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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 45th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 29 July 1999, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia)
(Vice-President)

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The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (continued)

The PRESIDENT invited the representative of Chile to introduce draft decision E/1999/L.51, entitled “Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees”.

Mr. TAPIA (Chile), introducing the draft decision on behalf of the Governments of the Republic of Korea and Chile, said that both countries, which were parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, were committed to the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In recent years the Republic of Korea had considerably increased its financial contributions to the High Commissioner's Programme. Chile, whose tradition of asylum was well known in Latin America, had recently concluded an agreement with UNHCR for the resettlement in Chile of families of refugees from the former Yugoslavia. The sponsors wished to continue their cooperation with UNHCR, and hoped that the members of the Council would adopt draft decision E/1999/L.51 by consensus.

INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS (continued) (E/1999/60 and Add.1)

Recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century” on its second session

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft resolution entitled “Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly entitled ‘Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century’”, contained in document E/1999/60 (chapter I, A).

The draft resolution was adopted.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft decision entitled “Report of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled ‘Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century’ on its second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the third session of the Preparatory Committee”, contained in document E/1999/60.

The draft decision was adopted.

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 50/227 AND 52/12 B
(continued)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on draft resolution E/1999/L.46 entitled “Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields and cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions”, which he had submitted as a result of informal consultations.

Draft resolution E/1999/L.46 was adopted.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should take note of the Note by the Secretariat entitled “Special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, held on 29 April 1999”, contained in document E/1999/78.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 8.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND
THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS
(continued)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on draft resolution E/1999/L.34 entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations”.

He announced that Algeria, the Comoros, Angola and Côte d'Ivoire had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

A vote was taken by roll-call on draft resolution E/1999/L.34.

Zambia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia,
Comoros, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Honduras, India, Indonesia,
Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan,
Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic,
Turkey, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Zambia.

Against: None

Abstaining: Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

Draft resolution E/1999/L.34 was adopted by 29 votes to none, with 17 abstentions.

Mrs. KING (United States) said that the respective mandates of the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies fully encompassed the requirements incumbent on those organizations in the area of non-self-governing territories. It was unnecessary and undesirable for the Council to attempt to provide supplementary guidance in that area. Furthermore, it was inappropriate for the Council to attempt to link the work of the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 9.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION ON THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING JERUSALEM, AND THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN (continued)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on draft resolution E/1999/L.32 entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”. He announced that Comoros, Cuba, Djibouti and Pakistan had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mr. BENTURA (Observer for Israel) said that rights over natural resources and other issues mentioned in draft resolution E/1999/L.32 were covered extensively in the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, signed on 28 September 1995. The new Government of Israel was determined to reach a final peace settlement with the Palestinians, leading towards a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The draft resolution in question aimed to predetermine the outcome of issues to be directly negotiated between the parties themselves. It was politically-motivated, discriminatory towards Israel and superfluous, and any delegation supporting peace should vote against it.

Mr. RAMLAWI (Observer for Palestine) said that the problems mentioned in draft resolution E/1999/L.32 represented the living situation of the Palestinian people today.

New settlements continued to be built, despite warnings by the Palestinian Authority that they were not only a violation of international law but an obstacle to peace. The remarks of the observer for Israel were for the time being mere intentions. He therefore invited the members of the Council to adopt draft resolution E/1999/L.32.

At the request of the delegation of the United States of America, a vote was taken by roll-call on draft resolution E/1999/L.32.

Gambia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Algeria, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, France, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: El Salvador, Honduras and Zambia.

Draft resolution E/1999/L.32 was adopted by 44 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.

Mrs. KING (United States of America) said it was regrettable that the Council had found nothing more to contribute to the prospects for peace than rhetoric which was entirely out of step with rapidly emerging developments in the region. Besides being misguided, draft resolution E/1999/L.32 was discriminatory towards one of the parties. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as the principle of land for peace, remained the sole basis for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region.

Mr. DEMBRI (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, thanked all the delegations which had voted for a text which was in the interest of peace between two great peoples, namely the Israelis and the Palestinians. The time had come to give a mistreated people the chance to build a house of peace for all. The resolution was a promising sign of the future for everyone, including the international community, which endeavoured constantly to achieve collective security.

Mr. SCHALIN (Observer for Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania,

Norway and Poland, welcomed the intention of the new Government of Israel to implement existing agreements and relaunch the peace process in the Middle East. He hoped the positive developments in the situation would lead to concrete improvements in economic and social conditions in the occupied territories, in which case the need for a resolution such as the one just adopted might be revisited.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS (continued):

- (h) INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION
(continued) (E/1999/L.44)

The PRESIDENT invited the observer for Guyana to introduce draft resolution E/1999/L.44 entitled “International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements”.

Mrs. ELLIOTT (Observer for Guyana), introducing draft resolution E/1999/L.44 on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by Armenia, said that its text had been approved in informal consultations by consensus; she hoped it would be adopted without a vote.

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued):

- (a) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (E/1999/L.41)

Mr. AL-BALUSHI (Oman) said that if his delegation had been present during the vote on draft resolution II, entitled “Palestinian women”, contained in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/1999/27), it would have voted in favour.

The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to take action on draft resolution E/1999/L.41 entitled “Revitalization of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women”. He said that Guyana, the sponsor of the draft resolution, had proposed some amendments to the text which had been approved in informal consultations. After the third preambular paragraph, a new preambular paragraph 3 bis should be inserted, to read: “Underlining the importance of research and training for the advancement of women,” and in the eighth preambular paragraph the words “continue the streamlined structure of the Institute” should be replaced by “reorganize the structure of the Institute” and the word “exclusively” should be deleted. In paragraph 2, the words “of the United Nations” should be inserted after the words “interested States”, subparagraph (b) should be amended to read: “Each training and research activity should be structured in projects that are to be financed and managed separately”, subparagraph (c) should read: “New technologies should be used for training, research and communications” and subparagraph (d) should read: “Its Web site should

be developed to include categorizing and making accessible third party gender research projects, thereby also providing a channel to include the results of these projects in United Nations policy-making for the advancement of women;”. In paragraph 3 (a) the word “immediately” should be replaced by “as expeditiously as possible”, and in paragraph 3 (c) the words “of the United Nations” should be inserted after the expression “interested States”. Lastly, the beginning of paragraph 6 should read: “Further urges States of the United Nations”.

Draft resolution E/1999/L.41, as orally amended, was adopted.

Mr. REYES RODRIGUEZ (Cuba), speaking as a sponsor of the initial text, endorsed the draft resolution but expressed concern at the absence of clearly-defined criteria for providing the Institute with financial stability. Other amendments to the text might jeopardize the independence of the Institute’s Board of Trustees vis-à-vis donor countries. In the framework of consideration of the Secretary-General’s report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, his delegation would endeavour to ensure that the Institute was given stable financial resources and the means to conduct an independent policy.

Mr. HERNANDEZ-BASAVE (Mexico) said that his delegation, a sponsor of the draft resolution, hoped that the financing mechanisms to be proposed in the Secretary-General’s report to the General Assembly would lead to the stability and long-term success of the Institute’s activities.

(h) HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (E/1999/L.45 and E/1999/L.47)

Mr. SCHALIN (Observer for Finland) introduced draft resolution E/1999/L.45 entitled “Applicability of the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations in the case of Dato’ Param Kumaraswamy as Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the independence of judges and lawyers” on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Norway. He proposed that a new paragraph 3 should be added, to read: “Takes note of the letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Council contained in document E/1999/49/Add.1”, and that existing paragraph 3 should become paragraph 4. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

Mr. RYTÖVUORI (Observer for Finland) introduced, on behalf of the European Union, document E/1999/L.47 entitled “Proposed amendments to the draft decision contained in the annex to E/1999/L.19”, containing a proposal to hold two additional extraordinary sessions of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, on the understanding that the sessions would be funded from the regular budget. Nevertheless, he

doubted whether increasing the number of meetings was the only way to address the problem of the treaty bodies' backlog; more fundamental reforms of their methods of work were needed. He hoped the proposed amendments would be adopted without a vote.

The PRESIDENT announced that the programme budget implications of the proposal were indicated in document E/1999/L.55.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS (continued):

- (e) CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS (E/1999/L.18, Corr.1 and Add.1, E/1999/110)

Mr. BUNCH (Chief, Central Planning and Coordination Service) introduced the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields for 2000 and 2001 (E/1999/L.18, Corr.1 and Add.1) and the letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences to the President of the Economic and Social Council relating thereto (E/1999/110). The Council had already adopted decisions on the requests contained in paragraphs 7, subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c), of document E/1999/L.18. It had also renewed the mandates of the working groups listed in paragraph 8 of document L.18, with the exception of the working group of intergovernmental experts of the Commission on Human Rights on the human rights of migrants (subparagraph (c)), as stated in document E/1999/L.18/Add.1. He also wished to make some clarifications and amendments concerning the calendar of United Nations conferences and meetings for 2000 (E/1999/L.18, annex, sect. A). Concerning entry 8, the proposed dates for the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Forum on Forests would be approved when the Council adopted the calendar. Concerning entries 24 and 25, he said that the Commission on the Status of Women would hold its forty-fourth session from 28 February to 10 March (rather than from 6 to 17 March) and that the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly would meet from 13 to 17 March (rather than 20 to 24 March), in order not to clash with the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights, which would be held from 20 March to 27 April, as stated in document E/1999/L.18/Add.1. Lastly, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development would meet from 22 to 25 February.

The provisional calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields for 2000 and 2001, as orally amended, was adopted.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.