

MEETINGS HELD FROM 17 APRIL TO 18 MAY 1973

1851st meeting

Tuesday, 17 April 1973, at 10.55 a.m.

President: Mr. Sergio A. FRAZÃO (Brazil).

E/SR.1851

Reopening of the session

1. The PRESIDENT declared the fifty-fourth session of the Economic and Social Council reopened and welcomed the new members of the sessional committees. He emphasized that the agendas of the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions were exceptionally heavy, for the Council, in addition to discussing some important questions, would have to consider the reports of a number of bodies. In order to be able to accomplish that task in the limited time allotted to it, the Council should not defer consideration of certain questions, for that would only overload the agendas of the 1974 sessions; it should deal quickly with the relatively less complicated questions in order to be able to concentrate on matters requiring general policy decisions. It would be especially desirable for the sponsors of draft resolutions to submit their drafts early enough for the members of the Council to be able to hold consultations.

2. Turning to the rationalization of the Council's methods of work, he drew members' attention to the problems of documentation and to the six-week rule established 25 years ago. The Council also had to give precise guidelines to its subsidiary organs because new procedures had been introduced for preparing programmes and the budget. It was to be hoped that the Council would be able to complete its consideration of the rationalization of its methods of work at the present session, for the fifty-fifth session would be devoted primarily to review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy, the work programme and the budget.

Tribute to the memory of Mr. Henri Laugier, first Assistant Secretary-General for Social Affairs

3. The PRESIDENT paid a tribute to the memory of Mr. Henri Laugier, Assistant Secretary-General for Social Affairs from 1946 to 1951. Professor Laugier, a scientist by training, had pursued his ideals with intelligence and enthusiasm and had contributed to the adoption of many social measures, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

4. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs felt the loss of Professor Henri Laugier perhaps more deeply than anyone else, for Professor Laugier had had a tremendous influence on the Department. Henri Laugier had always been in the front line, and since the period immediately after the Second World War he had striven to promote internationalism, for he saw international solidarity and co-operation as a means of solving major national problems. He had been a tireless champion of the cause of the third world and had recognized the need for an international organization

encompassing the whole range of human affairs and concerned, in particular, with the harnessing of science for the good of all mankind. He was remembered especially for the decisive part he had played in preparing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The words which Henri Laugier had written about himself shortly before his death could be considered his political testament. They were words which everyone should ponder today: "Always fighting to reform and strengthen the United Nations, but always deeply saddened by the indifferent attitude of the peoples of the world towards this immense undertaking on which, in my view, the fate of mankind depends".

5. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar), Vice-President of the Council, said that he, too, wished to pay a tribute to the memory of Professor Laugier, who had embodied the aims of the United Nations and its striving for a world of justice, harmony and peace. Professor Laugier had been a pioneer in economic and social affairs; he had devoted his life to the achievement of economic and social goals and had striven to solve the problems of the third world—problems of which he had had a very accurate grasp.

6. The PRESIDENT read out a telegram from Mr. Hernán Santa Cruz, who had been President of the Economic and Social Council at the time of Mr. Laugier's retirement. Mr. Santa Cruz associated himself with the tribute paid to the memory of Mr. Laugier by the Council and recalled that in 1951, the year of his retirement, the Council had paid an outstanding tribute to an official whose belief in peaceful and friendly relations between peoples had been an inspiration to the Organization in many of its activities, particularly in the drafting and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was unquestionably the most positive achievement of the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations. After he had left the United Nations, he had played a large part in promoting the Organization's purposes and principles; although he had been under no obligation to do so, he had laboured more persistently and constructively than anyone to gain acceptance for those purposes and principles, whether in the sphere of political security, of international co-operation for development or of universal observance of human rights. The memory of Henri Laugier must be kept alive in the United Nations and serve as an inspiration to all who worked for peace and friendship among peoples and for the well-being of all mankind.

7. Mr. DE GUIRINGAUD (France) said that he deeply appreciated the tribute which had just been paid to the memory of Henri Laugier, especially since he had himself known Mr. Laugier very well. Henri Laugier had been a humanist in the full meaning of the word and had brought his tireless energy to all the responsible positions which he had held. He had been

completely independent in his dealings with people or institutions and had retained that independence when he took up important duties in the service of the State. He had also been an extremely generous man, as he had shown by leaving his entire estate to the National Centre for Scientific Research. All those qualities were invaluable in an international civil servant, a fact which Henri Laugier had demonstrated when he had been Assistant Secretary-General for Social Affairs. The part he had played in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was common knowledge. However, even after leaving the United Nations, Henri Laugier had continued to take a great interest in the Organization; he had hoped to see it strengthened and had never lost faith in it, for he had always desired a closer solidarity among men.

At the invitation of the President, the members of the Council observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Henri Laugier.

AGENDA ITEM 1

Adoption of the agenda (E/5240 and Add.1, E/5279, E/5283, E/L.1543)

8. The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to consider the provisional agenda of the fifty-fourth session (E/5240 and Add.1) and drew their attention to paragraph 3 of the document dealing with the organization of work (E/L.1543), which proposed that consideration of item 19 of the provisional agenda (Work programme and budget for 1974-1975 and the medium-term plan for 1974-1977 relating to economic, social and human rights activities) should be postponed until the fifty-fifth session. If there was no objection, he would take it that the members of the Council decided to postpone consideration of item 19 of the provisional agenda until that session.

It was so decided.

9. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he shared the President's concern at the size of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session in view of the limited time available to the Council. The Council should seek every possible way of solving the problem and should consider deferring or eliminating consideration of certain questions which were less important or less urgent or on which the Council did not yet have sufficient documentation.

10. The Council should consider the possibility of postponing once again consideration of item 22 of the provisional agenda (Tourism), since no significant progress had been made in the matter. There had been no agreement on relations between the United Nations and the World Tourism Organization, and that body's statutes had not yet been ratified by a sufficient number of countries. It would therefore be premature for the Council to consider the item. Moreover, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) had not discussed the substance of the matter or made a formal recommendation; thus, it would be better to wait until additional information was available and until CPC had considered the question in depth before submitting it to the Council in a year's time.

11. In addition, he considered it would be more reasonable to refer subitems (a) and (c) of item 6 (Fiscal and financial matters) to the Committee on Natural Resources. Subitem (b) could be allocated to the Committee on Science and Technology for Development.

In making that proposal, the Soviet Union had in mind the fact that new bodies had been established which would be more competent to study such matters and which could submit the results of their work directly to the Economic and Social Council.

12. He hoped that his proposals would be studied in a positive spirit, for their purpose was the same as that of the suggestions made by the President.

13. Mr. NDUNG'U (Kenya) said that he had a number of remarks to make concerning the Soviet representative's proposal to defer the consideration of certain items or refer them to other bodies. Unlike the representative of the USSR, he did not consider that item 22 of the provisional agenda, concerning tourism, was less important or less urgent than other items. Tourism was of considerable importance for most of the developing countries, since it often brought them the foreign currency they needed and the resources necessary for the financing of their national budgets.

14. The representative of the USSR had said it would be premature to study the question of tourism during the current session of the Council since it had not been considered by CPC and that body had made no recommendations on the subject. His own delegation was a member of CPC, and it was thus in a position to state that the Committee had in fact studied the matter. That was clear from summary record E/AC.51/SR.388, which contained the Committee's decision on the matter, a decision about which his delegation had expressed reservations because of the manner in which it had been interpreted.

15. He was opposed to the withdrawal of the question of tourism from the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the Economic and Social Council in view of the importance of the subject for both the developed and the developing countries.

16. He pointed out with regard to item 6 (a) (Promotion of foreign private investment in developing countries), that the question was of vital interest for the majority of the developing countries, which had need of capital for development. To consider that the question was not important was tantamount to saying that the Council should not concern itself with the problem of development in the developing countries.

17. Item 6 (b) (Transfer of operative technology at the enterprise level) was equally important for those countries. As their goal was to achieve economic independence as quickly as possible, they had to acquire the requisite technology and knowledge from firms in the developed countries.

18. Finally, item 6 (c) (Tax treaties between developed and developing countries) had been thoroughly studied by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). In view of the large number of meetings and consultations devoted to that subject, he was surprised that the representative of the USSR considered it of secondary importance.

19. For all those reasons, his delegation was opposed to the removal of item 6 from the agenda.

20. Mr. DE AZEVEDO BRITO (Brazil) said he had listened to the Soviet representative's proposals with the greatest interest. Like him, he felt that an overloaded agenda might prevent the Council from devoting the proper amount of time to urgent and important questions, but he also understood the fears of the Kenyan delegation and considered that its remarks merited attention.

21. The representative of the USSR had proposed deferring consideration of item 22 of the provisional agenda until the next session. Like the representative of Kenya, he felt that item 22 was an important item. Indeed, the very fact that only a few more ratifications were necessary for the adoption of the statutes of the World Tourism Organization should prompt the Council to take a greater interest in the matter, particularly as it was currently the subject of additional work by the United Nations.

22. He had a practical comment to make with regard to subitems (a) and (c) of item 6. They dealt with questions which went somewhat beyond the mandate of the Committee on Natural Resources, and it was not certain that the Committee could study them in the general context in which they should be viewed. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that the Committee would not meet for another two years, so that study of the question would be delayed for two years and not one. As a result, it would perhaps be preferable for the Council to retain items 22 and 6 (a) and (c) on its agenda, but to study them as briefly as possible.

23. Mr. WANG Jun-sheng (China) said that he had no objection to the inclusion of item 22, relating to tourism, in the agenda. However, his delegation had reservations, which it would set out in greater detail at the appropriate time, with regard to the interim report on the discussions with the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO) concerning relations between the United Nations and the future World Tourism Organisation (E/5240/Add.1, item 22).

24. The PRESIDENT asked the representative of the USSR whether he wished his statements to be regarded as formal proposals to the Council.

25. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had wished to express its views on the provisional agenda in order to draw the attention of members of the Council to the need to lighten its workload so that it could devote itself to the questions of importance and take advantage of the recent establishment of bodies such as the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Science and Technology for Development. His remarks had not been intended in any way as formal proposals but rather as suggestions designed to show how the Council could be enabled to concentrate on the most urgent questions.

26. The PRESIDENT said that, if there were no further comments, he would take it that items 6 and 22 of document E/5240 would be retained on the agenda.

It was so decided.

27. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council approved the request by the Permanent Representative of Madagascar to the United Nations (see E/5279) for the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the Economic and Social Council of an additional item entitled "Measures to be taken following the floods in Tunisia".

It was so decided.

28. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should send a cable to the President of Tunisia, expressing its sympathy and informing him at the same time of the decision it had taken.

It was so decided.

29. Mr. KITCHEN (United States of America) said that he had some remarks to make with regard to the provisional agenda as a whole. Firstly, his delegation was fully aware of the difficulties encountered by the officers of the Council in drawing up the agenda. The Council had no way out of the present situation. It could no longer defer the consideration of certain items, even if it wished, since that would merely complicate its work at the fifty-fifth session. Furthermore, a rapid glance at the 59 documents which the Council was expected to consider during the current session showed that 42 of them had been distributed to members of the Council less than six weeks before the opening of the session; consequently, in accordance with rule 14, paragraph 4, of the rules of procedure, the questions covered by those documents should not be included in the agenda. It would none the less be unreasonable to defer consideration of those questions because of the confusion to which that would give rise. He recognized that it would be useful to entrust the study of certain items to committees of the Council, but he emphasized the difficulty such a procedure would entail for those members of the Council who could not follow the debates of all the committees.

30. In conclusion, his delegation hoped that a serious study would be made during the current session of the situation in which the Council now found itself and that an effort would be made to find a solution.

31. The PRESIDENT observed that the Council had approved all the items on the provisional agenda (E/5240) except for item 19 and had also approved the supplementary item relating to measures to be taken following the floods in Tunisia. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Council adopted the provisional agenda, as amended, in its entirety.

The provisional agenda, as amended, was adopted.

32. The PRESIDENT drew the attention of the members of the Council to document E/5274, in which he transmitted to the Secretary-General the text of a letter from the President of the Security Council concerning Security Council resolution 329 (1973) of 10 March 1973, requesting the Economic and Social Council to consider periodically the question of economic assistance to Zambia. He also drew the Council's attention to document E/5274/Add.1, in which the Secretary-General informed him that should the Economic and Social Council decide to consider the question of economic assistance to Zambia at its fifty-fourth session, the Secretariat would be in a position to provide it with a report which might facilitate its consideration of that matter. He invited comments from the members of the Council.

33. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) drew the attention of the members of the Council to Security Council resolution 329 (1973), particularly paragraph 6, in which the Economic and Social Council was requested to consider periodically the question of economic assistance to Zambia.

34. He also recalled that the Secretary-General, in his letter of 13 April (E/5274/Add.1), had noted that the Secretariat would be in a position to provide the Economic and Social Council with a report to facilitate its work in the matter. Accordingly, pursuant to rule 17 of the rules of procedure, he requested that the question of economic assistance to Zambia should be included in the Council's agenda.

35. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland) supported the proposal of the representative of Madagascar. Most

Governments had welcomed the request addressed to the Economic and Social Council by the Security Council in its resolution 329 (1973). Zambia needed assistance urgently and had herself taken determined steps to overcome the difficulties created by the decision to abandon traditional transport routes. The Secretariat had already taken steps to facilitate the Council's work. Furthermore, a number of Member States, among them Finland, had already indicated their readiness to assist the Government of Zambia. Against this background it was essential that the Council should consider the question at its fifty-fourth session.

36. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) said that in the light of the repercussions in Zambia of the conditions of oppression and colonialism existing in Zimbabwe, it was high time for the Economic and Social Council to see to it that Zambia received assistance in solving its economic problems.

37. Mr. FASLA (Algeria) asked that the question of assistance to Zambia should be included in the Council's agenda, in view of the situation of that country, which was the victim of aggression directed against it by its racist neighbours.

38. Mr. TOURÉ (Guinea), recalling that his country was one of those which had brought the problem before the Security Council, supported the proposal of the representative of Madagascar. The role of the United Nations in the provision of political and economic assistance to Member States should receive the full attention of the Economic and Social Council, particularly since Zambia was a land-locked country.

39. Mr. HOSNY (Egypt) supported the proposal of the representative of Madagascar.

40. Mr. NDUNG'U (Kenya) also supported the request to include the question in the agenda as a matter of priority.

41. Mr. JAIN (India), recalling that his delegation had been a sponsor of the Security Council resolution requesting the provision of economic assistance to Zambia, fully supported the proposal of the representative of Madagascar and hoped that the Council would be able to devote the necessary time to the question at the very beginning of its work.

42. Mr. WANG Jun-sheng (China) fully supported the request of the representative of Madagascar. The question of assistance for Zambia under Security Council resolution 329 (1973) should be given priority.

43. Mr. MOLI (Uganda) associated himself with the delegations that had spoken earlier; he also believed that the question deserved special priority.

44. The PRESIDENT said that if there was no objection, he would take it that the delegations were unanimous in support of including in the Council's agenda an additional item entitled "Implementation of Security Council resolution 329 (1973) concerning the question of economic assistance to Zambia".

It was so decided.

45. The PRESIDENT suggested that the question should be referred to the Economic Committee. The priority to be given that question would be decided upon in the light of the wishes of the Council members, subject to the submission of the report by the Secretariat.

46. Mr. OCHIRBAL (Mongolia) proposed, pursuant to rule 17 of the rules of procedure, that an item entitled "Admission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to membership in the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East" should be included in the

agenda. In that connexion, he drew the attention of the members of the Council to document E/5280, containing a message addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in which the Minister expressed his country's interest in the matter. Mongolia, which maintained friendly relations with Bangladesh, had always supported the latter's legitimate aspirations to participate in the work of the various organs of the United Nations. The People's Republic of Bangladesh was a sovereign State and a full member of the international community; in its foreign policy, it had joined the non-aligned countries and maintained, or was trying to establish, friendly relations with all States and was already a member of some specialized agencies. There was therefore no political or legal obstacle to the entry of Bangladesh into the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). He read out a draft resolution on the question.

47. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) fully associated himself with the proposal of the representative of Mongolia. The well-established policy of Poland had always been to support the principle of universality of membership in the United Nations; it fully recognized that Bangladesh had the right and need to become a member of ECAFE in order to make its contribution to it and derive the corresponding advantages from it; moreover, ECAFE was currently in session and was considering a question of fundamental importance to Bangladesh, namely, a programme of concerted action for the reconstruction of the countries of Asia and the Far East. It was therefore important to take a decision quickly.

48. Mr. ROUGÉ (France) said that it was desirable for Bangladesh to be a member of ECAFE, in the interest of the peoples of Bengal and all the countries of that region that were concerned with economic co-operation.

49. Mr. YOGASUNDRAM (Sri Lanka) recalled that his country had always favoured the entry of Bangladesh into the various organs of the United Nations and was convinced that Bangladesh would fulfil its obligations and make a valuable contribution to the work of ECAFE.

50. Mr. OGISO (Japan) supported the inclusion of the question proposed by Mongolia in the agenda and asked that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency, since ECAFE was currently in session.

51. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) said that, in the light of the arguments cited and the letter addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, he supported the inclusion of that item in the agenda.

52. Mr. WANG Jun-sheng (China) said that his delegation was opposed, under present circumstances, to including in the agenda the question of the request from Bangladesh, for admission to the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.

53. His delegation believed that the United Nations and the bodies related to it should not admit Bangladesh as a Member State until it had scrupulously implemented the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations and until there had been a reasonable settlement of the problems existing between India and Pakistan and between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

54. That position did not mean that China was fundamentally opposed to membership of Bangladesh in the

United Nations and its subsidiary bodies. The Chinese people had feelings of friendship for the people of East Bengal. China's present attitude was dictated by a desire to defend the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, promoting a rapprochement between the parties concerned and contributing to the relaxation of tension in the South Asian subcontinent. That position was consistent with the fundamental interests of the peoples of the region.

55. He asked that his statement in its entirety should be included in the summary record.

56. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) supported the proposal of the representative of Mongolia. Bangladesh needed both bilateral and multilateral assistance, and for humanitarian reasons the Philippines would support the admission of Bangladesh to ECAFE.

57. Mr. POERWANTO (Indonesia) associated himself with the request for the inclusion of the item.

58. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) said that his delegation had taken note of the request from Bangladesh for admission (E/5280), which was consistent with the rules of procedure of the Council, and it supported the inclusion of that important question in the agenda. A debate on the substance of the question should be avoided at the present stage of the Council's work.

59. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the proposal for including in the agenda the question of the admission of Bangladesh to ECAFE. The struggle of the people of Bangladesh for freedom and independence and the reconstruction of that country had been supported by the entire world; the People's Republic of Bangladesh had been officially recognized by more than 100 States and was a member of several international organizations. Like other peace-loving States, Bangladesh favoured the realization of the purposes and objectives of the United Nations, and its participation in ECAFE would be very helpful to the Commission's activities. Since the Commission was currently in session, he associated himself with those representatives who had asked that the question should be considered as a matter of urgency.

60. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan), recalling that his country was not a member of the Economic and Social Council but of a sessional committee, said that the Government of Pakistan was not opposed to the admission of Bangladesh to the various organs and bodies of the United Nations. However, the admission of Bangladesh should be governed by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the legal obligations imposed on Bangladesh under the Charter and by resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Economic and Social Council could not disregard those principles and the obligations they entailed. The Government of Bangladesh had not yet fulfilled those obligations and, as long as that situation continued, in particular with regard to humanitarian obligations, his delegation would oppose the inclusion of the question of the admission of Bangladesh to the organs of the United Nations. He requested that his statement should be reported fully in the summary record.

61. Mr. TOURÉ (Guinea) said that the Security Council had considered the question of Bangladesh and that all members of the Economic and Social Council were aware of the fate of the resolution submitted on the matter. That was why his delegation had reservations concerning the proposal of the representative of Mongolia; it would vote accordingly on the draft resolution.

62. Mr. TRAORÉ (Mali) said that the position of his country on the universality of the United Nations was well known. However, that universality should be seen as a function of certain principles, especially those of equality and justice. The United Nations had already adopted humanitarian measures in the interest of the peoples with which the draft resolution read out by the representative of Mongolia was concerned. Nevertheless, the Council should not revert to procedures followed in the past, namely, the admission of certain States to the United Nations or to certain of its organs merely because they asked to be admitted. The result of such action was to divide peoples still further, rather than to unite them. The problem should be viewed as a whole, rather than solely in terms of the possibility of admission to certain regional organs. It would be better if Bangladesh were admitted to the United Nations and to its principal organs in accordance with the normal procedures, that is, the procedures established in the Charter. For those reasons his delegation had reservations on the Mongolian proposal.

63. Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) and Mr. SINGH (Malaysia) said that, for the reasons adduced by previous speakers, they supported the proposal that the question of the admission of Bangladesh to the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East should be included in the Council's agenda.

64. Mr. OLIVERI LÓPEZ (Argentina) said that in accordance with the position adopted by Argentina in other United Nations organs his delegation wished to associate itself with the proposal of the representative of Mongolia. He emphasized in particular that the admission of Bangladesh to the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East would be consistent with the principle of universality and that it would make the economic development of that country much easier.

65. Mr. SZARKA (Hungary) and Mr. GETMANETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) also expressed the opinion that the question of the admission of Bangladesh to the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East should be included in the agenda of the Council, since it was an important and urgent matter. They emphasized the valuable contribution which Bangladesh would be able to make to the work of ECAFE.

66. Mr. JAIN (India) said that he supported unreservedly the proposal of the representative of Mongolia because of the important part which Bangladesh would be able to play in the economic development of the region and because the admission of Bangladesh would be consistent with the aims of ECAFE, namely, to strengthen economic co-operation among all the countries of the region.

67. Mr. CABRIC (Yugoslavia) stated that the position of the Yugoslav Government towards the admission of Bangladesh to the United Nations and its organs was very well known to all members of the Council and Members of the Organization, and consequently he supported the proposal to include in the agenda the question of the admission of Bangladesh to ECAFE.

68. The PRESIDENT said that if there was no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to include in its agenda, as an additional item, "Question of the admission of Bangladesh to membership in the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East", due account being taken of all the reservations which had been expressed.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.