean delegation would be prepared to support it.

42. It was a fact that the United Nations had not remained inactive in the struggle for peace. Resolution 380 (V) adopted at the fifth session of the General Assembly on united action for peace might, in particular, be called to mind, as well as resolution 290 (IV) on the essentials of peace. Decisions on the political action to be taken for the defence of peace had already been taken in the General Assembly. Those resolutions had been inspired by the Charter and they constituted for her delegation guiding principles in the work for peace. It was through the Council's action of directing, guiding and co-ordinating international collaboration in compliance with Article 55 of the Charter that peace could be secured. For those reasons, the Soviet Union draft resolution, which sought to mislead the conscience of the world, could not be supported by the Chilean delegation.

43. Miss LISSAC (France) said she did not wish to prolong a debate which seemed to her futile, since the discussion in the Social Committee had brought out very clearly the feeling of the large majority of the delegations with regard to the Soviet Union proposal. Consequently, the French delegation requested the Council to proceed to vote on the United Kingdom proposal.

44. Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland), replying to the assertions of previous speakers that the question raised by the Women's International Democratic Federation had been discussed repeatedly both in the Commission on the Status of Women and in the Social Committee,

said that her delegation considered the problem of world peace so vital that it was prepared to bring the matter up again and again. Indeed, the Council had spent considerable time discussing far less important questions. The Polish people were deeply concerned with the problem of maintaining world peace. In reply to the Chilean representative, it should be pointed out that their conception of peace was simple and unequivocal. As for the charge of propaganda, the Polish delegation was not ashamed of being accused of spreading propaganda in favour of peace; in fact, it was ready to do so on all occasions.

45. Polish women had played an important part in the struggle for peace and in particular those engaged in the rebuilding of Warsaw were inspired by a deep conviction that their work was directed to peaceful ends. Poland had suffered 6 million casualties in the Second World War and one woman in Warsaw had signed the Stockholm Peace Appeal fourteen times, as fourteen members of her family had perished during that war.

46. The debate on the world economic situation had amply proved which countries were really preparing for war. Such preparations imposed considerable hardships on ordinary people, especially on women, concerned as they were for the well-being of their families and for the future of their children. Her delegation had therefore been dismayed at the proposal that no action be taken on the Soviet Union draft resolution. Such a step would mean that the United Nations would lag behind in the tremendous struggle for peace engaged in by millions of women throughout the world. The Soviet Union draft resolution, the aim of which was to place the United Nations in the forefront of the peace movement, would receive the Polish delegation's whole-hearted support.

47. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) stressed the inconsistency between the arguments in favour of peace adduced by the supporters of the Soviet Union draft resolution and the deeds of the communist countries they represented. The Council had been invited to join in what was called by the Soviet Union representative a great effort for maintaining world peace and to endorse proposals to that end put forward by the Women's International Democratic Federation. No one, however, was deceived by the real designs of that move. He himself had travelled in a train full of young people returning from one of the so-called peace conferences held in Budapest in 1949 and had been deeply disturbed by the slogans of blind hatred against the world repeated over and over again by small children. Those slogans reflected a type of ruthless indoctrination which was far from conducive to peaceful relations between nations. He had also studied speeches made and resolutions adopted during those meetings and seen what poisonous accusations they contained. By such meetings, small children were being misled by insidious propaganda and prevented from knowing the real peace aims of the western world. He sincerely hoped that the Council would not be deceived by the propaganda manoeuvre which had inspired the submission of the Soviet Union draft resolution.

48. Mr. ARKADIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the United Kingdom representative, in his reference to alleged sabotage of war production, had shown that the primary concern of his country was to increase armament supplies. If such was the attitude of the United Kingdom delegation, then any attempt by the Soviet Union to speak of peace would be futile. The rulers of the United Kingdom, who had committed the heinous crime of forbidding a peace conference on their country's soil, were now seeking to conceal their war designs by attacking the genuine peace aims of the Soviet Union.

49. The Chilean representative's statement had similarly been dictated by the reactionary circles of her country which sought to stifle the real partisans of peace. Chile had not suffered during the Second World War and had no idea of the misery suffered by the peoples of Europe; nor could it sympathize with the millions of European women who were now determined to fight for peace.

50. What possible fault could be found with the Soviet Union draft resolution, concerned as it was with the vital struggle for peace? The United States representative had complained of the propaganda voiced by young people returning from peace conferences, but had given no consideration to the fact that such propaganda, accusing the United States of war preparations, was quite true. The draft resolution stood on its own merits and had no need of artificial arguments in its favour. It reflected the Soviet Union's genuine desire for peace. It was therefore the duty of the Council to adopt it.

51. Mr. MICHANEK (Sweden) said that the position of his Government and people with regard to the Stockholm Peace Appeal was too well known to require explanation. His delegation did not believe that such an appeal or the proposal contained in the Soviet Union draft resolution was designed to promote the peace which the Council was seeking to establish.

52. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) requested that a vote by roll-call be taken on the United Kingdom repre-

sentative's proposal to take no action on the Soviet Union draft resolution (E/L.209).

A vote was taken by roll-call.

In favour: Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, France, India, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against: Czechoslovakia, Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The proposal was adopted by 15 votes to 3.

Report of the Commission on Human Rights (seventh session) (E/1992 and Add.1, E/2044, E/2057 and Add.1 to 5, E/2059 and Add.1 to 8, E/2085)

53. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to examine the report of the Commission on Human Rights (E/1992 and Add.1)¹ and pointed out that, at its seventh session, the Commission had succeeded in drafting only the provisions relating to economic, social and cultural rights, and the measures of implementation of the draft International Covenant on Human Rights. Various proposals had been submitted to the Commission in regard to the action to be taken on the draft Covenant. It would appear that the Council should discuss that point in the first place, as, in the event of the discussion resulting in a decision to refer the draft Covenant back to the Commission, it would be useless to embark on a detailed examination of the various articles. He recalled that the Czechoslovak delegation had already proposed that the Council refer the draft Covenant back to the Commission for completion.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*, thirteenth session, *Supplement No. 9*.