

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

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THIRD COMMITTEE

43rd meeting

held on

Tuesday, 9 November 1976

at 10.30 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. von KYAW (Federal Republic of Germany)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/31/SR.43
11 November 1976

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 79: NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/10166; A/31/199; A/C.3/31/L.17/Rev.1) (continued)

1. Mrs. SIBAL (India) drew attention to revised draft resolution A/C.3/31/L.17/Rev.1, and pointed out that, owing to a technical error, the names of Cyprus and Denmark had been omitted from the list of sponsors. She also drew attention to the changes which the revised draft resolution introduced in the second, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, tenth and eleventh preambular paragraphs and in paragraph 2, and pointed out that, in the fifth preambular paragraph, the word "of" should be inserted before the words "forms of ownership of land".

2. The CHAIRMAN announced that Finland had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/31/L.17/Rev.1.

AGENDA ITEM 69: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (A/C.3/31/7, A/C.3/31/8; E/5813; A/31/151 (S/12144), A/31/178 (S/12179)) (continued)

(b) REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (A/10018; A/31/18; A/C.3/31/L.18 and L.20) (continued)

3. Mr. BAHNEV (Bulgaria), presenting his preliminary views on the subject, said that his delegation was pleased to note that the discussion of the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (A/10018 and A/31/18) provided a further opportunity to return to the problem of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination in connexion with the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

4. The Special Study on Racial Discrimination in the Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Spheres, prepared by Mr. Santa Cruz, called racial discrimination a denial of equality, and emphasized that the reason for the emergence and existence of racial discrimination was the desire for profits, advantages and privileges which made discrimination one of the most blatant forms of domination and exploitation. Consequently, slavery and colonialism were inevitably accompanied by the introduction of prejudices and racial discrimination.

5. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination proceeded from the premise that the United Nations Charter embodied the principles of human dignity and equality. That Convention occupied an important place in the system of international norms aimed at promoting respect for human rights. On the one hand, it represented a concrete formulation of the general provisions governing equality and non-discrimination embodied in article 2 of each of the two International Covenants on Human Rights; and, on the other hand,

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(Mr. Bahnev, Bulgaria)

it was a more general document on the elimination of racial discrimination than the conventions elaborated by such bodies as ILO and UNESCO. The Convention defined racial discrimination and provided that its elimination should be based on the principles of equality and equal enjoyment by all persons of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields. It concerned the obligations of States in the political, economic, social, cultural and all other fields, as could be seen from the scope of article 5. He drew attention in that connexion to the fundamental obligations set forth in article 2, on which the more detailed provisions of article 5 were based.

6. During the period covered by its reports, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination not only had considered the reports of States parties concerning legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which gave effect to the provisions of the Convention, but had also helped promote a spirit of co-operation between the Committee and the Governments that had submitted the reports by drawing attention to the desirability for new information under one provision of the Convention or another. Most Governments submitting reports had begun to send representatives to the meetings of the Committee in order to explain the provisions of the relevant report and to present additional information. Such co-operation was extremely useful. His Government, too, had established the closest co-operation with that Committee.

7. During consideration of the fourth periodic report of Bulgaria, it had been stressed that there was no racial discrimination in that country. The Constitution of the Republic established that all citizens were equal before the law, and prohibited any privileges or limitations of rights based on nationality, origin, religion, sex, race, education, social or property status. All speakers had noted that the report attested to Bulgaria's steadfast opposition to racial discrimination both within the country and at the international level.

8. In its decision 4 (XI), adopted in commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the defeat of nazism and fascism, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had noted the persistence in some parts of the world of racism and vestiges of those ideologies, based essentially on racism and racial discrimination, and had reminded the States parties concerned of their obligations to adopt measures to put an end to the manifestations of such ideologies. At its fourteenth session, as noted in document A/31/18, paragraph 268, the Committee had expressed its deep concern at the events which had taken place in South Africa in the summer of 1976, when human beings demonstrating for equal social, economic and political rights had been met with bullets, and had expressed its solidarity with the just cause of those struggling for racial equality and tolerance in South Africa.

9. His delegation fully supported the readiness expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to contribute in a practical way to the realization of the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and other decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on that question. The Committee had considered that question at its eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth sessions. Among the proposals put

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(Mr. Bahnev, Bulgaria)

forward, he drew attention to the recommendations for the inclusion in the agenda of the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination of an item concerning the International Convention, for the organization of a seminar in connexion with the Convention and its implementation, and for the study of considerations impeding the ratification of the Convention by States Members of the United Nations that had not yet done so.

10. His delegation considered that the General Assembly should highly commend the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for the period under review. Any resolution drafted by the Third Committee at the current session should, inter alia, draw attention to the fact that States parties to the Convention had undertaken to adopt immediate legislative and other effective measures in the fields of education and information with a view to the eradication and prevention of the dissemination of and incitement to racial discrimination or hatred both within their own countries and at the international level; should express solidarity with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in the just struggle of peoples against the racist régimes in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Namibia; and should invite all States not yet parties to the Convention to ratify or adhere to it. In that connexion, his delegation took the view that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination should direct its activities towards ensuring that the Convention became truly universal.

11. His delegation, which attached great importance to those questions, was ready to co-operate with all delegations in the formulation of the appropriate wording for such a resolution.

12. Mr. FAURIS (France) noted that many States Members of the United Nations were not parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and were therefore not concerned with the procedure the results of which the Third Committee was now considering and which was set forth in article 9 of the Convention. That procedure was an eminently reliable one, given the objectivity, impartiality and respect for legality shown by the members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: the States parties often sent representatives to explain, before that Committee, the various national measures adopted to give effect to the Convention. His delegation welcomed that spirit of co-operation. In the field of human rights, such a strictly juridical approach was not very common. It was essential to preserve such confidence by avoiding any outside interference that might jeopardize those excellent arrangements and practices.

13. Commenting on the two reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (A/10018 and A/31/18), he said that his delegation appreciated the concision, clarity of expression, moderate tone and tact characterizing the way in which awkward problems had been dealt with. The Committee deserved to be commended for the orderly juridical approach, balance and courtesy reflected in its two reports.

14. He noted that, in their reports, the States parties took care to emphasize the degree to which the relevant provisions in force in their countries conformed with their obligations under articles 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Convention. Nevertheless, States parties still found loopholes all too frequently, generally on the ground

(Mr. Fauris, France)

that since there was no racial discrimination in their territories it had not been necessary to adopt special legislative measures to prohibit discrimination. That refusal to consider the problem was precisely what the authors of the Convention had sought to avoid. Even if the de facto situation was satisfactory, that did not obviate the need to enact legislation which established a de jure situation in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. No State was free from manifestations of racism, and national measures should provide the opportunity for dealing with such manifestations if they were to arise. The measures envisaged under the Convention were intended to prevent as well as to penalize such manifestations; States parties were not absolved, in the absence of acute manifestations of racial discrimination, from the obligation to adopt such measures.

15. That consideration had motivated legislators in France. The anti-racist law of 1972 explicitly protected all persons and all groups of persons from defamation and insult based on racial, ethnic or national origin. Under it, anti-racist associations were entitled to bring an action, with the victim's agreement, and to exercise the rights of the plaintiff.

16. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expected the information that it requested under article 9 of the Convention to outline the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures adopted which gave effect to the Convention.

17. The Committee's comments could be grouped under a few headings, each corresponding to a category of obligation accepted by the States parties to the Convention.

18. The first heading covered the ideological and philosophical aspect of the problem as defined in articles 3 and 4 of the Convention, namely, the prohibition of all propaganda and all organizations based on ideas or theories of racial superiority. Fortunately, except for the lamentable example of apartheid in southern Africa, modern States were rarely actuated by racist philosophies. He was glad that the Committee had not encountered any case of it in the reports it had examined at its most recent sessions.

19. The second heading concerned the guarantees of the right of everyone, without distinction, to enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms. Article 5 of the Convention was very detailed and gave a list of the rights concerned. For instance, it listed different kinds of rights - the right to equal treatment before the tribunals, the right to security of person and political rights, on the one hand, and a great number of civil rights, on the other, which included the right to freedom of movement and residence, the right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's country, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion and expression, the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, and so forth. If everyone was to enjoy such rights equally without distinction, they must first be recognized and proclaimed, but the legislation of many countries did not do so. If several fundamental rights and freedoms were not formally recognized, how could those countries undertake to ensure that all their citizens should enjoy them equally without distinction? The Committee had underlined that many of the reports from States parties were not explicit enough about the application of article 5.

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(Mr. Fauris, France)

20. The third heading related to article 6 of the Convention, on effective protection and remedies through the competent tribunals. A case in point was the laws on the press, which protected citizens from libel based on their race and permitted anti-racial associations to become plaintiffs and to sue.

21. The fourth category of obligation on which the Committee had commented was that of measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, to combat prejudices leading to racial discrimination. The Committee had asked for clarification with regard to measures in the fields of culture and information in a large number of cases.

22. France should have been among the States parties whose reports had been examined at the Committee's fourteenth session, but owing to problems of translation and reproduction, it had been unable to submit its second and third reports by August 1976. Its reports would therefore be considered at the Committee's fifteenth session, to be held in Vienna in the spring of 1977. France was intending to submit a well-substantiated and explicit report, and it would co-operate to the utmost with the Committee in an atmosphere of trust and orderly procedure.

23. Mr. CAMERON (Australia) said that Australia would be submitting its first report to the Secretary-General under article 9 of the Convention in 1976. It had ratified the Convention on 30 September 1975.

24. He would not comment on the substance of his Government's report, which had not yet been considered by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. He would, however, like to describe the Racial Discrimination Act passed by the Australian Parliament in 1975. That Act, which was directly related to the Convention and was valid throughout the Commonwealth of Australia and its territories, created a Community Relations Council and a Commissioner for Community Relations, whose task was to inquire into alleged infringements of the Act, promote understanding and compliance with the Act and conduct and foster research and educational programmes for the purpose of combating racial discrimination and prejudices that led to racial discrimination, promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among racial and ethnic groups, and propagating the purposes and principles of the Convention.

25. Australia was deeply committed to that Convention and to the success of the machinery set up to administer it, in which it was looking forward to participating. It was fortified in that attitude by its observation of the work of the Committee itself. The Committee's report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session (A/31/18) was an excellent one, for which the Committee deserved commendation. It set out in detail the impartial methodology which the Committee had brought to bear on its task and although it might have worked differently in certain cases, the over-all impression was one of dedication to the purposes of the Convention. His delegation was impressed with the treatment the Committee had given to the national reports and with the work it had done under article 15 of the Convention, relating to dependent territories.

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(Mr. Cameron, Australia)

26. The people of Australia rejected, without qualification, the concept of racial superiority, which could not be justified even in time of war. However, it would be idle to pretend that circumstances and Australian attitudes had not changed since the country's colonization 200 years before, when it had first become a penal colony for the United Kingdom. Speaking as a former Minister for Labour and Immigration, a life-long trade unionist and member of the Australian Labour Party, he outlined the history of the settlement of Australia and its labour problems, showing how the trade union movement in Australia had seen the employers deprive organized labour on many occasions of the advantages it had won. When organized labour had succeeded in establishing minimum wages and working conditions, the employers had often had recourse to the employment of immigrants who could not insist on trade union standards. That had been the case for the Pacific Islanders who had been brought in to Australia as indentured labour to work on the sugar plantations and for the Asian seamen who had deserted their ships to dig for gold and then found themselves without employment when the gold diggings had petered out. Because of the defencelessness of the Islanders and the poverty, family commitments, ethnic isolation and language difficulties of the Asians, they had had no option but to work for longer hours and lower wages than their Australian counterparts. Seeing their working standards collapsing, the Australian working men had become increasingly resentful of the groups that were underselling them on the labour market, and organized labour had sought to protect itself by agitating for the control of immigration and the repatriation of indentured labour. Some unions had even excluded non-Europeans from membership and at one period, the Australian Labour Party had actually written into its political platform a plank calling for a "white Australia". He was glad to say that that phrase no longer found a place in any political platform in Australia. In the Great Depression, white migrants from the United Kingdom and southern Europe had become the unwilling victims of employer exploitation in their turn, and the resentment which the Australian workers had previously felt towards the Pacific Islanders and the Asian workers had then been turned against them.

27. As in earlier years, the resentment against their competitors had been based purely upon economic grounds and had had nothing to do with racial prejudice based on feelings of racial superiority. That had been true also of the their animosity to the various ethnic groups driven from their work by the labour disputes in the United States iron and steel industry. However resentful of their competitors the Australian workers had been, they had rejected the concept of racial superiority and still rejected it; all men were equally entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

28. During his tenure of office as Australia's Minister for Labour and Immigration, he had always looked for opportunities to translate Australian public opinion into law. In that period Australia had ratified and taken active steps to implement the International Labour Organisation's Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention No. 111.

29. The exclusion of non-Europeans from trade union membership was no longer seen as the answer to the exploitation of labour. Federal labour laws in Australia now prohibited the practice of limiting union membership to persons of European or Aboriginal stock, but it had not been until he had intervened personally that

(Mr. Cameron, Australia)

that last vestige of racial discrimination had in fact been struck from the books of trade union rules. At one time, the law in Australia had permitted Industrial Tribunals to fix lower wage rates for Aborigines than those applicable to other workers and there had been different systems of social welfare payments to Aborigines. None of those differences now existed; they should never have been tolerated in the first instance.

30. Returning to the question of immigration, he said that Australia was suffering its highest level of unemployment since the Great Depression, with about 4.4 per cent of the total work force unemployed. Australia had a great and growing surplus of unskilled and semi-skilled workers; at the same time it was suffering from an acute shortage of certain categories of tradesmen, technicians and skilled professionals. It could be said that to a very large extent the employment opportunities for Australia's unskilled workers depended upon its capacity to train or recruit skilled workers from overseas.

31. As Minister for Labour and Immigration, he had recognized those realities by establishing guidelines for the recruitment of migrants which stipulated the kinds of skills that corresponded to the categories of labour in short supply and he had sent missions to the Philippines and to Latin America to explore recruitment possibilities in those countries. Provided that the migrants were medically fit and were not criminals or drug traffickers, Australia welcomed qualified workers and their families irrespective of nationality, race, colour or creed.

32. Only a very few countries had a surplus of trained labour, which was the class of labour most needed by the developing countries; therefore Australia's gain would be the developing countries' loss. At the same time, Australia's natural resources and employment opportunities were so limited that even if it were prepared to opt for a policy of open-ended immigration, the over-all benefit to the rest of the world's labour force would be infinitesimal, but such a policy would destroy for all time the living standards established by working men and women of all nationalities in Australia.

33. Mr. van DONGEN (Netherlands) said that the elimination of racial discrimination was a prerequisite for the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was an indispensable instrument for keeping a close watch on the progress made in realizing the objectives set forth in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Netherlands had become a party to that Convention in 1971 and had taken a particular interest in the work of the Committee since that time. It had followed the Committee's examination of the country reports and noted that it had been successful in its efforts to achieve a yet higher degree of sophistication in its examining methods. The Committee was performing its functions in a most commendable manner. The Netherlands Government appreciated the thoroughness and objectivity with which its own second periodic report had been scrutinized by the Committee in April 1975.

34. Various international instruments set up machinery to keep human rights situations under surveillance and to hear complaints by States or individuals. A

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(Mr. van Dongen, Netherlands)

find example of such machinery was to be found in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. That machinery was a committee of independent experts, provided with biennial reports by the States parties to the Convention and having the right to receive communications from both States and individuals. It seemed uniquely equipped to carry out the assignment entrusted to it but the reality was slightly different. After seven years and some 90 ratifications, the Committee was still deprived of a major instrument provided for in article 14 of the Convention which would permit it to receive and consider communications from individuals and groups within its jurisdiction. Only five States of the 10 required under paragraph 9 of that article had thus far made the declaration authorizing the Committee to do so. His Government attached great importance to the right of individual petition. The adoption by the Third Committee of draft resolution A/C.3/31/L.3 on the status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination with the additional paragraph appealing to States parties to the Convention to study the possibility of making the declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention proposed by Uruguay in its amendment (A/C.3/31/L.6) had given his Government the hope that the Committee would be able to exercise its mandate under article 14 in the foreseeable future.

35. His Government welcomed the dialogue that had been established over the years between the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the States parties to the Convention. However there was still room for improvement. It was clear from the Committee's two reports (A/10018 and A/31/L.8) now before the Third Committee that a sizable number of States failed to submit their periodic reports in time, although there had been a notable improvement in that respect in 1976 compared with 1975. His Government shared the Committee's concern on that point and hoped that the States parties would do their utmost to respect the time-limit laid down in the Convention. The dialogue between the Committee and the reporting States might be intensified if a national representative was present at the meeting of the Committee at which his country's report was considered, as provided in rule 64 (a) of the provisional rules of procedure.

36. It would be a fair criticism of the country reports to say that the information provided tended to emphasize positive rather than negative developments. In order to counterbalance that trend, the members of the Committee might benefit from the knowledge and experience not only of ILO and UNESCO, but also of non-governmental organizations, which often provided useful and pertinent materials. By using all available sources of information, the Committee would be able to improve the effectiveness of its work.

37. Mr. CARTAS (Romania) said that the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination set a good example of competence with respect to the working methods that should be adopted for the implementation of international instruments relating to human rights. His delegation was pleased that that Committee as a whole, and individual members separately, had commended Romania's third periodic report for confining itself to relevant measures adopted in the biennium covered by the report without recapitulating information previously submitted and for concentrating on important recent events. One member had said he was pleased that the oral statement by the Romanian representative gave information on administrative measures, thus supplementing the description of legislative measures contained in the report. Similarly, a member had observed that the report testifies to Romania's continued commitment to the promotion of equality and to the excellent manner in which it was discharging its obligations under the Convention. /...

(Mr. Cartas, Romania)

38. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination should be commended for making the national legislation of States parties to the Convention available and thereby contributing to a useful exchange of knowledge. Its experience had also demonstrated the importance of efficient scheduling and preparation of meetings devoted to the examination of States' reports and of the participation of their representatives because those representatives were clearly the persons best qualified to supplement orally the data supplied by the reports and to give informed and competent answers to legitimate questions.

39. His delegation was confident that the Third Committee's debates and the resolutions to be adopted would provide useful guidance for the future activity of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and it pledged its full co-operation to ensure the success of those activities.

40. Mr. AL-HUSSAMY (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country was a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and had regularly submitted the reports required under the provisions of article 9. Its fourth periodic report was not before the Committee because its submission had been delayed. Without repeating his country's well-known position on racial discrimination as expressed in its previous reports, he wished to stress that Syria's Constitution and laws categorically prohibited all racial discrimination.

41. As his country's fourth periodic report stated, the occupation of Syrian Arab territory by the Zionists continued to prevent Syria from fulfilling its commitment to end all forms of racial discrimination on its territory. He wished to draw attention to the fact that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had not only expressed approval of Syria's previous reports, but had also indicated that it shared Syria's concern that foreign occupation had prevented it from fulfilling its obligations under the Convention.

42. The occupying forces in the Golan Heights belonged to a Zionist régime which was not a party to the Convention and which had refused to accede to it or to comply with its provisions. Those forces were pursuing the policy of expelling the Arab inhabitants and replacing them with communities created exclusively for Jewish residents, in flagrant violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions. Israel's policy was proof of the innate racism of the Zionist régime, whose very legal structure was based on elevating racial discrimination to the level of a religion and making it the responsibility of the State. Its law of return and its laws relating to nationality and property were segregationist laws forcibly applied in Syrian territory. The best way to ensure the implementation of human rights in the Golan Heights was to compel the Israeli forces to withdraw and to demand restoration of the rights of the Arabs to return to their homes.

43. Mr. MERKEL (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his country's commitment to the elimination of racial discrimination everywhere had been demonstrated by its early ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and by its conscientious implementation of the

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(Mr. Merkel, Federal Republic
of Germany)

provisions of that instrument. It remained convinced of the special importance of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination as an effective instrument to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination within the territories of the States parties to the Convention. It regarded that Committee as an independent body whose competence derived exclusively from the Convention. It shared that Committee's desire to contribute to the implementation of the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and to the preparation of the agenda of the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, provided that no alien element was incorporated into the Programme for the Decade. It welcomed thorough examination of the reports submitted to the Committee by States parties as long as the Committee applied the same criteria to all of them.

44. His delegation felt it was essential that the Committee should always remain within the legal framework established by the Convention and in that sense considered draft resolution A/C.3/31/L.18 as acceptable but would have considerable difficulty in accepting the first amendment to it contained in document A/C.3/31/L.20. Article 3 of the Convention stipulated that States parties should undertake to prevent, prohibit and eradicate racial segregation and apartheid in territories under their jurisdiction. The foreign relations of States parties to the Convention were not covered by the provisions of the Convention and the Committee should not be distracted from its main task, which was to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination in territories under the jurisdiction of States parties.

45. It was essential that the Third Committee should strive for the unanimous adoption of a text which could serve to provide the necessary encouragement to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

46. Mrs. TOLEQUET (Central African Republic) said that she wished to reply to rumours which were circulating in the United Nations that her country was about to recognize the so-called Transkei Republic. Such completely unfounded reports were the work of the lackeys of imperialism and a gross falsification of her country's policies, which had always been based on peace, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and the right to self-determination. Her country supported the just struggle of all African peoples to free themselves from colonialism and would never recognize a policy of separate development which actually perpetuated subjugation by granting sham independence to non-viable entities. The Transkei was a reflection of the racial discrimination which had been condemned by the international community and no peace-loving State could accept such a mockery of human dignity. The Central African Republic condemned it and would never recognize such a fiction.

47. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) announced that Liberia had ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

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48. Mrs. BEN AMI (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that her delegation took strong exception to the statement made by the representative of Syria and reserved its right of reply to the allegations contained in that statement.

AGENDA ITEM 72: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (E/CN.5/512/Rev.1 (ST/ESA/24); A/31/198; A/C.3/31/L.21) (continued)

49. The CHAIRMAN invited the United States representative to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/31/L.21.

50. Ms. PIKER (United States of America) said that the draft resolution which her delegation had submitted was strictly a procedural one and was concerned with the continued issuance of the Report on the World Social Situation. The first preambular paragraph recalled only one of a number of relevant resolutions. It did not mention General Assembly resolution 1916 (XVIII), which requested the Secretary-General to undertake far-reaching studies in the social field. Instead, it recalled General Assembly resolution 2215 (XXI) because that resolution requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the periodic reports on the world social situation reflected the over-all social situation and social trends in different regions of the world and in countries with different economic and social systems, taking into account the close interrelation between economic and social factors, which was a matter of particular concern to the Third Committee.

51. The Report on the World Social Situation, the only such report prepared by the United Nations, was an objective reflection of actual conditions in the world and provided a reliable tool for social planners. It was therefore important that such a report should continue to appear. Her delegation welcomed all observations regarding it but hoped that the draft resolution would be approved by consensus.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.