



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Resumed Forty-eighth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

1692nd meeting

Wednesday, 27 May 1970,
at 11.05 a.m.

NEW YORK

*President: Mr. J. B. P. MARAMIS (Indonesia).**Request for the inclusion of an additional
item in the agenda*

1. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) proposed under rule 17 of the rules of procedure that the Council should include in its agenda an additional item entitled: "Natural disaster in Romania and Hungary". In the wake of heavy rainstorms, devastating floods in those countries had caused extensive damage and taken a high toll of lives. The Romanian and Hungarian Governments had taken action and mobilized their armies and peoples. The Council should express its sympathy to the delegations and Governments of the two countries and do all it could to help them. His Government had expressed its readiness to provide all necessary aid. If the Council agreed to include the item in its agenda, his delegation intended to submit a draft resolution on the subject.

2. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia), Mr. CREMIN (Ireland), Mr. BRECKENRIDGE (Ceylon), Mr. CALOVSKI (Yugoslavia), Mr. YEVDOKHEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan), Mr. PHILON (Greece), Mr. OLDS (United States of America), Mr. HAMBRO (Norway), Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan), Mr. JHA (India), Mr. PAOLINI (France), Mr. ALZAMORA TRAVERSO (Peru), Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom), Mr. KITI (Kenya), Mr. VINCI (Italy), Mr. NAMON (Ghana), Mr. AZEVEDO BRITO (Brazil) and Miss MUTER (Indonesia) asked the President to convey the sympathy of their delegations to the delegations and Governments of Romania and Hungary and supported the Bulgarian proposal to include the item in the Council's agenda.

3. Mr. HILL (Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs), describing the measures already taken by the United Nations, said that the Secretary-General had informed the Romanian Government that the Organization would do its utmost to provide assistance, within the limits of its budgetary resources. The competent officials of the United Nations had held consultations to determine the areas in which they could be of assistance. UNICEF had issued a press release stating that it had dispatched antibiotics to the value of \$15,000 to Romania by air. In that connexion, the United Nations was in close contact with the International Red Cross at Geneva. FAO had announced that it had sent representatives to Romania and would provide assistance from the stocks of the World Food Programme. That was merely an indication of the effort being made by the United Nations system. Delegations could keep abreast of other activities by reading the press release which will be issued.

4. The PRESIDENT also offered condolences to the Romanian and Hungarian delegations. He assumed that the

Council unanimously agreed to the Bulgarian proposal for the inclusion of a new item in its agenda.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Non-governmental organizations (concluded)
(E/4799 and Corr.1 and 2, E/4808, E/4867)

5. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to continue its consideration of chapter III of the report of the Council Committee on Non-governmental Organizations (E/4799 and Corr.1 and 2), which dealt with the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations.

6. Mr. KHANACHET (Kuwait) said that most statements during the previous meeting had drawn attention to the fact that the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations was a tool of Israel and was using the consultative status conferred upon it by the United Nations to further Israel's political interests in the United States and elsewhere.

7. During the last session of the Council Committee on Non-governmental Organizations, his delegation had submitted impressive evidence of Israel's complicity with the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, and more especially with one of its main affiliates, B'nai B'rith. The latter was actively promoting Israeli policy, including massive emigration to Israel. It was scheming on behalf of Israel both at the United Nations and in foreign capitals and organized demonstrations in support of Israel which were in no way connected with the areas with which it was supposedly concerned. Not content with attacking certain countries, the organization had also attacked the United Nations, denigrated its resolutions and accused the Security Council of issuing threats. As the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations was acting as the instrument and agent of the State of Israel, it was obviously not qualified, for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

8. The Israeli Government had recently launched a bond issue designed to strengthen its economy and, especially, its military power so that it could continue to perpetrate its aggression against the Arab countries. B'nai B'rith had been shown to be one of the agents marketing those bonds.

9. Contrary to what was claimed by some, the many humanitarian activities of the organization did not compensate for its criminal undertakings, particularly as it had served as a front for a clandestine spy network acting for Israel. It would be scandalous to grant consultative status to an organization which exploited its association with the United Nations to engage in espionage with impunity.

10. Many questions put to the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations had not been answered or, at best, the answers had been unconvincing. A full investigation should therefore be made of the organization before it was granted consultative status. The Council had a duty to protect the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations, one of its most humanitarian instruments, which should serve as a channel for world opinion and as a champion of peace — not as a bulwark of the aggressive policies of certain countries.

11. Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan) urged the Council to act with caution and not to admit the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations before an investigation had shown whether the allegations against it were founded.

12. The Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, which claimed to be a purely humanitarian organization, had stated that it had “never criticized any government for reasons not connected with its human rights objectives”. It followed that it had criticized certain Governments for reasons connected with human rights. Consequently, he wondered whether the organization’s South Africa branch had taken a clear stand against the South African Government’s *apartheid* policy. If so, the organization really did pursue humanitarian objectives. If not, the United Nations would be perfectly justified in considering its objectives dubious. The Council should therefore examine carefully all the allegations against the Co-ordinating Board to avoid admitting an organization whose purposes would undermine the ideals of the United Nations.

13. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said that his understanding had been that the Council had decided, at its previous meeting, to take a decision on the issue; he was surprised that the general debate was continuing. He hoped that the Council would decide to put the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to a vote.

14. The PRESIDENT explained that before a vote was taken, everyone must be given time to explain his position.

15. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that before taking a decision, the Council should dispel the doubts of some delegations. As the United States representative had observed at the previous meeting, the Council should not concern itself with the political aspects of the question. However, non-governmental organizations applying for consultative status with the Council should also refrain from engaging in political activity. The Council could not grant consultative status to every applicant organization without examining the nature of its activities.

16. He suggested that the Council should ask the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to investigate the charges levelled at the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations.

17. Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan) supported the Pakistan representative’s suggestion.

18. Mr. OLDS (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, recalled that at the previous meeting the Council had rejected a motion to take no decision on the

recommendation of its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations contained in paragraph 14 of document E/4799.

19. Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan), supported by Mr. DRISS (Tunisia), said that the proposal submitted to the Council by the Pakistan representative was quite different from the proposal considered the day before, so that there was no contradiction.

20. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) asked whether the Council was continuing the item-by-item consideration of the recommendations submitted by its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4799) and whether or not there was actually a new proposal before it.

21. The PRESIDENT recalled that at the previous meeting the Council had rejected a Sudanese proposal to take no decision on the recommendation of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations contained in paragraph 14 of document E/4799. The Pakistan representative, supported by the Sudanese representative, had now proposed that the Council should request its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to conduct a thorough examination of the allegations made by some delegations.

22. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said that he had understood the Council’s decision at the previous meeting to mean that it did not wish to defer the matter to a later date. He did not see what new element was added by the proposal to refer the question to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for thorough examination, since that was merely a repetition of a proposal made in 1969.

23. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) drew attention to paragraph 8 of document E/4799, which stated, *inter alia*, that “after a lengthy debate, the Economic and Social Council decided to take note of that part of the report of the Council Committee and to refer the matter back to the Committee for further study,” and paragraph 14 of that document, which stated that “a proposal for category II status was adopted by 8 votes to 5, with no abstentions”. He said that the plenary Council would now have to take a decision on the recommendation of its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. By referring the question back to the Committee, the Council would not be helping the Committee in any way and would in fact merely be shirking its own responsibilities.

24. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) concurred with the President’s explanations and said that in his delegation’s view the rejection of the Sudanese proposal at the previous meeting did not mean that the Council could not consider the substance of the question concerning the decision it should take on the recommendation of its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. Delegations were therefore free to submit any proposals they wished on the substance of the question.

25. Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan) said that so long as delegations had any doubts concerning the activities of the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations the question should be referred back to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. He therefore formally proposed that

the Economic and Social Council should request its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to undertake a thorough examination into alleged activities of the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations which might require the application of part VIII of resolution 1296 (XLIV).

26. The PRESIDENT, in reply to a question from Mr. FRANZI (Italy), said that the Council would vote on the proposal under the second part of rule 66 of its rules of procedure and hence would not thereby be taking a decision on the substance of the proposal.

At the request of the Pakistan representative, a vote was taken by roll-call on the Sudanese proposal.

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

In favour: Bulgaria, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, People's Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yugoslavia.

Against: Chad, France, Ghana, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Argentina.

Abstaining: Brazil, Greece, Japan, Kenya, Peru.

The Sudanese proposal was rejected by 12 votes to 10, with 5 abstentions.

27. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) asked whether the proposal to approve the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations contained in paragraph 14 of report E/4799 would now be put to the vote.

28. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) proposed, in a spirit of compromise and with a view to reflecting all the opinions expressed in the Council, to amend the United States representative's proposal to approve the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations that consultative status should be granted to the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, by adding the following words: "subject to its right to invoke the provisions of part VIII of resolution 1296 (XLIV), if at any time the Council is convinced that the organization is engaged in any of the activities alleged against it in the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and in the Council".

29. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said he welcomed the spirit of compromise shown by the Pakistan representative and had no difficulty in accepting the amendment, which in any case, was implicit in part VIII of resolution 1296 (XLIV).

30. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) observed that the amendment proposed by the Pakistan delegation merely reaffirmed the duties of the Economic and Social Council under the terms of resolution 1296 (XLIV). He wondered whether it could be regarded as a genuine amendment.

31. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that the purpose of the proposed amendment was to take into account the allega-

tions made in the Council concerning the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations which, according to some members of the Council, had not been satisfactorily answered. By invoking the provisions of part VIII of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) the amendment was also designed to allay the hostile feelings expressed by some members of the Council.

32. The PRESIDENT announced that the United States proposal, as amended by Pakistan, would be put to the vote.

33. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that although his delegation had supported the Sudanese proposal to defer a decision on the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, it was nevertheless opposed to granting consultative status to an organization whose activities were political and not only humanitarian. Far from assisting the Council to settle problems of a humanitarian nature, the granting of consultative status to such an organization could only raise questions of a political nature in the Council. Moreover, it might be noted that, of all the organizations which had been granted or which had applied for consultative status, none was nationalist in conception. His delegation would vote against the proposal.

34. Mr. BRECKENRIDGE (Ceylon) wished to explain the vote which his delegation would cast. His delegation would have preferred that no decision was taken on this matter. His delegation bore in mind that earlier the Council was hopelessly deadlocked on the question of postponement of consideration of this matter. Since his delegation was now compelled to make a decision there were several other factors also to be borne in mind in considering consultative status for the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations. His delegation was not judging the humanitarian activities of one of its constituent bodies, namely B'nai B'rith, which have extended for more than 100 years. There was no attempt on the part of his delegation to assign guilt by association, but guilt by action was another matter. His delegation would take into account the considerable staff work done on this question by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. He would refer to various statements recorded in the report E/4799, which were relevant to the coming decision. He referred to a statement by the representative of the United States that

"To apply other extraneous standards, such as judgement of their political views, would only serve to erode their independence and ability to contribute to the work of the United Nations." (E/4799 p. 16.)

His delegation would not apply extraneous standards but it felt that resolution 1296 (XLIV) was a relevant standard. The representative of France had said that

"The fact that in different circumstances the organization may have adopted political positions which it would have been wiser not to take does not, for the time being at least, entitle us to say that it has already abused its consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council." (*Ibid.*, p. 31.)

The representative of Uruguay had said that

"The specific comments or objections voiced with respect to the activities of any member or representative

of this Co-ordinating Board or of any member or representative of its co-operating organizations, could not, even if proved, obscure or nullify the important work which this organization has done in favour of human rights and could not blind us to its noble history in this field". (*Ibid.*, p. 33.)

The representative of Kenya had said:

"My delegation is also unhappy that the organization has felt free to criticize political resolutions of the United Nations. This cannot just be dismissed on the pretext of freedom of speech. Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) . . . clearly provides against such conduct.

"It is our hope, therefore, that this affirmative vote will not be interpreted by the organization as a *carte blanche* for disregarding the provisions of resolution 1296 (XLIV)." (*Ibid.*, p. 33.)

The representative of Norway had stated that

"Irrespective of any political considerations the positive vote of my delegation was based solely on a liberal interpretation of paragraphs 3 and 36 (b) in Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) as well as on the well-recognized contribution of this organization to the work of the Economic and Social Council in the field of human rights". (*Ibid.*, p. 35.)

Finally the representative of India had said:

"Not all actions of NGOs having a political tone are necessarily politically motivated or *mala fide* in nature. The CBJO [Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations] has some extremely important achievements to its credit and in their long history, its affiliates have, on the whole, acquitted themselves extremely creditably. Nevertheless, my delegation feels that certain facts which have been submitted, both last year as well as this year, about the CBJO, warrant a careful consideration". (*Ibid.*, p. 36.)

35. Without meaning to judge the past or to prejudge the future, his delegation would vote in accordance with the rules under which the Council recognized the work of its subsidiary organs.

36. Mr. FRANZI (Italy) said that the question had been carefully studied by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. The Council was therefore quite capable of taking a decision on the substance. His delegation would vote in favour of retaining the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations on the list of organizations enjoying consultative status in category II, although it considered the Pakistan amendment to be relevant, since it was essential to make it quite clear that the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations must refrain from any activities that might be incompatible with the provisions of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

37. Mr. JHA (India) recalled that in the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations his delegation had voted against retaining the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations on the list of non-governmental organizations

enjoying consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and that the reasons for its vote were stated in document E/4799. His delegation would vote against the United States proposal, as amended by Pakistan, since it had no reason to change its attitude, the amendment being implicit in Council resolution 1296 (XLIV). Moreover, it apparently meant that other organizations would not be subjected to the same re-examination.

38. Mr. PAOLINI (France) said that his delegation had voted against the proposals of Sudan and Pakistan because it felt that the question had already been thoroughly studied, and that the Council was in a position to take a decision. It would vote in favour of including the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations in category II of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council because it had no reason to change the position it had taken before the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. In matters of that nature the French Government followed a liberal policy and had based its position in the current discussion exclusively on technical and objective criteria, and not on any political considerations. The French position had been stated in the report (E/4799 and Corr.1 and 2); any change in that position would depend on the conduct of the organization in question, as it would for all organizations in consultative status.

By 14 votes to 10, with 3 abstentions, the United States proposal, as amended by Pakistan, was adopted.

39. Mr. HAMBRO (Norway) said that his delegation had voted for the proposal and felt that the Council should examine the activities of all organizations in consultative status. The Pakistan amendment had therefore only stated explicitly an implicit obligation.

40. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that his delegation had not been able to vote for the proposal even though its amendment had been adopted.

41. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) felt that the reservation made to the Committee's recommendation was not trivial. It was a reflection of the series of debates on the questions raised concerning the dubious activities of the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, questions which had not yet received a satisfactory answer, and which, as the representative of France had said, involved "political positions which it would have been wiser to take".

42. Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan) stated that his delegation had voted against the proposal because the amendment proposed by the delegation of Pakistan was not a strong enough warning to the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations.

43. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said he hoped that the debate would serve as a clear indication to the non-governmental organizations of the seriousness with which the Council intended to examine their activities. The vigilance of the Council would apply equally to all organizations in consultative status.

44. Miss MUTER (Indonesia) stated that her delegation had voted against the proposal, because it did not feel that

the activities of the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations were compatible with the provisions of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

45. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) said that his delegation had voted for the proposal, because it felt that it should follow a liberal policy based on technical and objective criteria. It hoped, however, that the organization in question would ensure that its conduct was compatible with the provisions of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

46. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would consider that the Council endorsed the suggestion adopted by the Committee and given in section II, paragraph 18 of the Committee's report.

It was so decided.

47. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would consider that the Council approved the text worked out by the Committee concerning the question of grouping of non-governmental organizations and contained in section V, paragraph 21, of the Committee report.

It was so decided.

48. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would consider that the Council approved the recommendation made by the Committee in section VI, paragraph 23, of its report.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.