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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Thirty-first Session

3 February - 7 March 1975

DECISIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
RELATING TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Note by the Secretary-General

1. At its 1937th meeting on 15 January 1975 the Council took the following decisions in connexion with the items on the provisional agenda of the commission mentioned below:

Item 5

To refer General Assembly resolution 3267 (XXIX) to the Commission with the request that it submit to the Council at its fifty-eighth session a draft declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief.

Item 10

To refer General Assembly resolution 3268 (XXIX) on human rights and scientific and technological development to the Commission and to request it to submit to the Council at its sixtieth session the programme of work requested by the Assembly in paragraph 5 of its resolution.

2. At the same meeting the Council decided to authorize the Commission to have summary records for particular discussions when needed and to request it when adopting its agenda, to limit the provision of such records to those items in relation to which summary records are deemed essential.

3. The Commission's attention is also drawn to the following decisions taken by the Council at the same meeting;

- (a) to commend to all the subsidiary bodies of the Council the practice of holding informal discussions on items on their agenda as frequently as possible during their sessions;

- (b) to apply to the reports submitted to its subsidiary bodies the decision of the Council in its resolution 1894 (LVII) of 1 August 1974 not to consider any report exceeding thirty-two pages; 1/ 2/
- (c) to request all its subsidiary bodies to exercise the utmost restraints in making request of the Secretary-General for new reports and studies;
- (d) to request the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of scheduling more meetings of functional commissions during the second half of the year at Geneva and, in due course, when facilities are available, at Vienna, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3350 (XXIX) of 18 December 1974, and to submit appropriate recommendations to the Council, at its fifth-ninth session, in the context of the calendar of meetings.

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1/ Paragraph 4 of resolution 1894 (LVII) of the Economic and Social Council states that the Economic and Social Council "decides to consider no report exceeding 32 pages, with the exception of the World Economic Survey and the Report on the World Social Situation, unless the Council authorizes that the application of the guidelines cited in paragraph 1 above may be waived".

Paragraph 1 of resolution 1894 (LVII) of the Council reiterates the Council's request that "the Secretary-General should ensure that the guidelines set out in paragraph 8 of its resolution 1623 (LI) are observed in reports submitted to the Council and its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies, and particularly that reports are action-oriented and concise".

Paragraph 8 of resolution 1623 (LI) of the Economic and Social Council reads "Requests the Secretary-General to take urgent steps to reform the nature, scope and form of documentation submitted to the Council to ensure that Governments can review reports adequately and also that the Council is able to concentrate on issues requiring intergovernmental consideration, that reports submitted to the Council are action-oriented and concise (normally not more than thirty-two pages), and present clear and precise recommendations drawing attention to issues that should be taken into account by the Council and possible alternative courses of action proposed for the Council and their implications, and to ensure also that, in the case of meetings of experts convened by the Secretary-General, only a concise report by the Secretary-General setting out the relevant recommendations for action by the Council is submitted".

2/ By another decision taken at its 1937th meeting, the Council decided to waive the 32-page rule regarding, the report of the Secretary-General to the Council called for in General Assembly resolution 3057 (XXVIII) under the Programme of the Decade of Action against Racism and Racial Discrimination as well as another report called for in the Council's resolutions 1911 (i) (LVII) and 1896 (LVII) and the report of the Secretary-General called for in Council resolution 1761 A (LIV) to be submitted to the Committee on Natural Resources.