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SOCIAL COUNCIL  
OFFICIAL RECORDS



THIRTEENTH SESSION, **566th**  
MEETING  
THURSDAY, 20 DECEMBER 1951, at 10 a.m.  
PALAIS DE CHAILLOT, PARIS

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*President:* Mr. Hernán SANTA CRUZ (Chile).

*Present:* The representatives of the following countries:

Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies:

International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

**Basic programme for 1952 (*continued*)**

**Provisional agenda for the first regular session of 1952 and fixing of dates for commencement of discussion of groups of related items**

**Question of calling a single session of the Economic and Social Council in 1952 in view of the special circumstances arising out of the prolongation of the sixth regular session of the General Assembly**

(RESOLUTION 414 (XIII), PARAGRAPHS 8 AND 45, E/2158 AND CORR.1 AND ADD.1 AND 2, E/2160, E/2162, E/L.303, E/304 AND E/L.305)

1. The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should discuss simultaneously the question of holding a single session of the Council in 1952 and the question of the items to be included in the basic programme for 1952. In the light of its decisions on those questions, it could then decide on the date of the session or sessions.

2. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed with the procedure suggested. In deciding whether to maintain or drop items, the Council might consider its programme item by item, taking as a basis either the Secretariat note (E/2158) or the working papers submitted by the USSR (E/L.303) and the United Kingdom (E/L.304).

3. His delegation's document, which was intended as a working paper, merely outlined certain considerations; his delegation did not feel strongly that the items mentioned therein should be dropped. The fact, however, that the United Kingdom delegation, working separately, had reached the same conclusions on a number of items was an argument in favour of their deletion.

4. Once the Council had decided how many items should be retained, it would know the approximate length of the session required. If it was decided to hold only one session, he was sure that no delegation would wish that session to be as long as two regular sessions; six, eight, or perhaps nine weeks might be sufficient.

5. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) said there was nothing final in the document circulated by his delegation as a working paper. All the items underlined therein should be carefully considered with a view to their postponement.

6. The PRESIDENT called on the Council to discuss the proposal in paragraph 2 of the USSR memorandum (E/L.303) that the reports of the specialized agencies should not be examined in 1952.

7. Mr. HESSEL (France) said that in principle his delegation was strongly opposed to abandoning the discussion of the reports of the specialized agencies, since it considered that to be one of the Council's chief functions. It might, however, be necessary during the year

to take radical steps to reduce the number of items on the agenda, and the reports of the specialized agencies might prove to be of less importance that particular year. He pointed out that it was extremely difficult for the Council to decide, at the current stage, to delete from its agenda items the exact importance of which would only be revealed in the course of 1952. He therefore hoped that it might be possible to take a final decision on the agenda at a later stage, and indicated that his delegation would submit a proposal to that effect.

8. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in deciding whether it should discuss the reports of the specialized agencies in 1952 the Council should bear in mind that, while such discussion was customary, the agreements between the United Nations and the specialized agencies contained no legal commitment to that effect. Moreover, the agenda would, in any case, contain a number of items, such as items 31<sup>1</sup> and 32<sup>2</sup> proposed for the second session, which would enable the Council to consider, either in whole or in part, the work of the specialized agencies.

9. He further felt that the Council should not be strictly bound by the decision taken at that time and that if an emergency situation should arise which would necessitate the consideration of those reports, it would always be possible for the Council to take them up.

10. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) agreed with the USSR representative that the Council was merely establishing an emergency programme to deal with an emergency situation. His delegation had not been entirely logical in the list of items it proposed, since it had suggested retention of consideration of the reports of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund. In order to reach a solution, it would be willing to suggest that the reports of the specialized agencies appear as background documents submitted to the Council to which representatives might refer in the discussion of other items.

11. Mr. ADARKAR (India) said that though the Council might be under no legal obligation to consider the reports of the specialized agencies, he felt that a moral obligation existed. Moreover, little time was usually spent in the consideration of the reports except in the case of one or two on which protracted political debate was likely to take place. If the Council really wished to save time, such political discussions might be avoided.

12. Mr. HESSEL (France) supported the Indian representative's arguments. He further felt that it would be a great pity to omit discussion of the reports of the specialized agencies at that time when the Council was making a special effort to co-ordinate the programmes of the United Nations and those agencies.

13. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) said that when deciding to drop certain items the Council must seriously consider what effect the discarding of those items could have on its work.

14. With regard to paragraph 2 of the USSR proposal, she pointed out that not only was it customary for the Council to examine the reports of the specialized agencies each year, but that that custom was based on reasons of convenience and expediency. It was necessary for the Council to be regularly informed of the work done by each specialized agency. She therefore felt that it would be preferable at that stage not to exclude discussion of the reports, subject to the possibility of excluding them later if necessary, rather than to suppress those items and find it necessary later to reinstate them.

15. Mr. JOHNSON (Canada) was reluctant to see discussion of the reports of the specialized agencies, which was the Council's one opportunity each year of reviewing the agencies' work, removed from its agenda. Such action might establish a serious precedent, and he did not think the emergency was of such a nature as to justify it. Moreover, his experience was that it was always possible, in an international organization, to conclude the work within the time-limit imposed if representatives gave proof of goodwill and presented their views concisely.

16. Mr. TSAO (China) agreed that the reports of the specialized agencies should not be excluded. Some of the most substantial and concrete work in the economic and social fields was done by those agencies and he felt that it should be under constant review by the Council. The last annual report submitted by the Council to the Assembly had been criticized by the Joint Second and Third Committee and the Fifth Committee, even though considerable time had been spent during the thirteenth session in reviewing the reports of the specialized agencies. If the Council did not review those reports in future the results might be even more unsatisfactory.

17. He did not feel that one long session could be equivalent to two shorter ones. If the Council was to do a thorough job, he felt it should follow the procedure of previous years.

18. The PRESIDENT reminded the Council that at the 565th meeting the representative of Chile had proposed that representatives of countries elected to the Council as of 1 January 1952 should be invited to take part in that discussion if they so desired; he therefore asked the Council to take a decision on the proposal.

19. Mr. LUBIN (United States of America) moved that such representatives should be invited to participate in the debate immediately.

*There being no objections, the President announced that the representatives of Argentina, Cuba and Egypt might take part in the debate if they so desired.*

20. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) indicated that if only the items considered unimportant were removed from the agenda, there would be practically no deletions. It was essential to make a real sacrifice. He had found the Council's last session an exceptionally arduous one; the volume of work had been so great that it had not been possible to give many of the items the consideration they merited, even in a session lasting nine weeks. The Council was faced by the funda-

<sup>1</sup> "Relations among the United Nations and the specialized agencies: report of the ACC".

<sup>2</sup> "Programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the economic and social fields . . .".

mental problem of taking up fewer items or of scamping the consideration of the items it did take up. Unless it were to decide to meet, like the Security Council, in semi-continuous session, it would not be possible for it in 1952 to tackle such a large amount of work.

21. Mr. GARCIA (Philippines) said his delegation's views on paragraph 2 of the USSR proposal (E/L.303) were similar to those of the French, Indian and Chinese representatives. He was reluctant to agree that the Council should not consider the reports of the specialized agencies because, in the first place, Article 64, paragraph 1, of the Charter spoke of regular reports, which implied that the latter should be considered by the Council each year. Moreover, the reports of specialized agencies frequently gave grounds for action by the Council in emergency situations. The reports were generally non-controversial and their consideration took up very little of the Council's time. The Council could do much towards co-ordinating the work of the specialized agencies by reviewing their reports. Finally, the reports were, in some cases, of continuing interest; if they were not considered, the Council would have no way of following the results of certain resolutions it had adopted. Thus his delegation would be compelled to vote against the second paragraph of the USSR proposal.

22. Mr. CALDERON PUIG (Mexico) said his country participated actively in the work of the specialized agencies. That work directly reached and benefited the peoples of the world and it was essential that the United Nations should continue it. Moreover, it would scarcely be logical to lay stress on the co-ordination of the work of the specialized agencies and not to review the reports submitted by those agencies. His delegation, therefore, had strong doubts as to the desirability of excluding the consideration of those reports from the Council's agenda. If it were decided to hold only one session of the Council in 1952, he urged that it should be long enough to deal with all important items.

23. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) felt that the proposals made with regard to the Council's work were somewhat radical. He would find it very difficult to support the proposal that the Council should not consider the reports of the specialized agencies, because the work of those agencies was of such importance that the Council could scarcely omit it from its agenda. That work was in direct contact with the interests of many peoples, as could be seen from a mere glance at the programmes of the specialized agencies.

24. Such important problems could not be considered in haste. Besides, the Council was not actually so pressed with regard to its work as had been suggested. His delegation would therefore find it very difficult to support the USSR proposal.

25. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed with the United Kingdom representative that if the criterion for eliminating items from the agenda was to be their importance, it would hardly be possible to discard any, for all were important. The Council would indeed have to make some sacrifice.

26. The representative of France had contended that the co-ordination of the programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies must be discussed in

1952. However, the elimination of the reports of the specialized agencies as separate agenda items would still leave items 31 and 32 to provide an opportunity of reviewing the work of the agencies. The reports could be used as basic documents, informing the Council of the work done by the specialized agencies and their plans for the future. The Philippine representative had said that the reports of the specialized agencies did not as a rule give rise to much discussion. That was an added argument in favour of deleting them from the agenda. In suggesting the elimination of the reports of the specialized agencies, he himself had not taken their relative importance as a criterion. He had rather borne in mind the contractual commitments of the Economic and Social Council. Article 64 of the Charter, quoted by the Philippine representative, made no mention of an undertaking by the Council to consider those reports every year. Regular consideration was not the same as annual consideration and should not be interpreted as such. If the Council had in fact been committed to an annual consideration of the reports, he would not have suggested the deletion of those items. However, there seemed to be a trend of opinion in the Council that the reports should be discussed not as separate items but in connexion with other items, in particular item 32. He hoped that such a compromise would satisfy all parties; the reports would appear in the agenda as additional material and could be discussed in detail if necessary. He had no wish to injure the prestige of the specialized agencies but merely desired to organize the Council's agenda to meet the special situation.

27. Mr. MCDUGALL (Food and Agriculture Organization) said that according to their agreements with the United Nations, the specialized agencies were compelled to submit regular reports. It was for the Council to decide whether or not it wished to discuss the report of the FAO as a separate item, but he wished to warn the Council that if the report of the FAO were discussed in 1953 instead of 1952, it would be somewhat out of date, in view of the fact that the FAO now held biannual conferences, the most recent of which had met in November and December 1951.

28. Mr. DELHAYE (Belgium) admitted that the Charter did not impose any legal obligation on the Council to discuss the reports of the specialized agencies each year. However, it was important for its own work that the Council should examine those reports. The Soviet Union was not greatly interested in the specialized agencies, but the other members of the Economic and Social Council regarded their work as being of fundamental importance. He could not support any proposal to eliminate the reports of the specialized agencies from the agenda.

29. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) said that the discussion had shown that there was substantial agreement on the question of holding a single session of the Economic and Social Council in 1952 in view of the special circumstances occasioned by the late meeting of the General Assembly. The Council must, therefore, discuss possibilities of shortening that session while leaving adequate time for the study of the items retained on the agenda. It was not possible to arrive at an estimate of the time required simply by adding together the time

occupied by the two sessions held in normal circumstances. The problem should be approached from the point of view of eliminating duplicate items and items which could be discussed under other points. The memoranda submitted by the USSR and the United Kingdom thus formed a useful basis for discussion.

30. The problem of the reports of the specialized agencies, referred to in the memoranda, had been discussed at length. In that connexion, he believed that the interpretation placed on Article 64 of the Charter by the Philippine representative was quite incorrect. Article 64 imposed an obligation on the specialized agencies to submit reports and on the United Nations to receive them, but no mention was made of an annual review. In normal circumstances, the Polish delegation would not oppose the discussion of those reports, but 1952 was not an ordinary year. It was very seldom that the Economic and Social Council was called upon to take any action in regard to them and its usual practice was merely to take note of them. The fact that the reports were not discussed as separate items would not mean that the Council would be unable to refer to and study them, and make proposals for any action that might be required. If any special action was needed, items 31 and 32 gave ample opportunity for discussion of the reports. He therefore supported the view that the circumstances of 1952 made it inadvisable to discuss the reports of the specialized agencies as separate agenda items.

31. He supported the other suggestions that had been made to relate, combine or postpone other items on the provisional agenda. He was not adopting any general stand on the question of holding a single session of the Economic and Social Council, but felt that the proposal to do so in 1952 was justified by the abnormal situation.

32. The PRESIDENT reminded the Council that the work of the resumed thirteenth session should be completed before the end of 1951. If it were not, it would be necessary to call a special meeting, since the composition of the Council would have changed. He read to the Council the relevant passages of General Assembly resolution 125 (II) and resolution 128 (VI) of the Economic and Social Council, concerning the co-ordination of specialized agencies and the work programmes of the United Nations and specialized agencies.

33. Mr. GARCIA (Philippines) explained that when he had said that the reports of the specialized agencies were in general non-controversial, he had meant that their discussion was usually an occasion for a constructive atmosphere in the Council and an absence of political dispute. Article 64, paragraph 1, of the Charter spoke of regular reports and the Charter obviously meant the Council to consider those reports regularly. But paragraph 2 of Article 64 said that it could indicate its observations on those reports to the General Assembly, and provision was made in Article 20 for regular annual sessions of the General Assembly. It was obvious, therefore, that the Charter intended the reports to be considered annually. It had been the custom of the Council to consider them every year and that custom should be continued. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization had pointed out that his agency's report would be out of date if it was

deferred to 1953, and the same applied to the reports of other specialized agencies.

34. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) said that it was important for the proper discharge of the functions of the Economic and Social Council that its agenda should not be overcrowded. The United Kingdom regarded the work of the specialized agencies as being of great value and it was not the relative importance of their reports which had led the United Kingdom to suggest that they should be deleted from the agenda. It had been moved simply by the urgency of the situation.

35. He therefore made a formal proposal that instead of the reports being listed as independent items of the agenda, they should be listed as basic documents for use in connexion with other relevant subjects. It would be open to delegations to discuss those reports in relation to other items. He hoped that that would prove an acceptable solution both to the members of the Council and the specialized agencies.

36. The PRESIDENT said that such a procedure would leave the provisional agenda undecided. The reports of the specialized agencies had been used before as a basis for discussion in items such as economic development. He felt, however, that the items to which the reports were to be related should be specified, and pointed out that the reports of certain specialized agencies such as the Universal Postal Union and the World Meteorological Organization were not connected with any particular items on the agenda.

37. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) said that it had been the intention of his delegation to leave it to members to decide to what particular agency reports they wished to refer in connexion with related items on the agenda. If it were necessary to be more specific, he would suggest for instance that the reports of the Bank and of the Fund might be listed under the item on the world economic situation, and the report of the IRO under the item concerning migration. Those reports having no clear relationship to any particular item could be listed under item 31 of the proposed agenda for the fifteenth session.

38. Mr. CHHATARI (Pakistan) emphasized the importance attached by his delegation to the activities of the specialized agencies. He could not therefore agree with the United Kingdom proposal which would eliminate detailed and separate consideration of each report. He agreed, however, that delegations should be urged to use their discretion in order to keep their statements on the reports as concise as possible.

39. His delegation did not hold any rigid view on whether the Council should hold one or two sessions in the coming year. It was prepared to agree to a single session provided that a second session would be held if the draft International Covenant on Human Rights were not completed.

40. Mr. GRAFSTROM (Sweden) said that agreement could not be reached on the deletion of items on the basis of their importance since all items obviously were important. He felt that the proposal made by the United Kingdom delegation to leave discussion of the

reports of the specialized agencies to the discretion of delegations might, in the light of previous experience, yield disappointing results.

41. It was essential for the Council to evolve a procedure for establishing its agenda since the present discussion on one particular item did not seem to point the way to agreement.

42. Mr. ADARKAR (India) felt that if, in fact, it was decided to hold only a single session, it was desirable for the Council to agree on a certain assumption as to the length of its 1952 session. He believed that, following the deletion of items involving duplication and of those on which unanimous agreement would be reached for postponement, a session lasting some ten weeks and comprising some sixty items would appear advisable.

43. He requested the United Kingdom representative to withdraw his proposal as he did not think the reports of the specialized agencies would be satisfactorily dealt with under that procedure.

44. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should continue to discuss the question of holding one or two sessions in 1952 simultaneously with the question of the agenda, since general agreement did not exist as to which of those two questions should be voted on first.

45. Mr. HESSEL (France) introduced a proposal submitted by his delegation (E/L.305) which sought to achieve a compromise between the principle of holding two sessions of the Council each year devoted to economic and to social problems respectively and the valuable considerations raised in the USSR proposal. Accordingly, the final agenda of the fourteenth session would be agreed upon by the Council at the present stage whereas the agenda of the fifteenth session would only be established at the end of the fourteenth session since his delegation felt that others were no doubt in a similar position of being unable to take a decision on the final deletion of some items at the present juncture, as the situation in respect of various items might well change within the coming months. A decision on the United Kingdom proposal to list the reports of the specialized agencies as basic documents could also be postponed until then.

46. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) believed that the United Kingdom proposal to leave discussion of the reports of the specialized agencies to the discretion of delegations might in point of fact give rise to duplication of discussion and even to a measure of confusion in the debate. His delegation maintained its view that the reports of the specialized agencies should remain as separate items on the agenda. It would minimize the extreme importance of the activities of the specialized agencies if note were not taken of those reports in individual resolutions. Moreover, a decision not to consider the reports as separate items would give rise to the possibility of consideration of the future programmes of the specialized agencies being overlooked.

47. Mr. ADARKAR (India) considered that if the Council was to profit from the present discussion, some understanding must first be reached as to whether one

or two sessions would be held and as to the length of those sessions. If only one session were held, he did not think it should be a brief one, as the USSR representative had advocated, since there were certain items which should not be postponed.

48. Mr. JOHNSON (Canada) also considered it essential for some prior decision to be arrived at regarding the holding of one or two sessions and the length of such sessions.

49. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that although his delegation's proposal to hold only a single session in 1952 was of a formal character, the memorandum submitted by his delegation was in the nature of preliminary suggestions and he was fully prepared to consider any alternative proposals which would be applicable to a single session. He had never implied that the single session should necessarily be a brief one. The duration of such a session would be contingent on the items adopted. In the light of conversations he had had with other representatives, approximately eight weeks would appear to be the desirable length of time. However, he felt that the session should on no account be any longer.

50. He emphasized the fact that participation or non-participation in the activities of the specialized agencies was completely extraneous to the issue under consideration in respect of the inclusion of consideration of the reports of those agencies in the agenda. His delegation would be prepared to consider the deletion of other items from the agenda in their place if the Council so desired. He could not agree with the interpretation given to Article 64 by the Philippines representative; but he believed that the task of the Council was not to study interpretations of the Charter but rather to reach agreement on the agenda. In that connexion, he thought that the United Kingdom proposal was one which should meet general approval.

51. Although he was prepared to vote at the present meeting on the question of the 1952 session or sessions of the Council, he thought it would be useful if all delegations could before the next meeting submit their views on the items which they considered might be deleted from the agenda and if the Secretariat could prepare a working paper thereon. Such a procedure should considerably facilitate a decision.

52. Mr. LUBIN (United States of America) said that his delegation shared the views on the consideration of the reports of the specialized agencies which had been expressed by the representatives of the Philippines, Uruguay, Mexico and Belgium. Although he fully realized the difficulties of a practical nature facing the majority of delegations, it was nevertheless essential that the importance of the items in the provisional agenda and, consequently, the responsibilities of the Council, should be borne in mind before taking the time factor into consideration. Once agreement on the final agenda had been reached on the basis of a full realization of the Council's duties, ways and means could then be found of dealing with all those items in the course of the session, even if that involved a longer session.

53. The PRESIDENT believed that the discussion at the present meeting had clearly pointed to the need for taking a decision first of all, at the next meeting, on the USSR proposal to hold a single session in 1952. The length and date of the session would then be decided following agreement as to the items to be included in the agenda. In accordance with the suggestion made by the USSR representative, he requested delegations to submit their views on the deletion of specific items to the Secretariat so that a working paper might be drawn up for the next meeting.

54. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom), supported by Mr. GRAFSTROM (Sweden), suggested that, before rising, the Council should proceed to a vote on the question of the holding of one or two sessions in 1952.

55. Mr. LUBIN (United States of America), supported by Mr. ADARKAR (India), opposed voting on that issue at the present meeting since he did not think that should influence the expression of views by delegations on the retention or deletion of items in the agenda.

56. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the United Kingdom proposal to vote on the holding of one or two sessions in 1952 at the present meeting.

*The United Kingdom proposal was rejected, there being 7 votes in favour and 7 against.*

57. The PRESIDENT announced that a vote on that issue would be held at the beginning of the next meeting.

58. Mr. CHHATARI (Pakistan) stated that, in accordance with rule 16 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, his delegation would propose the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the present session relating to the entry of Japan as an associate member of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.

59. The PRESIDENT said that inclusion of the item would be considered after the Council had completed its present agenda.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.