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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Twenty-fourth Session

SUMMARY RECORDS OR MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIRST TO THE  
FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHTH MEETINGS

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
from 14 February to 3 March 1972

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|-------------------------|---------------------|---|
| <u>Acting Chairman:</u> | Mrs. MARINKEVITCH   | Byelorussian Soviet<br>Socialist Republic |
| <u>Chairman:</u>        | Mrs. STEVENSON      | Liberia                                   |
| <u>Rapporteur:</u>      | Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES | Colombia                                  |

The list of representatives attending the session appears in the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council (E/5109 and Add.1) (see Official Records of the Economic Council, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 6, annex I).

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ABBREVIATIONS

|        |  |
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| ASEAN  | Association of South-East Asian Nations  |
| ECA    | Economic Commission for Africa   |
| ECAFE  | Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East                                  |
| FAO    | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations                        |
| IBRD   | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development                          |
| ICRC   | International Committee of the Red Cross                                       |
| ILO    | International Labour Organisation  |
| OAS    | Organization of American States  |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme   |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization               |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund   |
| UNRWA  | United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East |
| WHO    | World Health Organization  |

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIRST (OPENING) MEETING

held on Monday, 14 February 1972, at 12.05 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The ACTING CHAIRMAN declared open the twenty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (item 1 of the provisional agenda)

Mrs. Stevenson (Liberia) was elected Chairman by acclamation and took the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission had worked tirelessly during the past 25 years to advance the status of women throughout the world, and the extent of its contribution to world peace and the promotion of human dignity could best be measured by the number of instruments which the United Nations had adopted during that period on the Commission's recommendation.

Whereas, at the time of the founding of the United Nations in 1945, only about one half of the sovereign nations of the world had granted political rights to women, the number of such nations had now risen to 123. However, there were still considerable discrepancies between law and fact, since the establishment of legal norms had not everywhere been matched by implementation. The Commission could not afford to rest on its laurels; on the contrary, the time had come to concentrate on practical long-term measures aimed at enhancing the status of women throughout the world.

In a world where nations were becoming increasingly interdependent, there was a growing awareness of the vital role which women had to play in national, regional and international affairs. Women were being increasingly called upon to avail themselves of opportunities to develop their potential so as to participate in all spheres of human activity, and both men and women had to learn to adapt themselves to their changing roles in society. The Second United Nations Development Decade offered an excellent opportunity to eliminate discriminatory practices which prevented women from exercising the right to vote. A concerted international effort was needed to mobilize public opinion in support of the policies and objectives of the Decade.

In conclusion, she hoped that the work done at the current session would help to determine the best course of action to ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of national development.

Mrs. Kolstad (Norway) was elected First Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

Mrs. Shahani (Philippines) was elected Second Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

Mrs. Andrei (Romania) was elected Third Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

Miss Sanchez-Torres (Colombia) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

#### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 2 of the provisional agenda) (E/CN.6/547)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that in preparing the provisional agenda (E/CN.6/547), the Secretariat had followed the grouping adopted in the programme of work established at the twenty-third session. There was some overlapping between items 3 (International instruments and national standards relating to the status of women), 4 (Programme of work and establishment of priorities. Control and limitation of documentation) and 5 (Programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and to increase their contribution to the development of their countries), but it would still be possible to discuss those items separately. Under Economic and Social Council resolutions 76 (V) and 304 I (XI), the Secretary-General was required to compile and distribute to members of the Commission, before each session, a non-confidential list of communications dealing with the principles relating to the promotion of women's rights in the political, economic, civic, social and educational fields, and to compile a confidential list containing a brief indication of the substance of other communications concerning the status of women, to be furnished to members of the Commission in private meeting. The first of those lists had already been circulated in document E/CN.6/CR.23. The Secretariat had decided not to include the question of communications concerning the status of women in the provisional agenda as a separate item, and she suggested that the question might be taken up under item 4 of the provisional agenda.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that, in view of its importance, subitem (c) of item 3 of the provisional agenda, entitled "Equal pay for equal work", should be discussed separately and that item 8

(Youth and human rights) should be deleted, since it related to a problem that did not fall within the Commission's competence. She also pointed out that the title of item 6 (Role of women in community, national or international life) bore very little relation to the substance of the two subitems (a) Status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories; (b) Protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence, to be discussed under that heading.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) drew the Commission's attention to paragraphs 1-3 of the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Youth and human rights" (E/CN.6/549), which described the stage reached in the consideration of the question covered by item 8 and its referral to the Commission by the Commission on Human Rights.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) supported the proposal for the deletion of item 8 and suggested that, in view of the importance of the question of the role of women in the family, item 7 (The role of women in the family) should be placed after item 4 of the provisional agenda.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) emphasized the fundamental relationship between the question of the education of youth and the status of women and suggested that the Commission should reflect very carefully before deciding to delete item 8.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) agreed with the USSR representative that there was little relationship between the title and content of item 6 of the provisional agenda, and suggested that the difficulty could be resolved by treating the two subitems of item 6 as separate items.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America), Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia), Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) and Mrs. OBA (Japan) supported the proposal to delete item 8 of the provisional agenda.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that her delegation attached great importance to the question of youth and human rights and had been the only delegation to vote against postponement of the discussion of that item at

the last session. While it might be possible to postpone consideration of the item pending the receipt of further information, she urged that it should not be deleted.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) supported the proposal by the USSR representative that subitem (c) of item 3 of the provisional agenda should be considered separately, and the proposal of the Egyptian representative that the two subitems of item 6 should constitute separate items of the agenda. She thought, however, that item 8 might well prove very useful and that it would be better not to delete it at the present time.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) opposed the United Kingdom representative's proposal to change the position of item 7 of the provisional agenda. She wished, however, to support the Egyptian representative's proposal that the two subitems of item 6 should be dealt with as separate items.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that she too would prefer to leave the items in the order suggested by the Secretariat, although on balance she was in favour of deleting item 8 of the provisional agenda. All the items were of considerable importance and a time-table of meetings should be drawn up to ensure that they were all given due consideration.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SECOND MEETING

held on Monday, 14 February 1972, at 3.20 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 2 of the provisional agenda) (concluded) (E/CN.6/547)

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the following modifications of the provisional agenda had been proposed: that subitem (c) (Equal pay for equal work) of item 3 should be discussed separately; that item 7 (The role of women in the family) should be placed after item 4; that each of the subitems of item 6 ((a) Status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories; (b) Protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence) should constitute a separate item in the agenda; and that item 8 (Youth and human rights) should be deleted.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said she supported the proposal that item 7 of the provisional agenda should become agenda item 5.

Miss CHATON (France) asked what documents were available to the Commission for its consideration of item 6 of the provisional agenda, particularly subitem (a); no item could be examined in the absence of the necessary documents.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that a report had been prepared by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/CN.6/560), the subject of item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda, but that report would not be distributed before the beginning of the following week; the report on item 6 (b) (E/CN.6/561) had so far been distributed in English only, but would be available in the other working languages very shortly.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to vote on each proposal separately.

The proposal by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that subitem (c) of item 3 of the provisional agenda should be discussed separately was adopted by 18 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

The proposal by the United Kingdom that item 7 of the provisional agenda should be placed after item 4, the following items being renumbered accordingly, was adopted by 16 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions.

The proposal by Egypt that subitems (a) and (b) of item 6 of the provisional agenda should be considered as separate items of the agenda was adopted by 10 votes to 3, with 11 abstentions.

The proposal by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that item 8 should be deleted was adopted by 15 votes to 7, with 3 abstentions.

The provisional agenda (E/CN.6/547), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN drew the Commission's attention to the second paragraph of the annotations to item 2 of the provisional agenda (see E/CN.6/547, p. 3) concerning the replacement of summary records by shorter minutes. She invited the Commission to decide what type of records should be prepared for the current session.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that three sorts of documents were used for recording the discussions of a body: minutes proper - a very brief summary of the debate issued in English only; minutes in the form of shorter summary records and, lastly, full summary records. The last two types of record were issued in provisional form in the three working languages and delegations were given a certain time in which to submit corrections. In view of the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council on the control and limitation of documentation, the Secretary-General asked the Commission to keep its requests for full summary records to the minimum.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) asked whether the members of the Commission could obtain a record of the discussions in another form.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that a sound recording was made of the proceedings and arrangements could be made for members to listen to it.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) asked whether a transcription of the sound recording could be distributed to members of the Commission.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said she regretted that that was not possible.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland), supported by Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia), proposed that minutes (shorter summary records) should be prepared for all agenda items.

The CHAIRMAN said that, in the absence of any objections, she would assume that that proposal was adopted.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THIRD MEETING

held on Tuesday, 15 February 1972, at 10.45 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1, E/CN.6/551, E/CN.6/NGO/233, E/CN.6/NGO/237)
- (b) POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN (A/8132 and Add.1, A/8481 and Corr.1, E/CN.6/NGO/234)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General), introducing the question of the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 2263 (XXII) of 7 November 1967), the subject of subitem (a), drew the Commission's attention to the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1). The addendum (E/CN.6/548/Add.1) was concerned with the unmarried mother and could perhaps be considered in connexion with subitem (a) (Status of the unmarried mother) of agenda item 5. Unlike previous reports, the report now under consideration summarized the information contained in the replies from Governments, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations under different headings, instead of reproducing them in full. One of the questions the Commission would have to decide was whether, in future, such reports should deal with the implementation of all the rights covered by the Declaration, or whether, as suggested in paragraph 28 of the note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and establishment of priorities (E/CN.6/565), they should be staggered, so that at one session civil and political rights would be dealt with and, at the following session, economic, social and cultural rights. Both series of reports could, as at present, deal with general measures taken to comply with the principles of the Declaration and with the publicity given to it. A similar system had been adopted for the Secretary-General's periodic reports on human rights, which would now follow a six-year cycle, beginning in 1971. The summary of information in periodic reports on human rights prepared by the Secretary-General, relating to the status of women, which was now before the Commission (E/CN.6/551), had been issued in response to the Commission's request at its twenty-third session.

Introducing subitem (b), she drew the Commission's attention to the reports of the Secretary-General on the political rights of women submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session (A/8132 and Add.1) and at its twenty-sixth session (A/8481 and Corr.1), which had been prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1132 (XLI) of 26 July 1966, entitled "Political rights of women". In its resolution 1 (XXII),<sup>1/</sup> the Commission had requested the Secretary-General to invite Governments to provide fuller information, including statistical data, and the reports now before the Committee were the first to appear since that request. Some but not all Governments had responded. A number of suggestions concerning the future organization of the reports relating to political rights of women were contained in paragraphs 42-44 of the note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and establishment of priorities.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) welcomed the fact that the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration contained a separate section on publicity given to the Declaration (see E/CN.6/548, chap. I) and expressed the hope that that practice would be continued. If the Declaration was not to remain a dead letter, it was vital that it should be given the maximum publicity. It should be translated into the various national languages and the general public should be informed of the extent to which each article was applied in law and in practice, so that an idea could be gained of international standards. She mentioned the fact that the Declaration had been translated into Finnish.

It was particularly essential that all those involved in the decision-making process at the national and regional levels should be made fully aware of the Declaration's importance. She knew from her own experience as special rapporteur on family planning that the importance of family planning, which was a new concept as an official United Nations policy, was far more widely accepted than that of the status of women, which as a concept dated back to the Charter itself. The international community must be convinced that the Commission's work was an integral part of United Nations efforts to promote economic and social progress. To that end, the Commission must in particular enlist the co-operation of non-governmental organizations, the regional economic commissions and the UNDP

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<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-sixth Session, document E/4619, chap. XVI.

system at the regional and local levels. In that connexion, she welcomed the new co-operation that was emerging between the Commission and such bodies as the Commission for Social Development and the Population Commission. Women themselves should be associated with that task and should be encouraged to participate fully in the life of the community.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) agreed with the suggestion made by the representative of the Secretary-General that chapter IV of the report under consideration (E/CN.6/548/Add.1) should be discussed under agenda item 5 (a). She further agreed that requests for information addressed to Governments in the future should be of a more specific nature, with special emphasis on recent developments; Governments should also be expressly invited to study discrepancies between law and practice.

After reviewing the publicity given to the Declaration in Egypt, she remarked that, in publicizing the Declaration, especially in countries where public opinion was sensitive to any suggestion of egoism or militancy on the part of women, it was important to stress the positive relationship between the acquisition of political rights by women and their contribution to society at large. In that connexion, it was desirable that objective scientific studies should be undertaken on such subjects as the relationship between inequalities in family law, on the one hand, and delinquency or excessive population growth, on the other; such studies should, of course, be sponsored and co-ordinated by official bodies.

In conclusion, she referred with satisfaction to the setting up in Egypt of a national commission on the status of women and to the recent decision to establish an inter-Arab commission on women.

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) said that an attempt was now being made in her country, under a democratically elected Government, to transform society and to give it a new socialist structure. Chile had achieved its political independence over 150 years ago and was now engaged in a struggle for its economic independence. In that struggle, it needed the support of the international community in order to combat the internal and external forces that were attempting to distort its image.

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Chile thus attached great importance to the role of the United Nations in furthering independence and freedom from exploitation for all the peoples of the world. Since, in all developing countries, Chile included, women had always been doubly exploited, particular stress was being laid on improving their status. It was a myth to speak of the Chilean woman. The women of the upper bourgeoisie enjoyed great privileges, but the majority of women in Chile remained subject to men and lived in varying degrees of poverty and servitude. It was the aim of the Chilean revolution to create a new image of woman as wife and mother, emphasizing her active participation in the creation of a new society. A number of practical steps had already been taken to improve the status of Chilean women and the possibility of setting up a special ministry for the family was under consideration.

Chile was fully aware of the difficulties facing it and of the fact that it could not wage its struggle alone. The countries of the world would have to co-operate with each other or they would in the end destroy themselves. Throughout the centuries, there had been many different kinds of societies but the law of the jungle had always prevailed. Today, through science and technology, man was beginning to learn to control the blind forces of nature, and the Chilean nation was placing its faith in the triumph of reason over force. The present time was a time of violence but also a time of hope, a time of hope for the developing countries and a time of hope for women, with men and women working together to make a better world for their children. The Commission on the Status of Women had an important part to play in that task.

Miss GELBER (Canada), after apologizing for the fact that her Government's replies had been submitted too late for inclusion in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Declaration, said that the broad principles of the Declaration had formed the subject of detailed study by a Royal Commission set up in 1967; the Canadian Government had spent almost \$2 million on the Royal Commission's work and in December 1970 had designated a Minister of the Crown to deal with its recommendations, which numbered over 160. She then reviewed the extensive legislative action taken at both the federal and the provincial level in compliance with the Royal Commission's recommendations concerning the economic and social rights of women. As regards political rights, the two

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provinces of Canada which until recently had prohibited women from sitting on juries had now removed that restriction from their statute books. Lastly, it was worthy of note that both the Government and the main opposition party in Canada now included women's rights in their political programmes.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that as the report of the Secretary-General on the study of provisions in existing conventions that relate to the status of women (E/CN.6/552) had not yet been distributed in Russian, she would be unable to take it into consideration in her remarks.

All the provisions of the Declaration were fully implemented in the Soviet Union. The large proportion of women among members of the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and of the Union and Autonomous Republics and among members of Soviets of Working People's Deputies, as well as the large number of women judges and magistrates, bore witness to the high degree of democracy achieved in the USSR and to the genuinely equal status of women in a socialist society. The ninth five-year plan adopted in 1971, whose objective was to ensure a considerable rise in the country's material and cultural level through the rapid expansion and increased efficiency of production, through scientific and technical progress and through higher labour productivity, would inevitably involve a redistribution of female labour between different branches and types of activity. Women would be increasingly employed in highly mechanized and automated industries such as radio engineering and instrument-making, while the occupations in which they were employed as ancillary labour would be progressively mechanized. The substantial increase in the production of food, textiles and consumer goods would mean that new technology would be channelled into those industries, so that women, who represented a high proportion of the labour force employed in them, would enjoy greatly improved conditions of work. The five-year plan also provided for wage increases for 90 million workers and employees, more than half of whom were women, and for increased disability pensions and other benefits. Women would specially benefit from salary increases for doctors, teachers and other educational workers, welfare personnel, shop assistants, etc.

After reviewing other aspects of the five-year plan which were of particular relevance to women, she observed that while the general trend throughout the world

was undeniably towards a more active participation of women in national life, in certain countries, especially those of the capitalist West, there was still regrettable evidence of forms of discrimination which were preventing women from occupying their proper place in labour and society. In some countries, women were still being denied equality of rights with men not only in the economic and social fields, but also in the political field. In that connexion, she referred to information contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the political rights of women submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session, and, in particular, in its table 3 (see A/8481, annex). The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which was the most recent and comprehensive international instrument in the sphere of women's rights, had only moral but not legal force. The Convention on the Political Rights of Women (General Assembly resolution 640-(VII) of 20 December 1952) provided only for the right to vote and to be elected. The ILO conventions and recommendations relating to the status of women were for the most part insufficiently concrete and up to date, and they required revision. The Soviet delegation was in favour of drawing up a legally binding international convention on the elimination of discrimination against women which would cover all aspects of the status of women, and intended to submit a draft resolution to that effect at the current session.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) said that her Government had decided to undertake a large-scale national investigation into the status of women in community life, in the home and in employment. Almost all the principles set forth in the Declaration were already secured by Japanese national laws, but many problems still had to be overcome before those laws could be fully implemented. The nation-wide investigation instituted by the Japanese Government would take the form of studies by groups of experts in various fields and by non-governmental organizations, supported by national surveys, including public opinion polls. She hoped to be able to submit partial results of the investigation at the Commission's twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) drew attention to the information given in paragraph 257 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration about the seminars on the status of women held in her country. Such

seminars might be expected to yield useful results where their participants included not only women but also men occupying key positions in public life. The principle of women's equality with men was still ignored to an alarming extent, even, on occasion, within the United Nations itself; it was difficult not to feel some sympathy with the younger women in many European countries and the United States of America who were rebelling against that situation. In that connexion, she described the action taken by various groups of Norwegian women to ensure, by legal if unconventional means, the election of an unprecedentedly high proportion of women candidates in the municipal elections held in her country in 1971. While the over-all percentage of women on municipal councils and in the Norwegian parliament was still relatively low, it was to be hoped that such action would compel the political parties to take greater account of women candidates and voters in drawing up their election programmes in the future.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that excessive emphasis on masculinity was a very important feature of the Latin American outlook and represented a serious source of social conflict, creating widespread insecurity and resentment. Central America was, if anything, even more afflicted by that outlook than the rest of the continent, since backward attitudes like machismo were often most deeply rooted in under-developed rural areas. It was patently impossible to correct that state of affairs by isolated action; her delegation therefore strongly favoured the setting up of a regional centre for Central America and Panama to deal with the training of women and their integration in productive life. The centre, which would operate for the area as a whole with subcentres in each country, would aim at integrating women in society while respecting their role as wives and mothers; it would extend training to all women rather than to a privileged minority, ensure the implementation of women's rights, maintain permanent contact with similar centres in other regions, and act as a non-political and independent force in promoting the welfare of the population as a whole.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOURTH MEETING

held on Tuesday, 15 February 1972, at 3.10 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
(agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1, E/CN.6/551, E/CN.6/NGO/233, E/CN.6/NGO/237)
- (b) POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN (continued) (A/8132 and Add.1, A/8481 and Corr.1, E/CN.6/NGO/234)

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) commended the Secretary-General on his report on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1). She noted with concern, however, that only 40 Governments had supplied information and that that information had not lent itself to the comparative analysis which would seem indispensable for an over-all picture of the progress made. Perhaps it would be desirable to give Governments specific guidelines concerning the information to be supplied in future reports. The reports might also be spread at longer intervals, since the Declaration generally called for changes in legislation and in the traditional attitudes of the peoples of the various countries, and such developments took time. Furthermore, Governments were called upon to submit a large number of reports to various United Nations bodies and other organizations, a task which presented a problem for some of them.

The comment in paragraph 90 concerning the right of spouses to inherit from each other was not quite accurate in the case of Austria, where one spouse could disinherit the other by will. A new law was, however, under consideration which was intended to improve the legal status of the surviving spouse.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that some legislative progress had been made but that, in her view, it was for women themselves to take action to eliminate the persisting discrepancy between law and practice. Women should master the procedures for obtaining advancement in all fields. What had to be considered was not only the number of women in jobs but also the nature of those jobs. Women were often confined to lower-level jobs and few of them rose to senior positions.

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In the United States, many women's associations had begun to organize on a national scale. They campaigned in favour of candidates who were ready to support their claims. Other organizations filed complaints against private companies which discriminated against women in their employment policies. A recently-formed youth organization was engaged in intensive activities in preparation for the 1972 presidential elections. Women were becoming increasingly involved in political affairs. In the 1970 congressional elections, they had constituted 51 per cent of the electors. Since President Nixon had assumed office, he had appointed 80 women to policy-making posts in the Government. Various enactments had been passed by the Federal and State Governments with a view to the application of an employment policy which was fair to women. The Supreme Court had taken several decisions favourable to women. Many people thought that an amendment to the United States Constitution would be the only way of instituting a national policy for the elimination of all discrimination against women and a number of States had already amended their constitutions with that end in view.

Women in the United States were showing themselves less and less willing to accept the role traditionally assigned to them. They realized their need for higher educational qualifications. Young women, in particular, were fighting for equality of the sexes and for the abolition of all legal and social distinctions based on sex. That movement was supported by leading personalities in the Government, and notably by President Nixon himself.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) reviewing the history of her country's legislation with respect to the status of women, said that, 400 years earlier, legislation had not even contained any mention of women's rights. The situation had improved slightly two centuries later and, still more, about 40 years ago, with the promulgation of the Civil and Commercial Code, to which a number of amendments had since been made. Despite all efforts, however, Thai women were not yet equal to men; as soon as they married, they lost part of their rights.

Discrimination was particularly evident in the provisions concerning the age of majority. The provisions concerning marriage and the registration of marriages were giving rise to strong protests. The objective was to ensure that the registration of a marriage should be automatically declared null and void if a

previous marriage was still valid. It had also been proposed that a central marriage registration service should be established whose records were open to consultation by everyone. The husband chose the place of residence and the wife was bound to live with him. A married woman could not apply for a passport without her husband's consent. If she had held a job before her marriage, she could keep it without her husband's consent, but she had to have his approval before taking up a new career. There had been protests against the right of the husband to manage the joint property of the household. The divorce law was favourable to men, since women could not apply for divorce in case of adultery; it had been recommended that the law should be amended to provide that the legal wife could seek a divorce if her husband cohabited with another woman. The question of the alimony to be paid in the event of separation caused serious difficulties; the establishment of a family court had been demanded. Since the promulgation of the 1932 Act, Thai women had had the right to vote on an equal footing with men and also to stand for election. There was no law against women exercising the profession of their choice; there were, however, prejudices against women in certain professions.

In those circumstances, there was no doubt that the Declaration would be welcomed in Thailand, which would do its best to implement it in future.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said it was regrettable that so few countries had supplied information on the implementation of the Declaration. In her view, that situation was not due to any lack of interest in the subject, but rather to the fact that many countries - and in particular developing countries - had difficulty in preparing all the reports requested of them by the various United Nations bodies. She approved the suggestion made in paragraph 7 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration that requests for information should be spaced at longer intervals; that would enable Governments and the Secretariat to study the questions more thoroughly. As was stressed in the Secretary-General's report, more publicity should be given to the Declaration. It might be possible for the Office of Public Information to issue publications designed for the general public, setting out the content and purpose of the Declaration in simple terms.

In general, Philippine legislation was in conformity with the principles set forth in the Declaration, except perhaps in respect of unmarried mothers. A number of general enactments had recently been passed which would improve the status of women, particularly in the social and cultural spheres. The new Electoral Act promulgated in 1971 laid down strict rules for electoral campaigns in the Philippines. The percentage of women elected was very low, considering that they made up half of the electorate. Much, therefore, remained to be done to ensure that women participated more fully in electoral campaigns and stood for election.

Much had been done to amend the legislation prohibiting night work for women. Measures should also be taken to compel employers to install day nurseries in their undertakings. The Philippine Government was endeavouring to remedy certain difficulties by providing the Moslem community with every opportunity for access to education and employment. The decisions taken in that field would naturally affect the status of Moslem women. A number of amendments to the Constitution which might have repercussions on the rights and responsibilities of women were currently under consideration.

The non-governmental organizations could do much to enlarge the role which women were called upon to play in the country's economic and social development and they should be congratulated on the work they were doing to promote women's rights. In November 1971, the International Council of Women had held a regional seminar in the Philippines; participants had discussed at length Commission decisions and General Assembly resolutions and the means of ensuring their implementation.

If guidelines were given to Governments concerning the information to be supplied on the implementation of the Declaration, it would be desirable to ask them to describe any problems arising in that respect. That approach would be more useful, particularly for the developing countries, than the mere listing of the laws and practices in force. It could provide a valuable source of information which might guide the Commission in planning its future work.

Mrs. ROUHI (Iran) described the social, economic and political rights and responsibilities acquired by Iranian women in recent years. For example, in 1963,

they had been given the legal right to vote, to stand for election and to receive equal pay for equal work. There were now women in high-level posts in nearly all spheres in Iran. Their number was still small, but it was increasing. The main task in future would therefore be to inform women of their rights and responsibilities and to ensure the acceptance and application of those rights and responsibilities. That was the goal of the Women's Organization of Iran, formed in 1966. That organization had a vast network of branches scattered throughout the country and carried out numerous activities, such as literacy and health classes, vocational training and handicrafts, family welfare centres, child day care centres and family planning. Those activities were carried out parallel to Government programmes with the same goals, and might supplement them where necessary, for example, with adult education programmes.

The family protection law, which was passed in 1967, had strengthened women's rights and women's role with regard to marriage and the family.

Since 1968, women students, like men students, had to spend two years in the social service corps (literacy classes, home economic classes, social work or family planning).

Mrs. NIMY (Zaire) deplored the overt discrimination against women in her country, especially with regard to employment. The condition of women was particularly difficult in rural areas, where it was customary for them to do all the heavy work, even if they were sick or pregnant. However, the activities of international organizations such as FAO, WHO and UNESCO had hitherto been restricted to the large cities such as Kinshasa, where they had distributed food to the people and built maternity hospitals or schools, although hospitals and schools already existed. It would be better if those organizations concentrated on the interior of the country, where the condition of women was much more difficult than in the cities.

With regard to equal pay for equal work, it would be necessary to add "and for equal training" because vocational training should be the basis for the true emancipation of women.

The status of the unmarried mother posed a complex problem in Zaire because it was necessary to reconcile the sometimes contradictory standards of the two ways of life, the traditional and the Western, which were closely intermingled in that country.

Miss GELBER (Canada) drew the Commission's attention to the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session on the composition of the Secretariat.<sup>1/</sup> The statistical tables in the annex to the report showed that the number of qualified women holding senior and even Professional-level posts in the secretariats of United Nations bodies was very small. In her opinion, the Commission should adopt a resolution based on that statistical information.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) agreed with the representative of Canada. Moreover, there should not only be more women in the secretariats of United Nations bodies, but also in the various committees of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) stressed the important role which could be played by statistical data broken down according to sex. By requesting such information, which was not always available, women had already achieved results in the United States. For example, as a result of statistics published on the number of men students and the number of women students admitted or given scholarships, etc., legal action had been taken against institutions of higher learning. That had prompted other institutions not to wait for such action to be taken before deciding to bring about changes.

Miss ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the situation had improved somewhat at UNESCO with regard to the access of women to high-level posts, and that there was an increasing awareness of the importance of the question, especially at the highest administrative level in that organization. The Director-General had recently issued a circular on the subject.

(c) EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (E/CN.6/550)

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that there was also a growing recognition in the ILO of the need to broaden the access of women to high-level posts.

In introducing the progress report by the International Labour Office on equal pay for work of equal value (E/CN.6/550), she said that the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), adopted in 1951, had had a very substantial impact on national policies and practices in that field. It had already been ratified by 74 countries (*ibid.*, para. 3), and constituted an instrument whose implementation could be followed up by the ILO through the special ILO machinery for that purpose; that machinery consisted of an independent Committee of Experts and a standing Conference Committee, in which workers and employers were represented on an equal footing with Governments.

Although the principle of equal pay was more and more widely accepted, its implementation still encountered many practical difficulties and required sustained efforts on the part of trade unions, women's organizations and Governments. Those difficulties were mainly due to the reluctant, if not hostile, attitude of employers, who used all kinds of delaying tactics to evade the responsibility of applying the principle of equal pay.

The International Labour Review was now devoting an interesting series of articles to the question of equal pay in various countries.

In that connexion, the widespread and persistent tendency to undervalue the work of women should not be overlooked. Wages were traditionally the lowest in occupations reserved for women. Nevertheless, equal pay was only one aspect of the broader question of women's wages. It was necessary to continue to press for solutions to problems of education, vocational training, promotion of women and sharing of responsibilities and duties within the family. Some progress had been made in that direction, especially among young people, but, within the family, the woman worker still had the heaviest burden and the least rewarding duties, both at work and at home. The plight of women was even more difficult in the developing countries.

In view of the changes which had taken place in recent years, it would seem to be necessary to publish a new edition of the pamphlet on equal pay, prepared by the International Labour Office and issued by the United Nations<sup>2/</sup> about twelve years ago.

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<sup>2/</sup> Equal pay for equal work (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 60.IV.4).

She stressed the importance which the ILO attached to the elimination of all discrimination on the basis of sex, in employment, working conditions, social security, etc.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the United Nations was also increasingly aware of the need for more women in senior posts in the Secretariat. The present Secretary-General had made a statement on that subject at a press conference.

She pointed out that the recruitment policy of the United Nations followed two lines: candidates were proposed by Governments, but also - and such a possibility was perhaps not well known - individuals could apply for employment personally. Such applications were placed on a roster and considered when posts became vacant.

Questions of personnel policy and recruitment were within the purview of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. If there was to be effective action, it had to come from the Fifth Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIFTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 16 February 1972, at 10.45 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
(agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1, E/CN.6/551, E/CN.6/NGO/233, E/CN.6/NGO/237)
- (b) POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN (continued) (A/8132 and Add.1, A/8481 and Corr.1; E/CN.6/NGO/234)

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) stressed the important role which the national women's organizations in her country had played in distributing the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and in providing a translation into the Indonesian language. In developing countries like her own, whose constitutions ensured the full equality of all citizens, the problem of eliminating discrimination against women was mainly a matter of education; women had to be made aware of rights and obligations they already possessed. Generally speaking, the legal status of Indonesian women was favourable, except in some matters of family law, e.g. divorce, polygamy and inheritance. The situation was a complex one, because people in the countryside still lived in family units or clans of three distinct types, patrilineal, matrilineal and parental.

A semi-official national commission on the status of women had been set up, but had not yet proved very active owing to lack of funds. Despite the fact that over 80 per cent of women voters had participated in the last general election of July 1971, the number of women members of parliament was relatively small because the names of women candidates appeared low on party election lists in almost every case; it was hoped that the situation would be remedied at the next general election. Women were prominent in public office, in the judiciary and in higher education, where women students outnumbered men in a number of institutions. It had to be acknowledged, however, that political life put a very great strain on married women and was hard to combine with family life. For that reason, many capable women had declined to stand for election in the last general election. Nevertheless, there was a general feeling that women who had the

talent and ambition to aspire to a political career should be encouraged, since many problems could be dealt with more effectively if there were more women members of parliament.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) said that during the past two years her Government had instituted several legal changes of great benefit to women. The Women's National Commission, composed of representatives of the leading women's voluntary organizations and of the Women's Advisory Council of the Trades Union Congress, had been reconvened following the 1970 general election. The Government recognized the right of women to work and have a free choice of profession or employment, and there were few occupations from which they were excluded. There was a long tradition of non-discrimination in the government service. A report issued as the result of a recent management study on the employment of women in the non-industrial civil service recommended, inter alia, that posts in the civil service previously open only to men should be made open to both sexes. The Government had already accepted several of the recommendations resulting from that study.

A subject at present under discussion was the extent to which the Government should legislate to protect working women, especially as such legislation was seen by some as a form of discrimination. Employers considered that women should have the same freedom as men to determine by agreement with the employer, within collective bargaining systems, what their hours of work should be; the workers' representatives, recognizing that the majority of women were married and had family responsibilities, felt that they should be protected from taking on too much work outside the home. Further consultations were expected to take place on that point.

However, despite those welcome moves towards equality, areas of discrimination still remained. The Commission might turn its attention to the fact that too few women occupied really responsible jobs in public affairs, a matter not so much, perhaps, of legislation as of the lack of women possessing the necessary qualifications. Another problem which warranted serious attention was that of women combining outside work with the job of caring for a family. Many women were in fact performing a double function. That again was a problem which could not be resolved by legislation but called for a fundamental change of outlook on the respective roles of both women and men.

In conclusion, she associated herself with previous speakers in supporting the idea put forward in paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Declaration (E/CN.6/548) that certain guidelines might be suggested for Governments which submitted replies. The United Kingdom delegation had prepared a draft resolution incorporating such guidelines, and would be glad to join other delegations in a small working party to consider the matter.

Mrs. Marte de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that the elimination of discrimination against women could best be furthered by frank recognition of the extent to which the principles of the Declaration were actually being applied in the various countries. The Constitution of the Dominican Republic guaranteed equal rights for women and a study was being made of all legal and administrative provisions discriminating against women, particularly with regard to article 6 of the Declaration. Discriminatory practices still existed, particularly at the lowest levels of society, but an effort was being made to apply the principles of the Declaration in order to ensure women's full participation in society and a large number of women were in fact playing an active role in public life.

The Commission had perhaps concentrated too much on publicizing the Declaration and had not given sufficient attention to the practical problems of its implementation. The Commission's role should not be limited to passing resolutions and collecting information from countries. New strategies must be devised, including perhaps the preparation of a convention, to put an end to all discriminatory practices blocking the true emancipation of women and preventing them from participating fully in the process of economic and social development.

Mrs. Machado BONET (Uruguay) said that throughout the world there was a general trend towards the elimination of discrimination against women, particularly in authentically democratic countries where women were able to make their voices heard. On the other hand, no country could claim to have succeeded completely in that task. Indisputable progress had been made in Uruguay, but discriminatory practices still existed at all levels and in some cases it could even be said that the situation had worsened. In many professions, there was an increase in the number and quality of qualified women but on the whole women were still unrepresented in the higher posts. It was only recently, for example, that through the efforts of a non-governmental organization women had been allowed for the first time to work in the Banco de la República.

Certain discriminatory provisions were still embodied in national legislation. In the area of equal pay for equal work, for example, there was a decree (14 December 1945) still in force, which sanctioned the possibility of a maximum differential of 20 per cent in the rates for men and women, when that differential was justified by the requirements and circumstances of women and their activities. In only one area could she point to legislation which actually favoured women rather than men: a woman, but not a man, could obtain a divorce without the consent of the spouse and without having to specify the grounds.

Miss CHATON (France) gave details of publicity given to the Declaration in French professional and educational institutions, and described a major publicity campaign carried out under the auspices of a national women's magazine. The campaign had culminated in a meeting of 350 women delegates at Versailles, which had attracted the attention of the radio, television and the press and had enlisted the support of members of the Government and of the opposition parties, doubtless, in part at least, because it was held in a pre-election period. The whole operation had been widely discussed and the marked increase in the number of women elected in the subsequent municipal elections could, to some extent, be ascribed to its success in promoting the participation of women in public life.

Useful work in detecting and preventing discrimination against women, particularly with respect to admission to civil service and other public posts, was being done by an unofficial round-table conference of women, while a committee on women's labour set up in 1971 within the French Ministry of Labour was attempting to deal with the problems of women working in the private sector. Bodies of that kind performed a very useful function in acting, as it were, as watchdogs against discrimination.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that specific decisions had to be taken at the Commission's twenty-fourth session on the subject under consideration, because discrimination against women continued to be practised in many parts of the world, despite the existence of international instruments aimed at its elimination. Discrimination against women was most widespread in political life, but in a number of countries it also existed in the sphere of education, employment, industrial relations, etc.

After referring to the statement in paragraph 50 of the Secretary-General's report that in many countries there existed a discrepancy between the situation in law and the situation in fact (see E/CN.6/548, para. 50), she quoted a number of facts and figures to illustrate the equality which women enjoyed in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. In the two years which had elapsed since the Commission's twenty-third session, Byelorussian women had advanced still further towards full integration and participation in political, economic and cultural life, and still greater advances in the status of women were expected to result from a variety of measures included in the current five-year plan of national development. In that connexion, she emphatically refuted the suggestion made by the United States representative at the 574th meeting that women in the socialist countries did not occupy high administrative posts, and adduced a series of facts to demonstrate the contrary.

In order to make efforts to eliminate discrimination throughout the world more effective, the Commission would do well to review the international instruments already adopted by the United Nations and its specialized agencies in the light of changing conditions. Such instruments as the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (General Assembly resolution 640 (VII)) and the ILO Conventions No. 100 concerning equal remuneration, No. 103 concerning maternity protection and No. 111 concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation had undoubtedly exercised a positive influence in their time, but now appeared inadequate in view of the numerous provisos and reservations, which often made their provisions ineffective. All the useful elements of existing international instruments should be brought together in a single text and, taking the provisions of the Declaration of Elimination of Discrimination against Women as a starting point, the Commission should draft a new convention which would be legally binding upon all States that signed and ratified it. She hoped that the draft resolution to that effect which was to be submitted to the Commission would be considered with due attention.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said that her country's Constitution and laws guaranteed total equality for women, and vigorous steps were being taken to combat discrimination where it still occurred for economic reasons or as a result of

prejudice. The information contained in paragraph 22 of the summary of information relating to the status of women contained in periodic reports on human rights, prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/551) concerning a Government decree passed in Hungary in 1967 was not entirely correct. The decree was related to article 10, paragraph 2, of the Declaration rather than to article 10, paragraph 1 (d), in that it enabled women to take maternity leave until their child was three years of age, with the guarantee of returning to their former employment. Moreover, the woman's contact with her job was maintained throughout the leave period, so that the three years' absence could be made up without much difficulty, except, possibly, in the case of women engaged in highly-qualified intellectual work. Progressive new legislation such as that embodied in the decree, together with the provision of increased numbers of nursery schools and other facilities for young children, was already resulting in a marked reduction of absenteeism among women workers; it should be noted, however, that only a relatively small proportion of women availed themselves of the option of remaining at home for the full period of three years.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said that, while she welcomed the progress noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration, it was clear that there was still too great a discrepancy between women's legal status and their social status. The enactment of legislation was meaningless unless it was followed by specific measures to enable women to play their proper role in society. The time had come for the Commission to concern itself with the real status of women and to ensure that the concept was understood as applying to their social as well as to their legal position. With regard to the guidelines referred to in paragraph 7 of the report, she would suggest that the Commission should ask for more detailed information on the social measures taken in application of the principles and, where possible, the results obtained.

Society in her country had been transformed in the course of the last 25 years. Women had full equality of rights under the law and played a significant part in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the country. There were still important problems to be solved, however, before women could successfully combine their public role with their role as wives and mothers, and

there were still certain outmoded ideas and practices to be overcome. Studies were being carried out by the Romanian Council of Women, which to some extent fulfilled the role of the national commissions on the status of women that had been set up in several countries. The practice of establishing national commissions connected with the United Nations Commission should be made as widespread as possible.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) said that, although her Government had not submitted any report on the implementation of the Declaration, a number of legislative measures had been taken to improve the status of women in Iraq. The Provisional Constitution of 19 July 1970, the National Action Charter of 15 November 1971 and Labour Law No. 151 of 1970 contained provisions guaranteeing equal rights for women, protection for the family, greater participation of women in the process of economic and social development and improved working conditions for women. The statistics on the participation of women in education, industry and government all pointed to the progress that had been made, but women still aspired to greater rights and greater participation in the future.

The discussion in the Commission had centred on the need to give women more rights. She would also like to emphasize the need for women to assume greater responsibilities. In many countries it was a new experience for men to work side by side with women, and if women, by assuming their responsibilities and demonstrating their ability and competence, made that experience positive, then much progress would be made in overcoming prejudice and discrimination.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of her right of reply, said that at the 574th meeting the United States representative had suggested that women in the socialist countries still occupied an insignificant proportion of high-level posts. She did not know what sources the United States representative had used, but the official statistics of the Soviet Union gave quite a different picture. There could be no doubt that the Soviet Union was far in advance of the capitalist countries in solving the problems of the status of women and the situations in the Soviet Union and the United States of America were in no way comparable. American women had a long and stubborn fight before them in order to obtain a place in society similar to that held by women in the Soviet Union.

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Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America), speaking in exercise of her right of reply, said she had referred in her statement to democratic and socialist countries, not, as the Soviet representative appeared to believe, to the socialist countries alone. She had simply been alluding to the fact that it was clear from every single report made by representatives to the Commission that women did not hold the top posts. No doubt every country had some women in high positions, but the Commission should recognize that all the real positions of power were held by men. It was difficult to make adequate comparisons between one country and another because the titles used were often very different. While much progress might have been made, it would be misleading to suggest that a great deal did not remain to be done.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SIXTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 16 February 1972, at 3.05 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
(agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1, E/CN.6/551, E/CN.6/NGO/233, E/CN.6/NGO/237)
- (b) POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN (continued) (A/8132 and Add.1, A/8481 and Corr.1, E/CN.6/NGO/234)

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) referred to the statement by the representative of the Secretary-General at the 573rd meeting that the information supplied by Member States on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women did not lend itself to a comparison of the progress achieved in the various countries or to an objective assessment of existing conditions. In that connexion, she suggested that the Commission should provide guidelines for Governments on the choice of the information to be supplied, asking them to describe the difficulties encountered and the results obtained and on the social measures adopted to implement the Declaration.

With regard to the revision of the Commission's programme of work, she thought that the task of studying existing recommendations and submitting proposals on the subject should be entrusted to a working party.

The Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/548 and Add.1) showed that one of the main obstacles preventing women from exercising their rights was the traditional concept of the respective roles of men and women in the family and in society. That concept caused difficulties for women who wished to combine family occupations with a profession. The Belgian delegation thought that the real remedy lay in education; young people should be given free theoretical and practical instruction on human rights in mixed classes, and such instruction should be compulsory.

Belgium had noted with interest the new arrangements for disseminating the Declaration which it was proposed to adopt in Finland. In Belgium, it was the

non-governmental organizations which had hitherto been responsible for its dissemination, but the Government now intended to take a hand as well. It had organized a seminar on women's rights, following which it had instructed a commission to recommend measures for eliminating discrimination against women.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) said she agreed with those representatives who had expressed regret that women were insufficiently represented in senior posts in the United Nations Secretariat. In Argentina, the Government had taken a number of measures to make the Declaration better known, by the dissemination of information through all the mass media, and in particular by means of a quarterly bulletin, El Servicio Nacional de la Mujer (see E/CN.6/548, paras. 11 and 15).

Since the passing of Act 11.357 of 1926, the married woman in Argentina enjoyed full civil rights and could manage her property, including property she acquired during her marriage, and could dispose of it. She could, without her husband's or any legal authorization, exercise whatever profession she chose and the income from it was at her own disposal. An amendment to the Civil Code in 1971 provided that neither the husband nor the wife could dispose of their real property without the consent of the other, if they had children under full age. That provision was intended to protect not only the children, but also the woman herself.

With regard to political rights, Argentine women could, since the passing of Act No. 13.010 of 1959, vote and be elected. In the 1958 elections, a woman had registered her candidacy to the presidency, on the second list, which evidenced the entry of women into political life. There were, however, still few women deputies and senators, owing to a lack of candidates.

She believed that, in order to bring about a general awareness of the problem, the question of education should receive attention, failing which national legislation and declarations by the General Assembly of the United Nations would take effect only very slowly.

Referring to the USSR draft resolution on a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women (E/CN.6/L.599), she observed, first, that the draft would be submitted to the General Assembly, in which most of the representatives

were men, and secondly, that the need was not so much to have one more convention as to put the instruments which already existed into practice.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) said that, in her country, wide publicity had been given to the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women by all information media. The provisions of the Declaration were in line with Tunisian national legislation. Tunisia had a single programme of education for girls and boys; schools were mixed; there was a system of educational guidance and the Women's Union sought to ensure that girls received vocational training in the same way as boys. There were women councillors on every local council. All posts were open to women and, while there were still few women in the National Assembly, their number had quadrupled at the last elections.

With regard to the draft resolution of the Soviet Union proposing the preparation of a convention reproducing the provisions of the Declaration, the Tunisian delegation thought that it would be more realistic to re-emphasize existing international standards and, if necessary, to revise them or prepare new ones, and to consider measures for helping Governments to combat discrimination. Once countries had enacted non-discriminatory legislation and international standards encouraging the enactment of such legislation had been drawn up, the time would be ripe to envisage a convention, which countries would then be in a position to ratify and apply, since most of them would have laws conforming to its provisions.

Miss DEHARENG (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that her organization had certain reservations concerning the proposal to convert the Declaration into a convention, because it was concerned about the effects that a United Nations "maxi-convention" on the rights of women might have on the normative activities of the ILO. Through the ILO, the International Conference of Free Trade Unions had available to it a number of international instruments in whose preparation workers' representatives had directly participated; the ILO also provided machinery for preparing conventions and for periodically revising or supplementing them when necessary. That procedure was being applied at the present time in the case of certain conventions on the employment of women. On the other hand, any draft prepared by

the Commission would be considered by the Economic and Social Council and by the General Assembly, in which only Governments were represented. The result might be the conclusion of an international convention couched in rigid and very general terms which might in fact retard rather than accelerate the economic and social advancement of women, and would hamper the efforts of the workers' representatives who, in the ILO, had the same rights as those of Governments and employers.

Mrs. JACCARD (International Federation of Business and Professional Women), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, gave some additional information on legislation in the Netherlands, where the minimum salary for both sexes from the age of 24 had been fixed by an Act of 1968 (see E/CN.6/550, para. 82). That legislation still allowed for a number of exceptions, but such derogations were for a limited period and it was expected that, as from 1 May 1972, all distinctions based on sex would be abolished.

Mrs. ERNST-HENRION (International Federation of Women in Legal Careers), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, suggested that the Secretary-General should be asked to make a list of those national constitutions which recognized the principle of the equality of men and women and the principle of non-discrimination based on sex; a list of national laws providing a legal remedy against any infringement of equality of rights and, in particular, of the principle of equal pay for equal work; and a list of national commissions on the status of women or analogous institutions, with a description of their composition and powers.

The CHAIRMAN declared the debate on subitems (a) and (b) closed.

(c) EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (continued)\* (E/CN.6/550)

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) said that her country had ratified the ILO Conventions No. 100 on equal remuneration and No. 111 on discrimination in respect of employment and occupation in 1968 and 1959, respectively (see E/CN.6/550, paras. 3 and 4). However, actual conditions left much to be desired, because women would have to receive the same education in order to obtain the same wages and do the same work as men, but such was not yet the case. Training for girls was often restricted to the so-called women's occupations and employers also tended to

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\* Resumed from the 574th meeting.

give preference to men, so as not to run the risk of female absenteeism, for example. Therefore, much remained to be done at all levels if equal pay for equal work was to be achieved.

Her delegation thought that the ILO recommendation No. 117 on vocational training might be revised in such a way as to contain a specific reference to the elimination of all discrimination against women and to indicate the arrangements needed to enable girls to receive the same training as boys. With regard to practical measures, social institutions such as day-care centres should be set up to enable mothers to work outside the home.

Mrs. NIMY (Zaire) thought that equal pay could hardly be discussed until conditions had been created which would ensure that girls could obtain vocational and technical training. That lack of training was a great handicap to women and might support the theory that they were incapable of serious work. Although the women of Zaire attached great importance to their role as mothers, they had realized that women in other countries succeeded in acquiring the necessary knowledge to become skilled workers. In the Republic of Zaire, girls married between the ages of 14 and 16 and, as a result, had no real security because they might subsequently be abandoned by their husbands and have no means of livelihood. Of course, the women of Zaire were gratified at being given the opportunity of becoming Secretaries of State or Ministers, but, in the developing countries, it would be better for women not to assume power before acquiring the necessary knowledge to hold high-level positions. Otherwise, they might prove incompetent, which would run counter to the desired goal. Zaire was a young nation and its women hoped to be able to count on the assistance of women in the more developed countries who had encountered the same difficulties in the past and had succeeded in overcoming them. With regard to employment opportunities, it was important to remember that, if women chose the same occupations as men, they had to be able to work in the same conditions as their male colleagues. Therefore, some occupations such as the military profession and certain others should not be considered by women, because they might lead to difficult situations.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) said that in Japan an Act of 1947 had embodied the principle of equal pay for equal work. The Japanese Government had also ratified

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ILO Convention No. 100 on equal remuneration. In addition, the 1959 minimum wage law protected women against excessively low wages. Since the ratification of the ILO Convention, a number of women's organizations and trade unions had discussed the question of equal pay. For its part, the Government had tried to give greater publicity to that issue.

A great deal of progress had been made in employment in recent years. There were many more women in positions previously reserved for men. There was a growing realization of the results of giving women access to higher education, which offered them the prospect of well-paid employment. The efforts of the ILO and the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations should therefore be concentrated on vocational training and guidance.

In order to overcome the obstacles to the application of the principle of equal pay, Japanese women workers did not hesitate, when necessary, to bring legal action against their employers. The legal decisions in that field were encouraging. In Japan, there was a minimum wage committee composed of representatives of workers, employers and the general public, and it was mandatory for at least one woman to be included in that committee. That system was very important, because it was well known that, in occupations exercised mainly by women, wages, which were usually set by men, tended to be very low.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) said that her country was striving to implement the principles of the ILO Conventions and of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Nigerian legislation which had been in force since 1958 protected the working woman. For example, it contained special provisions for maternity leave and nursing mothers, and prohibited too heavy work by women. The rules of employment for civil servants made no distinction based on sex. Under the previous Government, there had been women ministers and senators posts and women had played an important role in various regions. Some had represented Nigeria in the United Nations General Assembly. In the present Government, women held high-level positions in various States and had been appointed because of their work and efficiency. At present, the Government applied the policy of equal pay for equal work.

Nigerian women were greatly interested in the work of the Commission and of the United Nations and had asked many questions in that connexion. It was evident

that stress should be laid on training, because without education women could not be equal to men. Nigeria was a developing country and Nigerian women hoped to win their cause in order to be able to assume their role in the social, political, economic and cultural life of the country.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that the word "pay" in the expression "equal pay" should certainly be understood in the very broad sense of the term. The principle of equal pay should therefore apply to pensions. However, in the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, there was flagrant discrimination against women with regard to the benefits payable after their death. Although a woman staff member paid the same rate of contribution to the Fund as her male colleagues, the benefit payable to her spouse after her death was less. A recent proposal by the Joint Staff Pension Board of the Joint Staff Pension Fund only made that discrimination worse. The fact that an institution which proclaimed the principle of non-discrimination had a pension scheme which discriminated against women increased the difficulties of women trying to bring about the adoption of an equitable pension scheme in their countries.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that, in many cases, the reason women did not have equal pay with men was not legislative or other provisions, but rather that they accepted such discrimination as a result of the pressures to which they were subjected. It would, therefore, be useful to take specific action designed to change the outlook of women in society as a whole, with a view to eliminating customs which were obstacles to their emancipation.

Miss ZAHRAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, like the representative of Zaire, she wished to stress the importance of training. UNESCO was fighting for equal access to education at all levels for girls and women and was giving special attention to access for women to technical education. Programmes in that field were to be submitted to the UNESCO General Conference in 1972. If they were approved, they would be implemented in collaboration with the ILO. The aim was to give women the same education as men, so that they could do the same work.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said she supported the ILO's general recommendations concerning the obstacles to be overcome in order to give full effect to the principle of equal pay for equal work (ibid., paras. 122 and 123). The problem was by no means simple, since it was not only a matter of enacting legislation. In the United States of America, an attempt had been made to determine the causes of the inequalities which persisted despite legislation and despite the vigilance which had been shown. With regard to promotion possibilities, for example, men obtained certain jobs because their training was more thorough than that of women. Efforts had therefore been made to give women an opportunity of catching up. It was not a matter of granting them special treatment, but rather of recognizing that additional assistance was required to restore a situation of equality. Assistance of that kind was provided both by the State governments and by private enterprise.

In many countries, girls were taught to identify themselves with their mothers and boys with their fathers, so that the role of girls was already well-defined at a very early age. The use of the word "man" or "woman" was common in documents, regulations and practices; if equality was really to be achieved, it would be better to use the word "person". There was also a tendency to draw a distinction between the role of girls and that of boys in school text books and programmes.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said she had just read in a Norwegian newspaper that men would henceforth have access to the profession of midwifery. If men had access to the so-called "women's" professions, the result might perhaps be an improvement in the salaries in those very important professions.

Referring to paragraphs 87 to 90 of the report by the International Labour Office on equal pay for work of equal value (E/CN.6/550), she said that the proposals of the Norwegian Equal Pay Council were being studied so that the special wage groupings for men and women could be eliminated. However, in Norway, the majority of women workers were still in the lowest wage groupings. To remedy that situation, women should be urged to acquire proper vocational training. Both parents should also be given the possibility of working, in the knowledge that their children were being cared for; it was, therefore, essential to establish day-care centres.

The preamble to the Constitution of the ILO stated that one of the organization's functions was to protect women on the labour market. At the 1919 Conference at Washington, the Norwegian representative had entered reservations on that subject, except in the case of pregnant women and nursing mothers, and since then, the Norwegian Government had constantly opposed the idea of special protection for women whenever the matter had arisen in connexion with ILO conventions and recommendations. In Norway, the Government and all the bodies concerned considered, in fact, that all workers should be protected against arduous or dangerous work, but that special protective measures for women were to be avoided, since they would always be obstacles in the way of equality of employment and pay.

The discriminatory measures against women contained in the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, to which the representative of Canada had referred, existed in the systems of many countries and were definitely part of the equal pay question. If the Canadian representative submitted a draft resolution on the subject, Norway would support it. Consideration should perhaps also be given to the situation of the single woman, who paid the same contribution as other staff members and left nothing to anyone on her death.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) said that the title of ILO Convention No. 100 concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value did not correspond to the facts of modern life. There were very few cases where women did work equal to that of men, except in the civil service. In the manual worker category, women were practically always at lower levels and, as a general rule, the basic wage for women was different from that for men. The argument used to justify that inequality was the physical superiority of men, but that argument was becoming less and less valid with the increasing mechanization of industrial work. The Austrian delegation proposed that the ILO should draw up standards and objective methods for job analysis and evaluation. That would facilitate the establishment of more equitable wage categories, from which women manual workers would benefit.

Miss DEHARENG (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that wage discrimination began with the

fixing of the minimum wage. The Confederation also wished to see the application of an over-all social policy for the family, re-establishing equality by means of family allowances for workers with family responsibilities and providing for family assistance services.

The bogey of unemployment was often used to justify wage inequality. The Confederation was opposed to the view that it was normal to offer women the choice between lower wages or unemployment.

The inequality of wages was due not only to the difference in the qualifications required of men and women. It depended on many other factors: the level of wages in industries where male workers were preponderant, the degree and effectiveness of trade union organization, for example. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions wished to affirm that the main obstacle to equal pay was the attitude of employers. The progress so far achieved had been due to the trade unions, which had strenuously fought to eliminate discrimination against women in that respect.

At the international level, the Confederation was studying the problems of women workers; it was encouraging women to organize themselves and train leaders capable of playing an active part in the trade union movement. The Confederation had decided to organize a conference on equal pay in 1972, with a view to drawing up a new strategy for overcoming the opposition to the effective implementation of that principle. The Confederation believed that the Commission would recognize the essential role of the trade unions in that matter and would support it by encouraging women to combine in the defence of their rights.

Mrs. KUUSINEN (Women's International Democratic Federation), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, thought that the application of the principles contained in the ILO Convention No. 100 and Recommendations on equal pay was logically linked with the guaranteeing of women's right to work and to equal access to general, vocational, technical and scientific education. The Federation noted from the information received from its 107 affiliated national organizations that, except in certain countries, in particular the socialist countries, discrimination in the matter of employment and equal pay was general. That was

why the women of the countries in question were calling for the enactment of the necessary laws and regulations to ensure that their rights were respected. The problem posed by the existence of discriminatory measures against women in employment and pay was a serious one at a time when large numbers of women were entering the labour market. The Federation had therefore asked its affiliated organizations to make surveys and studies on the application of international instruments and of national provisions guaranteeing the rights of women. The Federation was very active and had, in particular, organized several seminars and congresses.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

## MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

held on Thursday, 17 February 1972, at 10.40 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
(agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

(c) EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (continued) (E/CN.6/550)

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that, as her country was not one of those described in chapter II of the report of the International Labour Office on equal pay for work of equal value (E/CN.6/550), she proposed to fill the gap by giving a brief description of the situation in Thailand. Since Thailand was still predominantly an agricultural country, the greater part of the female labour force was employed in the agricultural sector. The growth of industry had, however, widened employment opportunities for women and there had been an increase in vocational training for women. More and more women were seeking employment and working on an equal footing with men in all kinds of jobs.

The Constitution proclaimed equality of rights and the Labour Code confirmed the principle of ~~non-discrimination~~ against women workers in all fields. The Department of Labour regulations required that women should be employed on the same terms and conditions as men and that they should be judged purely on their merits. Maternity leave amounted to two months, for which a woman was entitled to one month's salary. There were provisions prohibiting women from working at night in certain industries and from engaging in certain strenuous or dangerous occupations. There were as yet no laws on employment and sickness insurance but it was expected that legislation would be enacted in the near future. Women government employees, however, already had pension rights.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that it was clear from the International Labour Office report and from the discussions in the Commission that the principle of equal pay for equal work could not be truly applied until women were given greater access to education and training and fully equal employment and promotion opportunities. That was obviously no easy matter, since many of the factors involved lay outside the scope of legislation, and there was therefore a need to devise national policies to assist Governments, employers, workers and women's associations in working towards that goal.

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She would like to stress the importance of objective job classification and evaluation, the need to combat the traditional image of woman as a housewife and the need to bring about a change in the psychological attitude of women themselves. Women had an important role to play in promoting social change and should not expect it to come about automatically. Acceptance of the principle of equal pay sometimes adversely affected employment opportunities and it was more difficult for women workers to do their jobs well because of the lack of legitimate social assistance in caring for their children; they were thus caught in a vicious circle of discrimination.

The question of equal pay was also affected by economic factors. It was much easier to apply the principle in an expanding economy where women's contribution was welcomed, but in the developing countries whose economies were largely agricultural, women had more traditional roles and were not generally wage-earners. They were also the first victims of the problems caused by over-population and under-employment, but it should be stressed that in such situations, where the dependent population might be as large as 50 per cent, the contribution of women to the national economy was even more vital.

She welcomed the reference in the report to women's right to freedom as an essential prerequisite for economic and social development and wished to emphasize the importance of the freedom of women to choose the type of work they wanted to do. Certain kinds of job were traditionally regarded as being too strenuous or dangerous for women, but some women might be suited to them and should not be automatically excluded on the ground of their sex. While there were many problems to be overcome in applying the principle of equal pay for equal work, there was no excuse for delaying the incorporation of the principle in legislation, since legislation was in itself an important instrument of social change.

In Egypt, the principle of equality was fully endorsed in the Constitution and in labour legislation, and girls had equal access with boys to education up to and including the university level. The number of women students attending universities was increasing at a much faster rate than that of men, and that situation had in fact prompted an attempt to close certain types of training

to women. Fortunately, that move had been defeated, but there was a great need for all kinds of vocational training for school-leavers and for better co-ordination between training and labour requirements.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) said that the movement towards equal pay in the United Kingdom had been given a great impetus by the adoption of the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the ratification of the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) in 1971 (*ibid.*, para. 3). The provisions of the Equal Pay Act were described in paragraphs 111-113 of the International Labour Office's report. It was clear, however, that the principle in itself was not sufficient; there had to be a change in attitude towards women's work on the part of the public, trade unions, employers and women themselves.

In that connexion, she wished to comment on some of the obstacles to equal pay listed in paragraph 121 of the report. She agreed that there was no objective method of determining the weighting to be used for factors such as skill and efficiency, but in the United Kingdom the Equal Pay Act did exclude the cruder kind of job evaluation and the methods used were not expected to discriminate unfairly against women. She also agreed that the interpretation of "work of equal value" might give rise to problems. The United Kingdom legislation required that equal pay should be given for the same or broadly similar work, and individual cases could be referred to industrial tribunals by the worker or the employer. With regard to the lack of adequate factual information, the Department of Employment received details of national collective agreements and statutory wage orders, on the basis of which it would supervise progress towards the implementation of equal pay. There was no evidence of unwillingness to accept the equal pay principle in the United Kingdom. Before the passing of the Equal Pay Act, there had been extensive negotiations with the Confederation of British Industries, which had fully endorsed the principle. The only disagreements had been on the question of timing. With regard to the integration of equal pay in wider incomes or economic policy, the estimated cost in the United Kingdom was 3 1/2 per cent of the national wage and salary bill. However, the transitional period provided for in the Act should give employers time to adapt themselves. The Government itself was pursuing a policy of progressive

implementation over the five-year period in the sectors for which it was directly responsible. The trade unions had played a full part in promoting the Equal Pay Act and no trade union opposition to its implementation was expected. The fact that an increasing number of women were trade union members should ensure trade union support. It was clear that the passing of the Act had already prompted employers and trade unions to consider women for a wider range of jobs.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) said that her country had ratified both the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) (ibid., paras. 3 and 4), and that there were no differentials between wage rates for men and women workers in Iraq either in law or in practice.

Various suggestions had been put forward in connexion with the obstacles to the achievement of equal pay represented by the lack of equal education and the traditional concepts of "women's work" and "men's work". In her country, girls had exactly the same educational opportunities as boys and followed exactly the same curricula. Why was it then that the girls tended to choose traditional women's jobs? The process of conditioning began at a very early age in the home and was reinforced at school by teachers and by the fact that educational materials, such as reading books, tended to perpetuate traditional concepts. Girls naturally modelled themselves on their mothers, as boys did on their fathers. Certain Norwegian studies had shown that boys whose fathers were away much of the time and who were brought up in an essentially feminine atmosphere tended to be less masculine in character. When stressing the need for equality of education, the Commission should bear in mind the possible consequences of giving boys and girls an identical upbringing in a world in which a distinction was made between men's and women's roles. That system might well pose even more problems for women.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said it was clear from the report of the International Labour Office that much remained to be done to implement the principle of equal pay for equal work. In the developed countries, the difficulties encountered were largely due to prejudice and traditional attitudes,

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whereas in the developing countries they were mainly due to lack of employment opportunities. While the obstacles listed in chapter III of the report were complex and related to all countries, the fact remained that economic conditions also played a fundamental part. In the Philippines, the political, social and legal status of women was high, but their economic status remained precarious because of adverse economic conditions. There had been an increase in the number of employed women but also in the number of unemployed women, since the economy was unable to absorb the surplus labour force. In a situation of unemployment and under-employment, women were particularly vulnerable with regard to employment opportunities and equal pay. While labour legislation did not discriminate against women in the Philippines, the principle of equality was not fully applied in practice. About two thirds of labour law violations related to girls and women, but the economic situation forced them to accept an unequal status.

The Bureau of Women and Minors had set up a Women and Minors Auxiliary whose function it was to inform women workers of their rights and privileges and to minimize exploitation by employers. Non-governmental organizations were taking an increasing interest in the problems facing women workers and there was a growing awareness in the Asian region of the need for women to exert their rights and assume their responsibilities.

Her delegation would like to endorse the recommendations in paragraphs 122-125 of the report and also to suggest that the Commission should consider the status of women agricultural workers, since in developing countries the majority of women workers were employed in agriculture. The Commission could perhaps request FAO and the ILO to submit reports on that subject. Her delegation would also like to recommend that there should be more technical assistance projects relating to women workers. With the adoption of country programming by UNDP, such projects could now be formulated at the national level. Her Government had been the first country to submit to UNDP its country programme proposal for assistance in the period 1972-1976, and she hoped that representatives of other developing countries in the Commission would ensure that projects relating to the advancement of women were included in their respective country programme proposals. The economic emancipation of women was basic to the attainment of their worth and dignity as individuals and as useful members of society.

Miss CHATON (France) said that in her country the differential between men's and women's wages was less pronounced at the level of the basic wage than at that of the real wage, where it sometimes amounted to 20 or 22 per cent or even to 30 per cent. The matter was giving rise to numerous discussions on the French radio and elsewhere, and the Committee on Women's Labour, to which she had referred in her statement at the 575th meeting, was specifically concerned with it. The situation had shown some improvement in recent years in the case of the lowest-paid categories of workers, but no marked improvement was as yet recorded at the professional level. In the private sector, many employers disregarded the existing legal provisions concerning equal pay for work of equal value; it would be interesting to obtain information on the results of coercive legislation which certain countries had introduced in that field. In the absence of such legislation, however, much could be accomplished by making women aware of their rights and encouraging them to insist on those rights when accepting employment within the framework of collective agreements.

Improved vocational training for women was another important issue currently under consideration by the Committee on Women's Labour. In that connexion she referred to a new system of "continuous vocational training" which had been introduced during the past year and was officially defined as a "national obligation". That system provided for special leave of absence for workers taking further training courses, the wage paid during the leave period being not less than 80 per cent of the national minimum wage, with additional benefits for women workers with children. The approval and encouragement of the women worker's family constituted an essential factor in making the system effective; in addition, it was necessary to convince employers of the economic advantages to be obtained by encouraging workers to undergo further training, whether in the form of in-service training or of refresher courses after a prolonged period of absence from work. The proportion of women availing themselves of the new system was as yet very low; possible methods of increasing it that had been suggested were the introduction of a regulation whereby the number of women from any particular enterprise who had to be granted facilities for further training would be made directly proportional to the total number of women employed in that

enterprise, and the granting of additional leave of one or two months to women returning to work after maternity leave for the express purpose of further training.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) accepted the 11 points listed in paragraph 121 of the International Labour Office report as very real obstacles to the application of equal pay, particularly in the developing countries where the difficulties were principally of an economic nature. Indonesia had ratified the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) (*ibid.*, para. 3) and had put into force a Labour Act which included specific provisions for the protection of women and children; some of those provisions, such as that allowing women two days' special leave a month, were possibly unique in the world. However, much remained to be done, especially in the private sector. For example, the batik industry did not come under the Labour Act although the manufacture of batik, traditionally performed by women and therefore regarded as a low-paid occupation, in fact required considerable skill. Unemployment was sufficiently widespread in Indonesia to make women workers hesitate to take maternity leave for fear of losing their job. The enrolment of women in secondary schools and universities was unusually high, but there was at present a slight trend towards limiting it, because women graduates were often reluctant to accept posts in remote parts of the country; many women doctors, dentists and pharmacists married after graduation and so became entitled to jobs in the area where their husbands were employed.

In conclusion, she endorsed the recommendation put forward by the representative of the Philippines and inquired whether the problem of women in agriculture was to be given special consideration by the Commission and, if so, under what agenda item.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said that her country had ratified both the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) (*ibid.*; paras. 3 and 4). However, the factual situation was not determined by law alone but also by a variety of other factors, including social and psychological ones. A comprehensive study carried out by a committee on the status of women appointed by the Finnish Government in 1966

showed that women's earnings were lower than men's because of inadequate training, because jobs assigned to women often required less skill, and because jobs traditionally entrusted to women, even when requiring considerable skill, were undervalued. In that connexion, she endorsed the views expressed by previous speakers regarding the importance of introducing efficient job classification or job appraisal methods. The Finnish Committee on the Status of Women had recommended, inter alia, the setting up of a special body to promote equality of the sexes and to break down the existing classification of certain types of work as being suitable for one sex only.

While generally agreeing with the conclusions of the report (ibid., paras. 124 and 125), she remarked that although adult workers were generally divided into two categories according to their sex, young workers tended to be lumped together under the general heading of "youth"; that was surely a mistaken approach, since youth included at least 50 per cent of young women, whose special needs had to be taken into account from the outset. The broad category of women workers should similarly be subdivided into single and married women, those having children or other dependants, etc.

On the subject of protection of women at work, she agreed with the observation of the Norwegian representative (576th meeting) that special measures of protection for women were not justified except during pregnancy and nursing; neither men nor women should be allowed to work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions. Finally, she emphasized the importance of adequate day-care facilities in advancing the status of women in economic life. It was surprising that the question should not have received greater attention during the present discussion; women could not realistically be expected to exercise their rights or to achieve greater equality as long as the burden of making day-care arrangements for young children was left to individual mothers or employers.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) drew attention to the work of the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin, and particularly to the Seminar on the Training of Girls and Women in relation to Employment Opportunities in Europe held at the Centre from 28 June to 1 July 1971, the discussion at which was summarized in annex II of the report of the International Labour Office on ILO activities of special interest in relation to the employment

of women (E/CN.6/556). Although the seminar had discussed the problem of the training of girls and women in relation to employment opportunities in Europe only, the principal points emerging from the discussion were applicable to the life and work of women in most other parts of the world and deserved to be widely known. The Commission might usefully enter into closer collaboration with the Centre under the terms of Economic and Social Council resolution 1513 (XLVIII) of 28 May 1970, entitled "Repercussions of scientific and technological progress on the status of women workers".

In Romania, the problem of equal pay did not exist, the right to work being guaranteed to all citizens and women having free access, on the basis of their qualifications, to all trades and professions. Vocational guidance and training were of an extremely high standard, with the result that large numbers of women benefited from specialized training courses; three quarters of the women in industry were skilled workers, while large numbers of women working on the land took agricultural and veterinary courses. The national system of vocational training had recently been reorganized and from 1972 onwards still greater opportunities would be available for women to improve their qualifications at all levels. Almost one half of all women workers already possessed secondary education diplomas and more than one third had a university education. Women represented 30 per cent of the total number of teachers in higher educational establishments, 20 per cent of all engineers and 36 per cent of scientific research workers. There were many women judges, magistrates and notaries public, and the national unions of writers, composers, journalists and visual artists likewise included large numbers of women.

The CHAIRMAN, replying to the Indonesian representative, said that the question of women in agriculture would be discussed under agenda item 6.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-EIGHTH MEETING

held on Thursday, 17 February 1972, at 3.10 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
(agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

(c) EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (continued) (E/CN.6/550)

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the International Labour Office had submitted a very useful report on the question of equal pay for work of equal value (E/CN.6/550). She regretted that so few States had ratified the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and that many of those that had did not observe its provisions.

The wage discrimination practised against women in the capitalist countries resulted from ownership of the means of production by employers, which gave them absolute power over working conditions and wages. Governments should play a more active part in employer-worker relations and the ILO should again make an urgent appeal to the Governments of countries where the principle of equal pay was not observed. The trade unions, too, should attach more importance to the observance of that principle, particularly when negotiating collective agreements.

Pointing out that the Equal Remuneration Convention did not include provisions guaranteeing observance of the obligations entered into by the contracting parties, she stressed the value of a new convention aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination - even the most subtle - against women.

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that in her country women already had access to high-level positions in nearly all branches of the economy. That still applied, however, only to the minority of privileged women who had received the necessary education. Much remained to be done to improve the working conditions and wages of the great majority of less favoured women, such as industrial, domestic, rural and handicraft workers, who were particularly exploited. Indigenous women also constituted a very underprivileged minority.

International organizations like UNESCO and the ILO might propose standards and methods for improving such conditions. The Commission, too, might seek to

contribute more effectively to a solution of the problems by direct activities (seminars, etc.) either within member countries or at the regional level. She stressed the importance of voluntary activity in response to the call of duty towards social ends.

She agreed that the number of women in senior positions in the secretariats of United Nations agencies should be increased.

Mrs. ROUHI (Iran) said that although Iran had not ratified the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), the principle had long been incorporated in Iranian law and that Iran had ratified the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) in 1964. The real way of eliminating discrimination against women was to ensure that they received good vocational training and to change the traditional attitudes which were deeply ingrained among both men and women.

The principle of equal pay for equal work was included in the Iranian National Labour Code. In addition, many Iranian firms provided on-the-job training for both men and women. Women could thus obtain the same training as men; the test was whether they really wanted it.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that in her country, where the Government owned the means of production, the standards relating to working conditions, equal pay, etc., were scrupulously applied and any violation was severely punished.

She supported the proposal that a convention should be prepared on the elimination of discrimination against women, establishing, inter alia, the principle of equal pay.

The report of the International Labour Office was of great interest. She agreed with the statement in paragraph 124 that what was needed above all was to provide good education for women and to ensure better co-ordination of the efforts, public and private, to encourage them to take advantage of the facilities available to them. On the other hand, she could not support the idea of an ad hoc bipartite committee in which employers' and workers' organizations would join in an effort to find a common approach to the full application of the principle of equal pay (ibid., para. 12); there was no doubt that the former would attempt to impose their will on the latter.

Nor could she agree with the Director-General of the ILO regarding the technical difficulties of interpreting the expression "work of equal value" (ibid., para. 121, subpara. (2)); the obstacle to equal remuneration did not lie in difficulties of interpretation, but in the discriminatory policy applied by employers with regard to women; in any event, the expression "work of equal value" was artificial and in itself implied discrimination against women.

In conclusion, she supported the proposal for the preparation of a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) said that the report of the International Labour Office was extremely useful. She also agreed that equal pay should be accompanied by equal educational facilities and equal access to high-level posts.

In Uruguay, the law made no distinction between women's and men's wages but, in practice, the principle of equality was sometimes evaded; some occupations were reserved for men; occupations regarded as typically female were classified as "unskilled", even if they required a high degree of specialization; the laws protecting maternity were often used to restrict the labour market for women; the trade unions sometimes proved recalcitrant, etc. Again, labour inspectors were men and accordingly had little inclination to concern themselves with discrimination against women. As for the familiar argument about women's absenteeism, surveys had shown that absenteeism was more frequent among men. Laws which were supposed to protect women prevented them from undertaking so-called "dangerous" or "arduous" work and in fact limited their opportunities of employment. It was for that reason that Uruguayan women had opposed the ILO Convention No. 89 concerning night work of women employed in industry.

Some provisions of Uruguayan legislation were, however, genuinely favourable to women, for example, those relating to maternity.

Finally, the situation of the most underprivileged women (domestic and rural workers, for example) was slowly improving, as the available advantages were beginning to spread to them.

Mrs. PLUME (Associated Country Women of the World), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, drew attention to the problems of women in rural areas, where educational and training establishments were usually scarce and

employment prospects very limited. The Commission should urge Governments to study, within the framework of UNDP country programming, the means of diversifying employment opportunities for women and girls in rural areas. In so doing, Governments would at the same time check the exodus to the towns, where those groups swelled the numbers of unemployed. Provision should also be made for the further training or retraining of older women, so that they could go back to work once their children's upbringing had been completed.

Mrs. LEFRANC (World Federation of Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that, in the opinion of the World Federation of Trade Unions, there was a close link between the elimination of discrimination against women and the achievement of better living and working conditions for all workers. Respect for the principle of equal pay involved training and the need to combat illiteracy in women, to adapt their education to labour market requirements and to overcome all other distinctions which were to their disadvantage and which restricted them to an unduly narrow range of occupations. Women should be given vocational training which would enable them to reach the highest posts in the occupational hierarchy.

Unequal treatment of women in the labour market was not directly related to the stage of development of the countries concerned, since there were discriminatory practices within the European Economic Community. The cause lay rather in economic and social structures. Practical measures should be taken to integrate women in all economic, social, trade union and cultural activities. The Commission should emphasize the need for States to impose penalties on employers who refused to apply the principles embodied in legislation to ensure non-discrimination against women.

Parallel to its action at the national level, where the Federation was urging that national development plans should be drawn up with the trade unions to promote the advancement of women workers, it also supported international activities, in particular the United Nations programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women (General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV)). Lastly, the Third World Trade Union Conference, which was to meet at Prague in 1972, would be devoted to the problems of women workers and would consider how the trade

unions could help to accelerate the ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions No. 100 on equal remuneration, No. 103 concerning maternity protection, and No. 111 concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, by a large number of countries.

Miss BUSH (International Alliance of Women), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the Alliance encouraged women to study and to obtain vocational training which would enable them to find qualified jobs. In the context of the fight for equal pay, the Alliance was demanding equality of retirement age and pension rights.

Mrs. ERNST-HENRION (International Federation of Women in Legal Careers), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that opinions were divided on the question whether social benefits formed part of wages and salaries and warranted protection on the same grounds. In May 1971, the Court of Justice of the European Economic Community had delivered a negative opinion on that point.

Referring to a point raised by the French representative (577th meeting), she confirmed that, in order to ensure protection of the right to equal pay, the remedy of an appeal to the courts had existed in Belgium since 1966. In practice, unfortunately, it had not proved possible to make use of it, either because women workers were afraid of reprisals and dismissal, or because, since wages had been fixed by collective negotiations, the trade unions had been unwilling to accept intervention by an external tribunal. Moreover, the courts were scarcely in a position to assess whether or not one job was equal to another; it was therefore essential to establish objective criteria for that purpose.

The CHAIRMAN declared the general debate on subitem (c) closed.

- (d) STUDY OF PROVISIONS IN EXISTING CONVENTIONS THAT RELATE TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (E/CN.6/552, E/CN.6/L.599, E/CN.6/NGO/233, E/CN.6/NGO/237)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the study of provisions in existing conventions that relate to the status of women (E/CN.6/552).

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599, proposing the preparation of a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women. She read out a number of amendments she had made to that draft resolution in order to take account of the observations of several delegations and informed the Commission that a revised text would be circulated. The main change concerned the mention of UNESCO in operative paragraph 3.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) expressed reservations concerning the preparation of such a convention at the Commission's twenty-fifth session. The Commission should not take a decision on that question until it had been studied in greater detail.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) pointed out that there was a Convention on the Political Rights of Women (General Assembly resolution 640 (VII)) another on marriage (Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages) (General Assembly resolution 1763 A (XVII)) and several UNESCO and ILO conventions which already covered important aspects of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. To the extent that those conventions were applied, there was no need to include the same rights in a new treaty. Her delegation believed that the question should be considered further and that Governments should be given an opportunity to express their views before a decision was taken. As for the text of the draft resolution itself, her delegation would prefer operative paragraph 2 to become operative paragraph 1 and would like FAO and WHO to be mentioned, together with the ILO and UNESCO, in operative paragraph 3.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) also thought that Governments should be consulted. She agreed with the representative of Finland that operative paragraph 2 should come first.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that no action should be taken which might weaken the machinery for implementing existing instruments. If a convention was adopted, it should merely fill the gaps in existing conventions.

Miss GELBER (Canada) thought there was room for a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, but that it should be drawn up in such a way that it would strengthen rather than impede the application of existing conventions, particularly the ILO conventions.

Miss CHATON (France) said she could not support the proposal of the Soviet delegation, since she considered it inopportune to prepare a new convention at a time when States were in the process of adapting their legislation to the requirements of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the second of those Covenants (General Assembly resolution 2200 (XXI)). In her view, the ILO and UNESCO conventions contained the elements needed to fill the gaps in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Mrs. GRABER-DUVERNAY (World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, pointed out that the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women did not specifically mention race as a cause of discrimination and drew the Commission's attention to the tragic situation of women in certain countries where there was racial discrimination; in those countries they were victims of a double discrimination, firstly because of their sex, and secondly because of their race. She quoted a moving account of the extremely difficult conditions of African women, which the World Union had received from one of its affiliated associations in a country which practised apartheid. The Union therefore associated itself with other non-governmental organizations and with delegations which had requested the Commission to consider the possibility of beginning the preparation of a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women; if the provisions, which, although excellent in themselves, were at present scattered among a large number of international instruments, were gathered together in a single text, that would make it easier to ensure respect for all women's rights and would provide non-governmental organizations with a better working instrument.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

held on Friday, 18 February 1972, at 10.50 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

- (d) STUDY OF PROVISIONS IN EXISTING CONVENTIONS THAT RELATE TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (concluded) (E/CN.6/552, E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, E/CN.6/L.601, E/CN.6/NGO/235, E/CN.6/NGO/237)

Miss JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that, while sympathizing with the objectives sought by the USSR delegation in submitting its draft resolution on a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1), she could see some drawbacks in the adoption of a new comprehensive convention on subjects already covered by existing instruments. It had been suggested that the ILO conventions relating to the employment of women needed to be reviewed and brought up to date. That could certainly be done, since a procedure for full or partial revision was provided for in the final articles of each convention.

There was an agreed division of function between the United Nations, on the one hand, and the different specialized agencies, on the other. An important practical aspect of that division, which was set out in agreements forming the basis of working relations within the United Nations system, was that the specialized agencies, unlike the General Assembly, were expected to possess expert knowledge of the technical matters within their sphere of competence. An additional feature particular to the ILO was its tripartite structure, which ensured that employers' and workers' organizations as well as Governments took part in its decision-making activities.

One of the possible drawbacks of a new general convention for the elimination of discrimination against women consisted in the risk of establishing standards which were not precisely in accordance with those already laid down in existing instruments. Such a situation might give rise to legal complications and thus lead to an erosion of ILO standards already accepted by a large number of Governments. Furthermore, certain nuances might be overlooked in an all-embracing convention, so that the effect might be to lower instead of raise existing

standards. The incorporation in a general convention of matters dealt with in several specific instruments imposing more precise obligations might also diminish the chances of ratification of those instruments. There again, the tripartite structure of the ILO was an important factor which should be taken into consideration. Paragraph 239 (c) of the Secretary-General's report entitled "Study of provisions in existing conventions that relate to the status of women" (E/CN.6/552) drew attention to yet another risk, that of competing international procedures, which likewise deserved serious attention.

At a more general level, the representative of Finland had raised the question of whether it was desirable to continue singling women out for the purposes of labour legislation. The ILO had always followed a policy of keeping special standards relating to women to a strict minimum, concentrating rather on ensuring that women were treated on a footing of equality with men in general standards concerning all workers.

In the light of all those considerations, she entertained considerable misgivings regarding the advisability of adopting a new convention.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia), while welcoming the idea of a new convention put forward by the Soviet delegation, pointed out that the Commission had had little time to acquaint itself with the Secretary-General's report and, in view of its programme of work for the current session, would also have only a limited opportunity to discuss that important document. She suggested therefore that the Commission might appoint a small working party which would meet well in advance of the twenty-fifth session to study the report and draft one or several new conventions, the results of its work being communicated to other members of the Commission in sufficient time to ensure that the matter could be discussed as a priority item at the twenty-fifth session. An alternative solution, which, however, she considered to be less satisfactory, might consist in requesting the Secretary-General to study the matter and to draft a new convention or conventions in the light of the information received from Governments.

Mrs. DEBATS-DENIS (Belgium) said that the ILO representative's remarks had confirmed her impression that the question of a new convention should be approached with considerable circumspection. The risk of conflicting standards

had to be avoided at all costs. Furthermore, the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women imposed a moral obligation on all States Members of the United Nations, whilst the provisions of a convention had to be respected only by those States which ratified it. The preparation of a new convention would in any event require a great deal of time. For all those reasons, she supported the Tunisian representative's suggestion for the setting up of a working party to meet before the Commission's twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that if the proposed working party were to meet in 1973, separate travel expenses would be involved. If, however, it met at Headquarters immediately prior to the twenty-fifth session in 1974, the proposal might have no financial implications at all.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) said that her delegation was prepared to support the Soviet draft resolution, subject to a slight rearrangement of the text. The question of a new convention was undoubtedly a highly complex one, but that was precisely why the draft resolution proposed that the co-operation of Governments, the ILO and UNESCO should be enlisted. It was also unquestionably true that the preparation of a new text would require a great deal of time and effort, but that had not deterred the Commission from drafting the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. As for the objection that the time was not yet ripe for a new convention, she felt that women all over the world were awakening to the inequality of their status, and no one could tell if the same interest and enthusiasm would prevail in a few years' time. For all those reasons she strongly favoured the idea of drafting a convention. As far as the method to be adopted was concerned, she formally supported the Tunisian proposal for the setting up of a working party; in order to avoid unnecessary expense, the working party might meet at Headquarters immediately before the Commission's twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom), introducing her delegation's amendments (E/CN.6/L.601) to the Soviet draft resolution, emphasized that further study was needed before the Commission could decide whether a new convention was really necessary and, if so, whether it would be preferable to prepare one or several

new instruments. Before embarking on the task, it was essential to ask Governments for their views and to give detailed consideration to the Secretary-General's report. She was proposing the deletion of the penultimate and final preambular paragraphs of the Soviet draft resolution because she could not agree that the existing conventions were inadequate; her proposed amendments to the operative part of the draft resolution were designed to prevent the Commission from becoming involved in premature action. However, in the desire not to appear unconstructive, she was willing to support the Tunisian proposal for the setting up of a working party. In conclusion, she requested that the United Kingdom amendment should be considered and voted upon as a whole rather than paragraph by paragraph.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) also supported the Tunisian proposal. The working party might consider whether it might be useful to extract from existing conventions certain provisions on matters within the Commission's competence, such as the status of women in family law.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) likewise supported the Tunisian proposal, as also the Uruguayan representative's suggestion that the working party should meet immediately before the twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) outlined the history of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women from its original conception in 1963 until its adoption by the General Assembly (resolution 2263 (XXII)) in 1967. The fact that, although the Declaration had undoubtedly passed through every stage in the shortest possible time, the process had nevertheless taken four years implied that the preparation of a comparable instrument would inevitably be a lengthy matter; the loss of time involved in asking Governments for their views before embarking upon the project was therefore no disadvantage. In the long run, it might save time. She agreed with both the United Kingdom and the Tunisian representatives, but did not consider that their suggestions invalidated the idea underlying the USSR draft resolution.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the prospect of encountering difficulties along the way should not deter the

Commission from beginning the preparation of a new convention; all difficulties could surely be overcome by a spirit of co-operation. The preparation of such a convention would raise the level of the Commission's activities and increase its authority within the United Nations and among women throughout the world. The objection that the time was not yet ripe for a new convention was unacceptable; on the contrary, if the Commission failed to take such action, it would be lagging behind events and failing to justify its existence. She saw no point in setting up a working party, especially in view of the financial implications mentioned by the representative of the Secretary-General. The Commission should decide forthwith that a new convention was necessary; at the same time it should invite the Secretary-General to seek the views of Governments, and, of course, it should ensure close collaboration with the ILO, whose conventions would continue to remain in force.

Miss. SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) supported the Tunisian proposal.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) said that she could see no contradiction between the Soviet proposal and her own. So far as she could judge, all members were agreed that the time had come for a new convention; only the method of arriving at such a convention was in question, and the setting up of a small working party would appear to be helpful, in that it would allow more time for reflection and for the actual process of drafting. She was inclined to feel, however, that the working party should meet at least three months before the twenty-fifth session in order to give members sufficient time to study the results of its work; in view of the importance of the matter, the financial implications of such a meeting might surely be considered as justified.

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) said she was convinced that there was general agreement in the Commission on the substance of the USSR proposal; the only question that remained to be settled was the method to be followed. It was important that the Commission should discuss whether a working party should be established, as proposed by the Tunisian representative, or whether it should undertake the work itself.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) said that, while she agreed with representatives who had emphasized the dangers of a conflict of standards and of insisting on the over-protection of women, she nevertheless wished to emphasize that women, particularly in under-developed countries like her own, were still in need of protection against physical danger and exploitation. In her country, many of the jobs referred to under the concept of "women's work", such as nursing and primary teaching, had traditionally been carried out by men, and it was only now that it was beginning to be realized that women were capable of doing what men could do, in some cases better.

So far as the proposed convention was concerned, her delegation was willing to support any proposal that would promote the advancement of women. She wished merely to propose that, in operative paragraph 1 of the USSR draft resolution, the words "begin the preparation of" should be replaced by the word "prepare".

Mrs. ERNST-HENRION (International Federation of Women in Legal Careers), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that her first impression from reading the report of the Secretary-General had been that there was no real need for a new convention, since most of the provisions in the Declaration were covered by existing legal instruments. However, the considerations put forward by the Secretary-General in paragraph 232 of the report had led her to modify that view. In some of the instruments, the measures in question were only minimum measures and were not necessarily applicable to the entire population, or the instruments were only ratified in part or with reservations. In all such cases, there was scope for discrimination against women. Moreover, many of the instruments, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (General Assembly resolution 2200 (XXI)) were "promotional" in character and did not impose immediately applicable obligations upon States. Implementation of the provisions was therefore dependent on the future goodwill of the States in question. For all those reasons, while she did not feel that it was necessary for the Commission to take a decision at the present time, the proposal to prepare a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women should be given very serious preliminary study.

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PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (E/CN.6/565, E/CN.6/NGO/236)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General), introducing agenda item 4, drew the Commission's attention to the note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and establishment of priorities and on the control and limitation of documentation (E/CN.6/565). The first part of that note dealt with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council. She wished to draw particular attention to the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination in paragraph 5, and to the comments and recommendations of that Committee reproduced in paragraph 6. The most recent decision of the General Assembly on the control and limitation of documentation (resolution 2836 (XXVI) entitled "Publications and documentation of the United Nations") requested the Secretary-General to reduce the volume of documentation originating in the Secretariat by 15 per cent, and the Secretariat had made a serious effort to reduce the documentation for the present session of the Commission and to make it as concise as possible. The principles set forth by the General Assembly and reproduced in paragraph 17 (a) of the note would also affect the Commission's report on its present session.

The second part of the note contained the Secretary-General's suggestions on the programme of work and the establishment of priorities and should be read in conjunction with the programme of work itself, which was reproduced in an annex. Many of the suggestions stemmed from the fact that the Commission was now meeting on a biennial rather than on a yearly basis. The presentation of the programme of work had been altered to comply with the directives of the Economic and Social Council and was drawn up in terms of the workload on the Secretariat entailed by the Commission's decisions, rather than in terms of the Commission's agenda for its twenty-fifth session. The specific proposals relating to each project were contained in section A of part II. Although the programme of work did not include the lists of communications concerning the status of women, those lists would continue to be circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 76 (V) and 304 I (XI). The present procedures governing the handling of communications concerning human rights were described in paragraphs 220-228 of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Study of provisions in existing conventions that relate to the status of women" (E/CN.6/552).

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that the ILO was fully prepared to accept the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's note.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.600)

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile), introducing the draft resolution of Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic (E/CN.6/L.600), said that the purpose of the proposal was to include in the agenda of the Commission's twenty-fifth session an item on the influence of mass communication media on the formation of an attitude resulting in discrimination against women. It was clear that women themselves constituted one of the greatest obstacles to their own progress. They passively accepted the secondary role imposed upon them by men and seemed in many cases eager to conform to men's traditional image of what a woman should be.

Such an attitude was due to cultural patterns which could be changed, and the Commission must be aware of the importance of the mass communication media in forming those cultural patterns. It was no longer enough to rely on the family and the school. The mass communication media, particularly magazines and programmes directed exclusively towards women, were helping to create a false image of what a woman should be, stressing only one aspect of her personality to the detriment of the rest.

The influence of the mass communication media was a very important question that should not be neglected by the Commission. While she recognized that there were difficulties, in particular financial difficulties, in including a new subject in the Commission's programme of work, she felt that, in view of its importance, some way must be found of doing so, and she hoped that UNESCO would assist in the preparation of the necessary studies. The sponsors of the draft resolution had decided to delete the fifth preambular paragraph and she hoped that, with that amendment, it would gain the unanimous support of the Commission.

\* Resumed from the 576th meeting.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said she was glad to see that subject brought before the Commission and she would have no difficulty whatsoever in supporting the draft resolution just introduced by the Chilean representative. In her own country, for example, the excesses of the advertising industry had an extremely harmful effect. She hoped that the proposed study would heap ridicule on such excesses, since ridicule could often be a most effective instrument.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

## MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTIETH MEETING

held on Friday, 18 February 1972, at 3.15 p.m.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued) (E/CN.6/565, E/CN.6/NGO/236)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) drew the Commission's attention to part II, section B, of the note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and the establishment of priorities and on the control and limitation of documentation (E/CN.6/565), containing a number of suggestions designed to facilitate the task of Governments in dealing with the requests already addressed to them. The programme of work given in the annex to that document was based on requests submitted by the Commission before the twenty-fourth session. The Commission might wish to add further questions.

The Secretary-General had made no suggestions concerning the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery,<sup>1/</sup> or the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (General Assembly resolution 317 (IV)). In view of the situation described in paragraphs 36 to 38 of the note by the Secretary-General, the Commission might wish to revise project 1 (a) (iv) (see E/CN.6/565, annex) and decide whether it wished to retain it in the programme of work in its present form.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said that her delegation approved the recommendations in the note by the Secretary-General, particularly those relating to the new scheduling of reports concerning the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (*ibid.*, paras. 28-30). In the view of the Philippine delegation, the question of the working conditions of women in agriculture, which was of particular interest to developing countries, should be included in the programme of work. The "Newsletter on the Status of Women" contained useful information and its publication should be retained in the programme.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) also approved the Secretary-General's recommendations for action to comply with the observations made by the

<sup>1/</sup> See United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 266 (1957), No. 3822.

Economic and Social Council. She supported the suggestion of the Philippine representative concerning the "Newsletter"; in her view, the "Newsletter" should not only continue to be published but should be given a wider circulation and should include many items of information which Member States needed in order to have a complete picture of activities relating to the status of women.

Mrs. DEBATS-DENIS (Belgium) suggested that a small working group should be set up to finalize the programme of work.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) supported that suggestion. Since the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others was not at the moment being considered by other United Nations organs, she thought that the Commission should deal with that question, perhaps by requesting information on the implementation of that important instrument.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay), Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) and Miss CHATON (France) approved the Egyptian representative's suggestion concerning that Convention.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said she also thought that the Commission should keep that question on its agenda. The non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to obtain as much information as possible on the subject, as they were often in a better position to do so than Governments.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that the main difficulty in combating prostitution was the lack of information. The Commission should therefore endeavour to obtain data and carry out studies on a problem which seemed to be becoming more acute.

Replying to a question by Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America), Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities dealt with the question of slavery but not with that of prostitution.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in view of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the Commission, which met only every two years, should choose the questions to be included in its programme of work with great care. It should, in particular, apply the following criteria: the programme should include questions of interest to all countries; it should not include questions which were already being examined by other United Nations bodies; it should deal with questions relating to the status of women in society, i.e. not only questions relating to the struggle for women's rights, but also to the significant contribution that women could make to the development of their countries; it should not include questions of secondary importance. On the basis of those criteria, the Commission should, in her view, retain in its work programme questions relating to international instruments with a bearing on the status of women and their professional activities and drop questions which properly belonged to the sphere of competence of the Commission on Human Rights or the Population Commission. The priorities should also be reviewed. There were too many questions relating to the efforts of women to obtain their rights and ensure their observance and too little space was given to the role of women in the maintenance of peace and the development of their countries in present conditions of technological progress. More emphasis should be placed on questions relating to social services, maternal and child welfare, the improvement of leisure activities and the position of women in rural areas. The best procedure would therefore be to set up a small working group to revise the programme and establish a sound balance between all the various questions.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) also stressed the need to avoid overlapping by eliminating from the work programme all questions of minor importance which came within the sphere of competence of other organizations. Prominence should be given to questions which related to the most important aspects of the present situation of women and which called for an effort by the whole community. For example, the question of the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence should not only be

included in the programme but should be given a high priority. The inclusion of that question in the programme would meet the requirements of Economic and Social Council resolution 1515 (XLVIII) on the protection of women and children in emergency or wartime, fighting for peace, national liberation and independence.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) also thought that the programme of work should be reviewed. The Commission should not, however, refer a question to another body unless it was sure that that body would study it in the way the Commission desired. With regard to the question of priorities, while priority should clearly be given to questions of interest to the community as a whole, certain problems which were of great importance for particular regions of the world - and in particular for the developing countries - should not be neglected. She approved the suggestion for the setting up of a small working group, which would take account of the various views expressed during the plenary meetings.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) also approved that suggestion. In deciding which items should be given priority and retained in the programme of work, it was essential to keep the Commission's function in mind. The Commission had been set up in order to fight for equality of the sexes and combat all discrimination on the grounds of sex. Private law was the main area in which women's rights were not recognized and the Commission would be failing in its task if it did not give priority to questions relating to private law. Moreover, although it was true that the Population Commission was concerned with family planning and fertility, its approach was different from that of the Commission of the Status of Women. It was, of course, important that women should exercise a greater influence in such areas as the maintenance of peace, technological progress and training, the use of leisure time or rural development, but those were sectors which concerned men as well as women. Moreover, leisure time and rural development were more the concern of the Commission for Social Development. The Commission on the Status of Women should concentrate on enabling women to increase their participation in all political bodies, so that they could influence the decisions taken at both the national and international level.

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The CHAIRMAN noted that there was general agreement on the establishment of a small working group which would take account of the various observations made in the course of the debate. She invited representatives who wished to form part of that group to give her their names at the end of the meeting.<sup>2/</sup>

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that preferably the working group should be very small.

The CHAIRMAN declared the general debate on agenda item 4 closed.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, E/CN.6/NGO/238):

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/L.600)

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile), referring to the draft resolution proposed by Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic (E/CN.6/L.600), informed the Commission that, at the request of several delegations, the sponsors had made the following changes in the text: in the third preambular paragraph the words "the mentality of the great majority of women who tend to continue passively to accept their status" should be replaced by the words "the deep-rooted attitudes in men and women which tend to perpetuate the status quo"; in addition, operative paragraph 2 should now read as follows:

"Requests the Secretary-General to communicate the resolution to Member States with a view to their transmitting information on the attitudes adopted by the mass communication media on this subject, for consideration at the next session."

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said she was afraid the new text was not sufficiently explicit either as regards the information to be supplied by Member States or as regards the use to be made of it by the Secretary-General.

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<sup>2/</sup> The composition of the Working Group was as follows: Belgium, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Indonesia, Nigeria, Philippines, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

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Miss ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that UNESCO was naturally greatly interested in the question of the influence of mass communication media in the area under consideration; she agreed that it would be useful to carry out a study on that subject, which should have a sociological basis. However, UNESCO was already planning to submit in 1974 a comparative study on the relationships between employment and the opportunities provided for women, as part of its two-year programme. It might therefore have difficulty in undertaking to make a further study which it would perhaps not be able to complete before the Commission's twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) thought that the item to be included in the agenda of the twenty-fifth session of the Commission might be worded on the following lines: "Influence of mass communication media on the formation of an image of women which results in a discriminatory attitude towards them". It might even be preferable to find a more positive wording and speak of the influence of mass communication media on the creation of a new image of women.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) said that text books and curricula also played a role in creating the image of women, and suggested that operative paragraph 1 should be modified accordingly.

So far as the proposed studies were concerned, Governments could entrust them to their universities.

Miss CHATON (France) said that she too thought that the item to be included in the agenda of the twenty-fifth session should be worded in more positive terms, such as, for example, "Influence of mass communication media on the formation of a new attitude towards the role of women in society." A phrase such as "in order to increase awareness of all the forms of discrimination affecting their way of life" might also be added.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) proposed that the meeting should be suspended to enable the sponsors of the draft resolution to prepare a joint text in consultation with the delegations which had proposed amendments.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 5.15 p.m.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) introduced the revised text of the draft resolution.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>3/</sup>

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.

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<sup>3/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.610.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIRST MEETING

held on Monday, 21 February 1972, at 11.50 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, E/CN.6/L.601, E/CN.6/L.606, E/CN.6/L.608, E/CN.6/L.609)

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/L.603)
- (b) POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.602)

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) introduced her delegation's subamendments (E/CN.6/L.608) to the amendments of the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.601) to the USSR draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1) on the draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, and her delegation's amendment (E/CN.6/L.609) to that draft resolution.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) introduced her delegation's amendment (E/CN.6/L.606) to the USSR draft resolution.

Miss GELBER (Canada) read out a revised version<sup>1/</sup> of the joint draft resolution on the employment of women in senior and other Professional positions by the secretariats of organizations in the United Nations system, originally submitted by Canada, Chile, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the symbol E/CN.6/L.602, and of which Belgium, Colombia, Costa Rica, Liberia, the United States of America and Uruguay had also become sponsors. In view of the shortage of time, it had not been possible to obtain all the sponsors' approval of the revised text, which she hoped to be able to submit to the Commission in writing at the next meeting.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.603 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, on behalf of her own delegation and those of Uruguay, Japan, Thailand and Indonesia, which were now co-sponsors. By agreement with the

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\* Resumed from the 576th meeting.

<sup>1/</sup> Subsequently circulated under the symbol E/CN.6/L.602/Rev.1.

co-sponsors, she proposed that the word "and" after the words "at large" in operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution should be replaced by a comma and that the following passage should be added at the end of the paragraph:

"and (c) the low status of women in rural areas, specifically those women engaged in agriculture, who make up the majority of the labour force in some of these countries".

After a discussion in which Miss GELBER (Canada), Miss CHATON (France), Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina), Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) and Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) took part, Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) agreed on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution to the amendment of the new passage at the end of operative paragraph 7 to read as follows:

"and (c) the low status of women in rural areas in some developing countries, especially those in agriculture, who make up the majority of the labour force in some of those countries".

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that it might be advisable to specify the year in which the Commission wished the Secretary-General to issue the pamphlet referred to in operative paragraph 10 and accordingly suggested that the words "without delay" in that paragraph might be replaced by the words "in 1972".

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) accepted that suggestion on behalf of the sponsors.

Mrs. SIPIÄ (Finland) said that since she had mentioned in her statement (573rd meeting) concerning the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women that the Declaration had been translated immediately after its adoption in 1968, into Finnish, although that language was not mentioned in the documents now before the Commission, she suggested that the word "sixteen" in operative paragraph 3 should be replaced by the word "seventeen".

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, agreed.

(c) EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (continued)\*\* (E/CN.6/L.605, E/CN.6/L.607)

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), introducing, on behalf of her delegation and of those of Austria and the Philippines, a draft resolution on equal pay for equal work (E/CN.6/L.605), said that the sponsors had agreed to the insertion of the following new operative paragraph 2, reading as follows:

"Expresses the hope that Member States of the United Nations which have not yet acceded to ILO Convention No. 100 will do so without further delay;"

The remaining paragraphs would be renumbered accordingly and the word "Also" would be inserted at the beginning of the new operative paragraph 3.

Although the principle of equal pay was now accepted as a basic step in advancing the status of women in economic life, many States parties to ILO Convention No. 100 realized that ratification did not ensure automatic application. Job classification was one of the practical means of solving some of the problems posed by the discrepancy between law and fact.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) informed the Commission, in accordance with rule 28 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, that operative paragraph 5 (the former operative paragraph 4) of the draft resolution would have certain financial implications which were at present being calculated.<sup>2/</sup>

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said that she supported the draft resolution, subject to the information to be provided on its financial implications. She suggested that in the new operative paragraph 2 the words "acceded to" should be replaced by the word "ratified" to conform with the ILO's procedure.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) accepted the amendment on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution.

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\*\* Resumed from the 578th meeting.

<sup>2/</sup> The note by the Secretary-General on the financial implications of the proposal in document E/CN.6/L.605 was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.615.

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) introduced her delegation's draft resolution on equal pay for equal work (E/CN.6/L.607), which was similar to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.605 except that it was addressed solely to the ILO and that it also requested the ILO to analyse the concept of pay. Such an analysis was important in order to secure the equitable application of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since the two draft resolutions were similar, the sponsors should try to combine them.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) suggested that in view of the differences in methods between countries, any combined draft resolution should request Member States to submit their own job analyses and evaluations as a basis for the ILO study.

Miss GELBER (Canada) hoped that the sponsors of the draft resolutions would draw a clear distinction between the technical aspects of the matter and the principle involved. The Commission was concerned with the principle of equal pay for equal work and should rightly be kept informed of developments. It should, however, avoid giving the impression that it was to be involved in or duplicate the kind of expert technical work that could be performed only by the competent body, in the present instance the ILO.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SECOND MEETING

held on Monday, 21 February 1972, at 3.35 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, E/CN.6/L.601, E/CN.6/L.606, E/CN.6/L.608, E/CN.6/L.609):

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (concluded) (E/CN.6/L.603)

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), referring to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.603 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, submitted by Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand and Uruguay, read out the amendments which had been proposed at the 581st meeting. These were (a) to replace the word "sixteen" in operative paragraph 3 by "seventeen"; (b) to add the following sentence to operative paragraph 7: "(c) the low status of women in rural areas in some developing countries, specifically those women engaged in agriculture, who make up the majority of the labour force in some of these countries"; and (c) to replace the words "without delay" in paragraph 10 by "in 1972".

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.603, as amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>1/</sup>

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) referred to the subamendments of Tunisia (E/CN.6/L.608), to the amendments proposed by the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.601), to the USSR draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1) on the draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, and proposed amendments to those subamendments as follows: in paragraph 1, the words "believing it desirable" should be replaced by the words "believing that it may be desirable" and the words "all forms of" should be deleted; in paragraph 2, the words "the draft international instruments to be submitted to it" should be replaced by "the proposals to be submitted to it"; in paragraph 3, the words "scope and" should be inserted before the words "content of".

<sup>1/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.611.

Miss GELBER (Canada) asked the Tunisian representative if it was proposed that the working group should prepare a text on its own or that it should collaborate with experts in the United Nations Secretariat.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) said that the group would work in collaboration not only with United Nations experts, but also with experts in the ILO and UNESCO.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) asked how the six members of the working group would be divided among the various geographical regions.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) said that they would be divided in roughly the same proportions as in the Commission.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) pointed out that previous working groups had had a membership of nine, a figure which made it easier to ensure the representation of all geographical groups.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that she could not accept the United Kingdom amendments to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1, because their effect was to postpone the preparation of a convention indefinitely and even to cast doubt on its desirability.

The Tunisian subamendments provided for international instruments instead of for a single convention and they failed to define the terms of reference of the proposed working group sufficiently clearly. The Soviet delegation would agree to the establishment of a working group, provided that it met during the session of the Commission so that it could work in consultation with delegations.

The Soviet delegation had no objection to the Nigerian amendment (E/CN.6/L.606) to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) gave some provisional information on the financial implications of the Tunisian proposal. The cost of a six-member working group meeting in New York would be \$3,900, the subsistence expenses of the participants being borne by the Governments concerned. Some expenditure would also be incurred by the ILO and UNESCO.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that she shared the Soviet delegation's doubts regarding the effectiveness of a working group. She thought that Member States should be consulted and accordingly proposed that the Commission should request the Secretary-General to invite Governments to communicate their views on the question of the preparation of a convention, to publish their replies and to submit them to the Commission. In the light of the results, the Commission could then, if appropriate, invite the Secretary-General to prepare a draft text.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Canadian delegation for its suggestions; she saw no objection to all Member States being consulted.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Commission should continue the following day its discussion of draft resolutions relating to a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.604)

Mr. ELLISON (United Kingdom) introduced, on behalf of his delegation and those of Austria, France and the Philippines, draft resolution E/CN.6/L.604 on the revision of the programme of work and the establishment of priorities and on the control and limitation of documentation, and read out the various amendments which had been made to the original text.<sup>2/</sup>

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) asked whether it was really desirable for the Commission to draw up guidelines for use by Governments in preparing reports on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. She thought it would be preferable for that to be done by the Secretariat.

Miss GELBER (Canada) and Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) agreed.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) also agreed with the Finnish representative. She pointed out that certain Governments had ratified ILO and UNESCO conventions under which they were called upon to submit information; there was a danger of duplication between those reports and the reports requested in the draft resolution.

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\* Resumed from the 580th meeting.

<sup>2/</sup> The revised text of the draft resolution was subsequently circulated under the symbol E/CN.6/L.604/Rev.1.

Mrs. KASTALSKAYA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the question of practices similar to slavery came within the sphere of competence of the Commission on Human Rights. Furthermore, that form of exploitation had virtually disappeared. The Commission on the Status of Women should study questions which were of genuine interest to women.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said that the question of the guidelines to be given to Governments for preparing reports on the implementation of the Declaration had been raised in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration (see E/CN.6/548, paras. 7 and 8). The Commission should therefore take a decision one way or the other. The guidelines could be prepared either by the Commission or by the Secretariat, but they were essential if coherent and uniform replies were to be received.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) thought that the guidelines should be prepared by the Secretary-General.

Mr. ELLISON (United Kingdom) said that, in view of those comments, the sponsors of the draft resolution would withdraw the proposed guidelines. It therefore proposed to amend the text and would merely request the Secretary-General, in preparing guidelines, to take account of the proposals contained in the draft resolution.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation), referring to operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, said that she had misgivings about the invitation addressed to specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to describe developments which had taken place during the period under review. If the Secretary-General received information direct from Governments, it was difficult to see what the specialized agencies were expected to do. They could hardly be asked to analyse the information submitted by Governments, since that would impose too heavy a burden on them. The question needed further study.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5):

- (a) STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER (E/CN.6/548/Add.1, E/CN.6/562, E/CN.6/NGO/231, E/CN.6/NGO/241 and Corr.1, E/CN.6/NGO/242)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) reminded the Commission that, at its twenty-third session, it had recommended two draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.<sup>3/</sup> Draft resolution V, entitled "The unmarried mother and her child: their social protection and the question of their integration in society", had been adopted by the Council as resolution 1514 (XLVIII). Pursuant to paragraph 2 of that resolution, 19 Governments and one specialized agency had forwarded information, which was reproduced in chapter IV of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/548/Add.1). The Council had decided to forward draft resolution VI, entitled "The legal and social status of the unmarried mother", to the Governments of Member States for their comments and to invite the Commission to reconsider the draft resolution in the light of the replies received.<sup>4/</sup> By 30 April 1971, 31 Governments had forwarded their replies. Meanwhile, four Governments had forwarded replies which it had not proved possible to include in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Comments of Governments on draft resolution VI adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-third session" (E/CN.6/562). A number of Governments had communicated the texts of their legislative provisions applicable to unmarried mothers. In view of the rules regarding the limitation of documentation, it had been decided not to reproduce those texts; they could, however, be consulted by delegations which so requested.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) expressed her regret that the Council had not adopted the draft resolution on the legal and social status of the unmarried mother;

<sup>3/</sup> See the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its twenty-third session (Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 6 (E/4831), chap. XIII, annex, section II, draft resolutions V and VI).

<sup>4/</sup> See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 1A (E/4832/Add.1), p. 15.

that draft resolution had been drawn up in accordance with the spirit of the provisions adopted by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and in line with the proposals made by a committee of the Council of Europe.<sup>5/</sup> However, most of the 31 Governments which had replied had supported the draft resolution in principle, with the result that the Commission's task should now be easier than it had been in 1970. In chapter IV of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration, it was stated that where it was reported that no serious problem was posed by the integration of the unmarried mother and her child in society, mention was made of the fact that the enactment of progressive legislation had eliminated discrimination against them (see E/CN.6/548/Add.1, para. 6). In her view, it would have been preferable to present the question in broader terms and to speak not of the "unmarried mother" but of the "single parent"; in that way, account could have been taken of the rights of the father as well as those of the mother and the integration of children born out of wedlock would probably have been facilitated. However, as the question had been submitted to the Council in terms of the "unmarried mother", it would be better to retain that expression. She proposed to submit a draft resolution based on draft resolution VI and taking account of the replies from Governments, correspondence and communications from non-governmental organizations in particular, and the comments that would be made in the course of the present discussion. It was extremely difficult to formulate general guidelines concerning the legal and social status of the unmarried mother, since their situation varied according to the country and the region and also from case to case.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said she would provide the Norwegian representative with some material which might be useful to her in preparing the draft resolution.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that she had originally expressed reservations concerning draft resolution VI. She believed however, that a new draft resolution which took account of the observations submitted would now have more chance of being accepted. Her attitude had been somewhat negative, firstly, because of the social stigma attached to the unmarried mother in Egypt, and secondly, because

<sup>5/</sup> Ibid., Supplement No. 6 (E/4831), paras. 120 and 122.

the legal situation in Egypt concerning the legitimation of birth was satisfactory. The unmarried mother was automatically registered as the mother of the child. The father, if he recognized his paternity, became the child's legal father, with all the obligations which that implied. It was rare for women to file paternity suits, but it sometimes happened. The real problem was the social stigma; women in such a situation needed the assistance of social services or women's organizations. The Egyptian social services provided the unmarried mother with medical, financial and legal assistance and also provided services for the child.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that her delegation was not in a position to support the establishment of rules governing the legal and social status of the unmarried mother for the simple reason that, in Indonesia, married women still had no defined legal status, although the Government was at present working on that question. Moreover, the situation of the unmarried mother did not pose any problem in Indonesia. Most of the population was Moslem and, in accordance with the present customary and religious law, a pregnant girl had to marry the natural father or another man immediately so that the child could be born in a normal family setting.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) thought that the Commission should tackle the problem of the unmarried mother in a more dynamic way. The replies from Governments demonstrated that the protection of the young was essential to enable women to exercise their right to work without a sense of insecurity. Such protection was in the interests of children and of society. There was little danger of harming the unity of the family, since women in general wanted to have a home and a lawful husband. The provisions of draft resolution VI coincided with the principles of the relevant Romanian legislation. The Commission should renew its request to the Council in a draft resolution which took account of all the views expressed.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) said that public opinion had changed and that the integration of the unmarried mother in society was now easier than it had been. Motherhood out of wedlock should not, of course, be encouraged, but where that situation arose, society could not reject the unmarried mother, since

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she was generally in a difficult situation which might lead her to prostitution or even to suicide. The Uruguayan Civil Code provided for determination of paternity and gave the unmarried mother the right to demand that the father should contribute to the child's maintenance. So far as social protection was concerned, no distinction was made between the married woman with children and the unmarried mother.

Mrs. ROUHI (Iran) said that the situation of the unmarried mother did not pose serious problems in her country. Because of the influence of Islam, it was considered that the family had to be protected as the basic unit of society. If paternal filiation was established, the father had to marry the unmarried mother. If the father was already married, he had to take the child's mother as a second wife. If paternal filiation could not be established, the courts decided whether the mother was in a position to provide for the child. There were social services which took care of the mother and of the child, but those services could be improved. She considered that the problem of the unmarried mother could best be solved, not so much by enacting legislation on her behalf, but by developing the sense of moral responsibility in young girls with regard to the family and society.

Mrs. DEPETRIS (Chile) said that the married woman had fewer rights than the unmarried woman, since there were certain things she was unable to do without her husband's permission. That situation changed where the woman had children. If she was not married, the children were at a disadvantage. The law made a distinction between the legitimate child born in wedlock, the child born out of wedlock, i.e. recognized by one or both of the parents, the illegitimate child and the adopted child. Legitimate children were in the most advantageous position, but new legislation was under study with a view to modifying that situation. Such a reform would be of great value, since at present the laws discriminated against the unmarried mother, who generally had great difficulties in working and in maintaining her child.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that her delegation understood the expression "single parent" to apply not only to the unmarried mother, but also to the father or mother who was widowed, divorced or separated.

Miss CHATON (France) explained that the French Government had not replied to the Secretariat inquiry on the status of the unmarried mother, partly because the legislature was in the process of amending the provisions governing filiation. The new law had been published in the Journal Officiel on 3 January 1972.

With the change in mores, the social situation of the unmarried mother in France had improved. The unmarried mother was entitled to all social security benefits if she was a wage-earner and to social welfare if she was not. On the birth of her child, she received a "livret de famille" which made it easier for her to secure the appropriate benefits. The very young unmarried mother was in a somewhat special situation. If she sought shelter outside her family, she was taken in by a home for unmarried mothers (maison maternelle) from the time of confirmation of pregnancy to the third month after the birth of the child. She could then go to a hostel for unmarried mothers (hôtel maternel), of which there was one in each département, until the child reached the age of two years. In the hostels an attempt was made to give the young mother vocational training and find her accommodation. Where a young girl who had not yet finished school became pregnant, she could either remain with her family and continue her schooling by correspondence, or attend one of the establishments set up for such cases in large cities.

She informed the Commission that, when the law on filiation had been drawn up, account had been taken of the discussions of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-third session.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THIRD MEETING

held on Tuesday, 22 February 1972, at 10.50 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
(agenda item 3) (continued):

(c) EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (concluded)\* (E/CN.6/L.605/Rev.1-E/CN.6/L.607/Rev.1  
(combined))

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.605/Rev.1-E/CN.6/L.607/Rev.1 (combined), which was a combination of the two draft resolutions sponsored respectively by Austria, Egypt and the Philippines (E/CN.6/L.605) and Belgium (E/CN.6/L.607). The sponsors now included Finland, whose name had unfortunately been omitted, and Iraq. The combined draft resolution reproduced all the substantive ideas contained in the two previous texts. Operative paragraph 4 (c) met the point made by the Canadian representative the previous day, since it provided that the International Labour Office should include information on the progress of its research in its periodic reports to the Commission instead of, as provided in operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.605, submitting the results of its study to the Commission at a future session.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the financial implications of operative paragraph 5 had now been established and were as follows:<sup>1/</sup>

|  | <u>US dollars</u> |
|--|-------------------|
| Translation, revision and typing of a manuscript of<br>approximately 70 pages into two other languages ..... | 3,500             |
| Reproduction and distribution in three languages .....   | 2,800             |
| Total  | <u>6,300</u>      |

\* Resumed from the 581st meeting.

<sup>1/</sup> The details of the financial implications of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.605/Rev.1-E/CN.6/L.607/Rev.1 (combined) appear in the note by the Secretary-General subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.615.

That estimate covered publication in English, French and Spanish. The additional cost of publication in Russian as well would be \$2,000. The figures were based on the production of 400 English, 2,000 French and 2,000 Spanish copies, and 1,000 Russian copies if it were decided to publish in that language.

Miss JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) suggested that the words after "to continue to study" in operative paragraph 4 (a) should be replaced by the wording of the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention No. 100: "measures to promote objective appraisal of jobs on the basis of the work to be performed".

She also suggested that, for practical reasons, it might be desirable to delete the words following "(a) and (b) above" in operative paragraph 4 (c), since they concerned a task which was primarily for the trade unions. The International Labour Office would, of course, pass on in the ordinary way any information that it might receive from the unions.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that the amendment to operative paragraph 4 (a) was acceptable. She could not, however, understand the ILO representative's objection to operative paragraph 4 (c) and feared that the proposed deletion might result in the omission from the periodic reports of any relevant information received by the International Labour Office.

Miss JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organization) said that she had no objection to the inclusion of the words in question; she had merely wished to explain the situation.

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) thought that operative paragraph 4 (c) should be retained in its existing form. She appreciated that the International Labour Office had no power of control over trade unions, but it could at least exercise some pressure in collective negotiations.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) pointed out that, whereas the wording used for the title of the agenda subitem and in the heading of the draft resolution was "Equal pay for equal work", the report by the International Labour Office (E/CN.6/550) was headed "Equal pay for work of equal value". It was important to take account of that distinction in terminology and of the

reasons behind it. In the United States of America, difficulty had been experienced with the legislation on equal pay because it had been found that there was often no discrimination against women in the matter of equal pay for the same job, but that discrimination existed in respect of equal pay for jobs requiring the same skill and training. It had finally been decided to refer to equal pay for comparable work, i.e. work assessed as having the same value to society. It would be necessary for the Commission to clarify its intention for the purposes of the study carried out by the International Labour Office.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) agreed with the United States representative. In the opinion of the sponsors of the draft resolution, it would be preferable for the International Labour Office's wording to be used in the title.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested a separate vote on operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution in view of its financial implications.

Operative paragraph 5 was adopted by 18 votes to 3, with 6 abstentions.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.605/Rev.1-E/CN.6/L.607/Rev.1 (combined), as amended, was adopted by 27 votes to none, with 1 abstention.<sup>2/</sup>

(b) POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN (concluded)\* (E/CN.6/L.602/Rev.1)

Miss GELBER (Canada) introduced the revised draft resolution on the employment of women in senior and other Professional positions by the secretariats of organizations in the United Nations system (E/CN.6/L.602/Rev.1) on behalf of the sponsors and drew attention to a number of minor drafting changes.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said that, although she was prepared to support the draft resolution, she felt that it did not reflect the main problem. The fact that the principle of equality of men and women was not fully applied in the United Nations Secretariat reflected the situation in Member States. The situation in the United Nations could not be changed until the situation in each country had been changed.

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\* Resumed from the 581st meeting.

<sup>2/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.621.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that the reference in operative paragraph 3 to the right of individuals personally to apply for vacant positions should be deleted, since it might conflict with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) opposed the deletion. The right in question existed but individuals might be unaware of it.

Miss GELBER (Canada) agreed with the USSR representative that the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be respected but did not believe it would be affected by the draft resolution. Vacancy notices could mention the requirements concerning geographical distribution.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested a separate vote on the words in question.

The words "including more extensive publicizing of the right of individuals personally to apply for all vacant positions" in operative paragraph 3 were adopted by 23 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.602/Rev.1 as a whole was adopted unanimously without change.<sup>3/</sup>

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.604/Rev.1)

Mr. ELLISON (United Kingdom) introduced the revised draft resolution on the programme of work and establishment of priorities and on the control and limitation of documentation (E/CN.6/L.604/Rev.1) on behalf of the sponsors. The revised version mentioned the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others and the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, in order to ensure adequate reporting on their implementation as far as they concerned the status of women.

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<sup>3/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.617.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed the insertion of the words "including information on the practices of apartheid and colonialism, which are the worst form of slavery" after the word "Slavery" in the fifth line of operative paragraph 4.

Mr. ELLISON (United Kingdom) said he did not regard that amendment as acceptable. It was clear from the preamble of the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council that some aspects of slavery fell within the competence of the Commission on Human Rights, which was actively concerned with apartheid and colonialism. The draft resolution was concerned solely with practices of slavery which affected women.

Replying to a question from Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General), Mr. ELLISON (United Kingdom) said that the words "set out in the annex to this resolution" at the end of operative paragraph 1 of the main draft resolution should be deleted. The words "of the Prostitution" should be inserted after the word "Exploitation" in the sixth line of the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested a separate vote on her amendment.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that there was a precedent for including a reference to apartheid and colonialism, as they were mentioned in the report of the Special Rapporteur on Slavery.

Miss GELBER (Canada) thought it would be sufficient to mention the various conventions; to expand on them would make the draft resolution too long.

The USSR amendment was adopted by 14 votes to 7, with 7 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, as amended, was adopted by 15 votes to 4 with 9 abstentions.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.604/Rev.1 as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 23 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.<sup>4/</sup>

<sup>4/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.620.

## THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (continued)

(a) STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER (continued) (E/CN.6/548/Add.1, E/CN.6/562, E/CN.6/NGO/231, E/CN.6/NGO/241 and Corr.1, E/CN.6/NGO/242)

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) said that in Iraq, as in many Islamic countries, there was no difference between the legal status of the natural child and the legitimate child, but considerable social stigma was attached to the unmarried mother and her child. Establishment of paternity, however, made a child legitimate in all respects. Paternity was established when a man admitted a woman's claim that he was the father of her child.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina), amplifying the information in the Secretary-General's report entitled "Comments of Governments on draft resolution VI adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-third session" (see E/CN.6/562, p. 6), said that the Argentine Act No. 14,367 of 1954 had abolished legal and official discrimination between legitimate and illegitimate children and also between the various categories of illegitimate children. Formerly, filiation proceedings could be instituted only on behalf of natural children, whereas they could now be instituted on behalf of all children born out of wedlock. The only exception to the equality thus created was that, in the case of an illegitimate child born to a married woman, filiation proceedings could not be instituted against the mother, although she could voluntarily acknowledge the child. Recognition of a child carried with it the legal obligation of maintenance up to the age of 18 years and the child acquired the entitlement to an inheritance half that of a legitimate child. The basis of the Act was the need to protect the child from injustice, not to undermine the institution of marriage, which was considered as the foundation of normal society.

Referring to draft resolution VI, which the Commission, at its twenty-third session, had recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see E/CN.6/562, pp. 2 and 3), she said she was surprised at the wording of operative paragraph 1. Prejudice against the unmarried mother was a matter of irrational emotion. Moreover, the unmarried mother was no longer the ignorant, penniless, working class figure of former times. It would be preferable to refer in the draft resolution to the elimination of the effects of such lack of understanding on unmarried mothers and thus on their children.

Her Government agreed in general terms with draft resolution VI, subject to a reservation on operative paragraph 2 (b) (v) concerning inheritance rights.

Mrs. NIMY (Zaire) said that in the tradition of her country all members of a clan, except women assimilated by marriage, had to be the descendants of a common ancestor. Although transgressions against that law were no longer punished by death, both unmarried mothers and their children were still subjected to extremely harsh treatment by the community. While generally deploring that situation, she nevertheless felt that the provisions of draft resolution VI went rather too far in offering assistance and security to the unmarried mother, and might actually encourage women to have children out of wedlock, especially in countries like her own, where the married state entailed many hardships. Some distinction could perhaps be drawn between unmarried mothers whose situation was due to a reasonable cause, e.g. the prolongation of their studies beyond what was regarded as normal marriageable age, and those who had no such justification for conduct which in her country was still viewed as reprehensible. Governments should, in her opinion, assist the children of unmarried mothers once they attained school age, but not before, since it was important, in the circumstances she had described, to deter young women from irresponsible sexual behaviour.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) drew attention to recent developments in the United Kingdom in connexion with the status and welfare of illegitimate children. The new legislation which had been introduced would undoubtedly do much to improve the situation of the unmarried mother and her child, but many difficulties still remained to be overcome, such as the continued use of the word "bastard" or "illegitimate" in legal documents, the problems which arose if the putative father was unwilling to append his name to a child's birth certificate, the question of adequate housing for unmarried mothers and their children, the widespread reluctance of working unmarried mothers to absent themselves from work when ill, and the risk of death in infancy which still remained relatively high in the case of illegitimate children, despite the fact that the unmarried mother enjoyed the same medical facilities as other mothers. Organizations such as the Women's National Commission and the National Council

for the Unmarried Mother and Her Child were giving consideration to all those problems and were putting forward recommendations for dealing with them; on the question of housing, for example, it had been suggested that special accommodation with day-nursery support might be provided to enable the mother to go out to work in the knowledge that her child was being safely cared for in her absence.

An attempt should be made to analyse the reasons for the continued increase in the rate of illegitimacy. In many cases, one of the fundamental causes was a lack of education and understanding of the real meaning of parenthood. It was encouraging to read in the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.6/548/Add.1) of the steps being taken in a number of countries in the field of education for parenthood; the progress report by the Special Rapporteur, Mrs. Helvi Sipilä (Finland) (E/CN.6/564), which the Commission would be discussing under agenda item 5 (c) (Status of women and family planning) would also be of great interest in that connexion.

In conclusion, she remarked that the status of the unmarried mother and her child might usefully be considered as part of the broader issue, already under study in the United Kingdom, of the family with only one parent. With modern developments such as increased urbanization and mobility of labour, the problem of the one-parent family had recently become particularly acute; its serious consideration by the Commission would doubtless bring forth new, constructive and practical ideas and recommendations of benefit to countless such families throughout the world.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) noted with regret that only 31 Governments had forwarded their comments on draft resolution VI; in particular, she wondered whether the absence of Norway from the list of responding Governments implied that the representative of Norway, who had in fact sponsored the draft resolution at the Commission's twenty-third session, had been acting in her personal capacity rather than on behalf of her Government.

The Government of Austria was one of the nine listed as being in agreement with many of the principles of the draft resolution. The legislation containing a new definition of the legal status of the child born out of wedlock, mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration

on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (see E/CN.6/548/Add.1, para. 27) and in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Comments of Governments on draft resolution VI adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women" (see E/CN.6/562, various paras. under the heading "Austria") had come into force in Austria in July 1971, and, as a result, illegitimate children no longer had to suffer any economic disadvantage. However, the Austrian Government was anxious not to introduce improvements in the legal status of the unmarried mother which might infringe upon the right of the illegitimate child; such a situation might arise, for example, in connexion with the mothers' right not to disclose the identity of the child's putative father. Where the mother's surname was transmitted to the child (as specified in paragraph 2 (b) (i) of draft resolution VI), the question arose how it would be possible to avoid revealing to the child his birth out of wedlock, if the mother remained unmarried. If she later married a man who was not the father of her child, the name of her husband could then be transmitted to her illegitimate child, so as not to reveal the fact of the child's birth out of wedlock. A further difficulty was related to the phrase "whether working or not" in paragraph 2 (b) (vi) of draft resolution VI. Under the Austrian social security system, an unmarried mother not in gainful employment was excluded from certain social benefits, such as pension rights. She accordingly suggested that the subparagraph should be amended to specify that the social security measures which mothers should enjoy regardless of their family status were only those directly relating to maternity and to the upbringing of the child.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) recalled that at the twenty-third session her delegation had abstained from voting on draft resolution VI, because it was partly at variance with provisions of the Philippine Civil Code. Following discussions with leading legal authorities in her country, she believed that there now existed a growing consensus of opinion in favour of reviewing those provisions. However, while agreeing with the United Kingdom representative that the problem of the unmarried mother and her child was an important one and merited the Commission's continued attention, she would maintain her previous position should a draft resolution on the subject be submitted and put to the vote at the present session.

Mrs. DEBATS-DENIS (Belgium) emphasized the importance of providing material, psychological and medical assistance to the unmarried mother from the moment when she became aware of her condition. While the situation of the unmarried mother could in some respects be subsumed under the more general one of parents bringing up the family single-handed, it was nevertheless a specific situation, in that it occurred outside the framework of marriage; the unmarried mother needed special help if she was to face the present and the future with any sense of security. The assistance given might take the form of helping the mother to find suitable housing, giving her vocational training and help in the choice of a job, and providing nursery facilities for the child. Special measures were being taken in Belgium to provide assistance for single women with dependent children under the age of 16. In particular, legislation enacted as recently as July 1971 ensured that family allowances and maternity benefits were now payable to any person, whether working or not, with dependent children, provided that person's means did not exceed a specific maximum. With regard to housing and child care facilities, the Belgian Government attached great importance to avoiding solutions which might result in segregating the unmarried mother and her child from the rest of the community.

It was a matter of considerable difficulty for the Commission, especially bearing in mind the wide variety of cultures and traditions represented, to distinguish between the interests of the unmarried mother and those of her child; indeed it was almost impossible to dissociate the problem of the unmarried mother from that of the legal status of children born out of wedlock. A study on that subject was at present being carried out under the auspices of the Commission on Human Rights, and it would be regrettable if the Commission on the Status of Women were to pursue its work on the topic under consideration without due co-ordination with the work of that body.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH MEETING

held on Tuesday, 22 February 1972, at 3.20 p.m.

In the absence of the Chairman, Mrs. Shahani (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (continued):

(a) STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER (continued) (E/CN.6/548/Add.1, E/CN.6/562, E/CN.6/NGO/231, E/CN.6/NGO/241 and Corr.1, E/CN.6/NGO/242)

Mrs. HUVANANDAMA (Thailand) said that in Thailand, which was largely a Buddhist country, where polygamy was still permitted and where official and traditional marriage existed side by side, the percentage of unmarried mothers was low. Their status did not present any serious problems, because little, if any religious or social stigma attached to the unmarried mother, who was well integrated in society. The Department of Social Welfare assisted needy unmarried mothers and provided the necessary facilities for their children (adoption services, foster homes, day-care centres, etc.).

She agreed that the Commission should give close attention to the question and encourage Governments to increase their social assistance for the unmarried mother and her child.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) emphasized the injustice of the situation of unmarried mothers - an injustice which women tended passively to accept - and the need to ensure that the father's responsibility was more fully recognized, socially as well as legally. Women should try to change existing attitudes by teaching their sons as well as their daughters respect for marriage and sexual relations and a sense of responsibility, since little change could be expected unless women asserted more leadership in the matter. In countries where prostitution was illegal, women were usually punished, while men were not; and the blame was placed on women without the underlying factors and cause being seriously considered. In some cities and towns in the United States where separate schools and evening schools were maintained for young mothers (married or unmarried), the father, if he was still at school, was often also required to leave a regular school and attend evening school. In addition, fathers were encouraged to work to provide for the support of the mother and child.

Members of the Commission should do everything in their power in their respective countries to see that the social responsibility placed on the unmarried father was more widely recognized and increased.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that in her country the statutory provisions relating to health, social security, education and the various children's services applied without discrimination to both illegitimate and to legitimate children. There were even special services for the unmarried mother and her child. All the Canadian Provinces had enacted legislation to protect the unmarried mother and her child. If the mother did not wish to keep the child, it could be adopted, but the statistics showed that mothers were tending more and more to keep their children, probably because of the increasing number of unmarried mothers and a change in attitudes towards them. Some prejudices persisted, but everything seemed to show that the probability of an unmarried mother becoming socially integrated in the community was increasing, particularly where she had work skills and experience. The fact that a large number of unmarried mothers were very young (in 1968, 40 per cent of them were under 20 years of age) created a demand for new services. It was, in particular, necessary to find them accommodation, provide facilities for vocational training and establish day-care centres. In general, great importance was attached to the provision of sex education and education for family life, in the schools for children and adolescents and in the community for adults.

Mrs. KANE (Mauritania) said that the status of the unmarried mother did not give rise to serious problems in Mauritania, where the majority of the population was of the Moslem religion. It sometimes happened, however, that an unmarried mother was expelled from the family, in which case the child had no rights. The country's social authorities had given much attention to the question and it was to be hoped that Mauritania and the other Moslem countries would take the human aspect of the problem into consideration and find satisfactory solutions.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said that the Commission should never lose sight of its essential function, which was to try to ensure equality of rights between men and women. It should therefore try to establish a comparison between the

status of the unmarried mother and that of the unmarried father, with a view to finding means of removing the existing inequalities. A family consisting of an unmarried mother and her child could in many respects be compared with that of a family consisting of a single parent with a child. The legal situation was, however, very different in the two cases, and legal and other measures should be taken to remedy that state of affairs. The situation of the unmarried mother varied according to the circumstances; where both parents had wanted the child but did not wish to marry, there was usually no problem; it was where the birth of the child had not been intended that there was a need to provide a special legal status for the unmarried mother. The same applied to a woman left alone in consequence either of desertion by her fiancé or of his death. The resolution concerning the social and legal status of the unmarried mother should aim primarily at helping the woman who had become a mother against her will to obtain a status in which her situation would not be inferior to that of the unmarried father.

The problems facing the unmarried mother were broadly similar to those encountered by any single parent with a child. In Finland, it was increasingly felt that there should be no difference from the moral and legal standpoint between a family consisting of a mother and her child and a family consisting of a father, mother and child or of a father and child. Finnish legislation was generally in accordance with the principles set forth in draft resolution VI, adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session and recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see E/CN.6/562, pp. 2 and 3). A new law on children born out of wedlock was now under consideration which would probably remove the remaining divergences. It should not be forgotten that, as stated in the statement on the status of unmarried mothers submitted by several non-governmental organizations the situation of the unmarried mother and that of the child born out of wedlock were two facets of the same problem (see E/CN.6/NGO/241 and Corr.1, para. (1)). She approved the suggestion made by some non-governmental organizations that, in view of the differences in cultural and religious attitudes in various parts of the world, countries with similar backgrounds might hold joint discussions on the question of the unmarried mother (see E/CN.6/NGO/242). Regional seminars might be useful in that respect.

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Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) stressed the part played by education in the matter under discussion: the social education of parents and young people and the sex education of young people.

In Tunisia, unmarried mothers did not encounter serious problems; they were entitled to the same treatment as married women in maternity homes, where their identity could be kept secret. Social assistance was provided for unmarried mothers (day-nurseries, children's homes, foster-homes and adoption facilities). Children born out of wedlock had the same rights as legitimate children.

The Tunisian Government had no objection to draft resolution VI, entitled "The legal and social status of the unmarried mother".

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) agreed that the problem of unmarried mothers could not be separated from that of their children, who were very often brought up in institutions for abandoned children, where they were deprived of affection and developed a sense of frustration, which accounted for many of the cases of social maladjustment to be found among young people in those groups of the population. Perhaps it would be desirable for the Commission to delegate one of its members to a United Nations body concerned with the problems of illegitimate children.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that draft resolution V recommended by the Commission at its twenty-third session for adoption by the Economic and Social Council and adopted by the Council (resolution 1514 (XLVIII)) was entitled "The unmarried mother and her child: their social protection and the question of their integration in society", and had dealt with the social aspects of the question. At the present session, the Commission should concentrate on the legal aspects. Social assistance was, of course, useful and necessary to the unmarried mother but her status would not really improve until she was given adequate legal rights. In 1915, Norway had enacted legislation according equal rights to all children, whether born in or out of wedlock.

She did not think that the fact of granting social and legal rights to the unmarried mother in any way jeopardized the institution of marriage. It had also been said that draft resolution VI attached more importance to the child

than to the mother; but if the law gave the child of an unmarried mother a status inferior to that of the child of a married mother, the status of the unmarried mother would be affected.

Mrs. PAQUIER (World Young Women's Christian Association), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, drew the Commission's attention to the needs of the very young unmarried mother: education, accommodation, advice and acceptance. It was essential that a young girl who was pregnant should be able to complete her vocational training so that she could later earn a living for herself and her child. The Young Women's Christian Associations organized general and vocational training courses for such girls. The young unmarried mother also needed accommodation after her confinement, so that she could keep her child and resume her education or work. It would seem desirable to develop the system of hostels for single women or for single parents with children, because they provided a solution to the problem of child care during the day and of the mother's psychological and moral isolation. Lastly, the unmarried mother needed information and advice on questions of private and family law, investigation of paternity, social security, or even adoption. There again, the Young Women's Christian Associations offered counselling services.

The non-governmental organizations were in a good position to act on public opinion and to supplement and support the efforts of Governments to make information and consultative services generally available, thus helping to develop the sense of responsibility of parents, both men and women.

The CHAIRMAN declared the general debate on agenda item 5.(a) closed.

(b) STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW (E/CN.6/563, E/CN.6/NGO/240)

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) introduced the preliminary report by the Secretary-General on the legal capacity of married women (E/CN.6/563); the substantive report would be submitted to the Commission in 1974. That study was part of a long-term project on the status of women in private law undertaken by the Commission in 1968 and scheduled to be completed in 1980. The annex to the preliminary report contained a draft outline of the substantive report on the legal capacity of married women.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that in her country it was an established constitutional principle that men and women were equal under the law. In marriage, the father and mother had equal rights with regard to the children. Problems might arise, however, on the dissolution of the marriage, for the respondent in the divorce case lost his or her rights over the children. For example, if it was the mother who lost her rights, the father could agree to allow her to retain custody of the children on condition that she no longer claimed alimony. The mother would thus assume a responsibility which should be borne by both parents. In order to eliminate injustices of that kind, Costa Rica had prepared a draft family code and urged countries which had no such code to follow suit.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that, under Islamic law, women had the legal capacity to administer their own property and to be a party in legal proceedings. The situation left much to be desired, however, in the field of family law, where there should be greater equality between husband and wife.

At the request of Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia), the CHAIRMAN announced that the discussion on item 5 (b) would be resumed the following morning.

(c) STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING (E/CN.6/564, E/CN.6/NGO/232)

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland), speaking in her capacity as Special Rapporteur for the study on "The role of women in the family: status of women and family planning", introduced her progress report (E/CN.6/564). She announced that the completed study would be submitted to the Commission in 1974, World Population Year.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) emphasized the usefulness of the guidelines contained in the annex to the report, which had been drawn up to assist Governments in furnishing the information requested for the purposes of the study.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) noted that the guidelines for the Special Rapporteur's study corresponded in general to the conditions prevailing in the Latin American countries.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that, after amending its legislation on family planning, Canada had recently adopted a programme and measures with regard, firstly, to Canada itself, and secondly to international assistance for family planning programmes. The new Canadian legislation aimed at ensuring that all children brought into the world should be wanted and that the birth of a child should be the result of a deliberate decision by the parents.

Mrs. DEBATS-DENIS (Belgium) congratulated the Special Rapporteur. Belgium had experienced certain difficulties in replying to the questionnaire, because of its special situation; far from being faced with the problem of over-population, Belgium had, on the contrary, one of the lowest birth rates in the world. Perhaps it might be possible to prepare two or three different versions of the Special Rapporteur's "guidelines", corresponding to the main types of situations existing in the various regions of the world.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) congratulated the Special Rapporteur and said that her country had sent a preliminary reply to the questionnaire; that reply would be completed later. The problem of the population explosion did not exist in Uruguay, but the Special Rapporteur's "guidelines" would help it in studying other aspects of demographic questions which were no less important.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) also congratulated the Special Rapporteur and informed the Commission that a study had just been completed in Indonesia on the legal aspects of family planning. The close links between family planning and the various aspects of the life of the community, in particular the status of women, were highlighted in that study.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) congratulated the Special Rapporteur. In Latin America, doubts had been cast on whether family planning was really the best way of solving the problems of the countries of the region; she nevertheless believed that the study to be undertaken by the Special Rapporteur might be useful for those countries. At a regional seminar recently held in Central America, during which the problems of the aborigines had been studied, it had been stated that in Guatemala family planning had been used to prevent the indigenous population from reproducing itself. Any family planning policy

which did not respect the rights and dignity of man could be dangerous and would not provide any solution to the economic and social problems of the countries concerned.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) congratulated and thanked the Special Rapporteur. Family planning had been introduced in Japan after the Second World War because of the great poverty prevailing throughout the country at that time; it was now fully accepted in rural areas as well as in the towns. The large decline in the birth rate which had resulted from it had undoubtedly affected the status of women, even though it was difficult to establish a relationship between the two questions, as the Special Rapporteur had indicated in her explanatory note (ibid., annex, p. 4).

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) informed the Commission that, in addition to the countries mentioned in the progress report by the Special Rapporteur (ibid., para. 5), the following countries had replied to the note by the Secretary-General: Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Guatemala, Italy, New Zealand, the United States of America and Uruguay.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland), speaking in her capacity as Special Rapporteur, added that several non-governmental organizations had also replied since the appearance of the report, in particular the All-India Women's Conference and the International Alliance of Women. She had taken note of the suggestions made by the members of the Commission, and in particular by the representative of Belgium.

Mrs. SWINGLER (International Planned Parenthood Federation), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that, in the opinion of the Federation, a balance between world population, natural resources and productivity was a necessary condition for economic and social progress and peace. That was why family planning associations provided contraceptive services, undertook the training of family planning personnel and carried out programmes for informing the public of the personal, health, social and economic benefits of family planning. Where Governments launched their own family planning programmes, the member associations of the Federation were engaged in supplementing governmental services, in particular by educational and training projects intended for all sectors of the population.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation welcomed the fact that the questionnaire drawn up by the Special Rapporteur (ibid., annex, pp. 4-8) stressed the need for non-governmental organizations and Governments to recognize the influence of family planning on the status of women, the influence of the status of women on fertility and the impact on the status of women of population growth trends. The Federation had requested family planning bodies to assist the governmental services concerned in providing the required information. For their part, the offices and associations of the Federation had submitted information in connexion with the Special Rapporteur's study.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 23 February 1972, at 11 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.2, E/CN.6/L.601, E/CN.6/L.606, E/CN.6/L.608, E/CN.6/L.609, E/CN.6/L.616, E/CN.6/L.622)

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), introducing the second revised version of the USSR draft resolution on international instruments relating to the status of women (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.2), said that her delegation, acting in a spirit of co-operation, had endeavoured to take into consideration to the greatest possible extent the comments and suggestions made in the course of the debate. Comparing the new text with that of the first revised text (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.1), she pointed out that the paragraphs introducing the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council had been deleted and that the last two preambular paragraphs thereof had been replaced by three new paragraphs. The Tunisian amendment proposing the establishment of a working group (E/CN.6/L.609) was incorporated in the operative part of the revised draft resolution. However, bearing in mind the Secretary-General's appeal for strict economy, it was proposed that the working group should meet five days before the beginning of the Commission's twenty-fifth session; if the working group could not complete its work by the beginning of the session, it would be at liberty to continue to meet while the session was in progress. Lastly, in the interests of wider representation, it was proposed that the working group should be composed of 13-15 members of the Commission rather than of 6 members, as suggested in the Tunisian amendment.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) suggested that the words "nature and" should be inserted between the words "the" and "content" in operative paragraph 1 of the USSR revised draft resolution and that it might be advisable to replace the words "a new instrument" in the second and third lines of that paragraph by the words "new regulations" to allow for the possibility of a decision to prepare more than one instrument. She still felt that it would be preferable for the proposed working group to meet well in advance of the Commission's twenty-fifth session, and doubted whether five days would be sufficient to enable it to complete its work.

\* Resumed from the 583rd meeting.

Miss GELBER (Canada) supported the proposal to insert the words "nature and" in operative paragraph 1 of the USSR draft resolution. She also agreed with the previous speaker that the wording of the draft resolution should provide for the possibility of more than one document being prepared, but thought that the point could be more effectively met by inserting the words "or instruments" after the word "instrument" in operative paragraph 1. She further suggested the replacement of the words "countries members of the Commission" in the first line of the same paragraph by the words "States Members of the United Nations" and the insertion of the words "in collaboration with expert staff of the Secretariat" between the words "prepare" and "a draft convention" in operative paragraph 2. As for the date of meeting of the proposed working group, she was inclined to support the USSR view; insistence on an earlier meeting might lead to the proposal for the establishment of a working group being rejected altogether on account of the greater financial implications.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) pointed out that if operative paragraph 1 mentioned "a new instrument or instruments", it would be illogical to refer to "a draft convention" in operative paragraph 2. She suggested that that paragraph should be amended accordingly.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said that five working days in fact constituted a full week, which, she thought, was a sufficiently long period for the meeting of the proposed working group.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) accepted all the amendments proposed in the course of the discussion with the exception of the proposals to insert the words "or instruments" in operative paragraph 1 and to omit any reference to a draft convention in operative paragraph 2. The intention of the draft resolution was perfectly clear; to introduce the notion of the possible plurality of instruments could only result in vagueness. An international instrument was in fact a convention and there was no reason to refrain from using that term.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America), referring to the penultimate preambular paragraph, remarked that to say that existing international instruments

relating to the status of women were not adequate in all respects was to prejudge the results of the detailed examination of those instruments implied in the operative part of the revised draft resolution.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (continued):

(a) STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER (continued) (E/CN.6/L.613)

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway), introducing the draft resolution on the status of the unmarried mother (E/CN.6/L.613) on behalf of the sponsors, said that, while it was easy to agree that the unmarried mother, like any other person living under difficult conditions, should receive a measure of social assistance, the question of her legal and social rights was a much more complex matter. The draft resolution constituted an attempt to provide guidelines for Governments on the legal status to be given to the unmarried mother and her child. Some of the recommendations contained in the draft resolution were doubtless in advance of the current practice of many countries, but they represented a goal to which all countries should aspire, and the Commission would be evading its responsibility if it failed to define that goal.

The draft resolution was a revised version of draft resolution VI entitled "The legal and social status of the unmarried mother", adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session and recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, incorporating small amendments based on the comments received from Governments as set out in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Comments of Governments on draft resolution VI adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-third session" (E/CN.6/562). Subject to the consent of the other sponsors of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613, she wished to propose the addition to the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution for adoption by the Council of the words "and contribute by their work to all aspects of community development".

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) agreed in principle with the amendment just proposed, but thought that it would be more appropriate to speak of social or national development than of community development, as the latter term implied small, local social units.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) accepted that suggestion.

(b) STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW (continued) (E/CN.6/563, E/CN.6/NGO/240)

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) hoped that the Commission's study on the status of women in private law would not overlook the question of the status and legal capacity of women under customary or religious laws in countries where civil law provisions on the subject did not yet exist. In her own country, the status of women in customary and Islamic law was on the whole very favourable. The role played by such laws should be taken into consideration, on the understanding, of course, that the countries concerned intended to introduce civil legislation on the status of women as soon as possible.

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) said that the subject was of particular interest to her delegation. Although Chile was an advanced country in many respects, it lagged behind as regards the rights of married women; in particular, there was no divorce law, and the only way to dissolve a marriage was by annulment, a method which was often extremely unfavourable to the wife. A new family code was at present in process of preparation, and the Chilean Government's efforts in that sphere closely corresponded to the ideas contained in the study which formed the subject of the Secretary-General's preliminary report on the legal capacity of married women (E/CN.6/563). She wondered whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to adopt a draft resolution in support of the study.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) said that the problem of the legal capacity of married women did not exist in her country, since married women enjoyed rights equivalent to those of their husbands under a law enacted in 1946.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that there was room for improvement in some aspects of women's rights in her country's family law, such as those concerning the management of common property, grounds for divorce, and maintenance or support of dependents after the breakdown of a marriage. An amendment of the family law had been proposed to the Thai Government in 1971 and was at present under consideration. The Government had also adopted a plan for the setting up of family courts in the interests of the welfare of women and children.

(c) STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING (continued) (E/CN.6/564,  
E/CN.6/NGO/232)

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that, in consequence of a sharp drop in the death rate with no corresponding fall in the high birth rate, Thailand's population growth was the second highest in Asia and among the highest in the world. If the current growth rate persisted, the 1999 population would double in less than 22 years. Although Thailand could support a population of 60 million, immediate plans were necessary to avoid the economic and social problems that would be created by such a rapid population increase.

Surveys carried out by the Ministry of Public Health, the National Economic Board and the Institute of Population Studies had revealed considerable interest in family planning among women and evidence of some use of contraceptives. The over-all level of fertility, however, showed no signs of decline. The population growth rate was particularly high in rural areas, with adverse effects on the already low standard of living.

In 1970, an inter-ministry co-ordinating committee had been appointed by the Government under the chairmanship of the Minister of Public Health, who had been authorized to carry out a nation-wide family planning programme. The objectives of the programme included a reduction in the rate of population growth, the dissemination of information on family planning and the provision of services throughout the country, the integration of family planning with maternal and child health services, and the development of research on family planning and maternal and child health. Several organizations were co-operating with the Ministry of Public Health, including the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand. Co-operation and assistance were being received from a number of international agencies.

The Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand, whose objectives and activities she briefly described, was still in the early stages of development and most of its activities had taken place in Bangkok. Plans were being made to set up branches throughout the country to co-operate with the national family planning programme.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said that the questions contained in the Special Rapporteur's guidelines had been distributed among the relevant government

departments in her country, since each department had its own family planning programme, the programmes being co-ordinated by a Commission on Population.

In connexion with the Special Rapporteur's guidelines, she suggested that terms such as "status of women", "discrimination" or "equality" should be given a flexible interpretation in view of the differences in conditions between countries. They were, after all, Western terms and belonged to a historical, cultural and regional tradition which was not shared by other countries.

Family planning in the Philippines had started as a multi-sectoral programme carried out mainly by private effort. Government recognition and support had come only with the establishment of the Commission on Population in response to the need to provide adequate food, clothing, housing and employment for the people. That move, which was a significant one for a Catholic country, was described in the President's message to Congress on 25 January 1971. On 15 August 1971, the President had signed Republic Act No. 6365, also known as the Population Act, which provided for a national family planning programme that respected the religious beliefs of the individuals involved.

Family planning was carried out by means of a broad educational programme designed to promote the widest possible understanding of the adverse effects of unlimited population growth on family life and national welfare, by the dissemination of information on contraceptive methods, and by the provision of health facilities for all who wished to take advantage of them. The choice of family size and contraceptive method was left to the discretion of couples, but abortion as a method of birth control was illegal.

Family planning should enable women to broaden the scope of their activities and should thus improve family welfare, standards of living and the quality of life. It was also a form of preventive medicine, since the spacing of pregnancies protected the health of mother and child. The availability of acceptable and dependable contraceptives removed the fear of pregnancy and improved the mental health of the wife and of the family as a whole.

The reduction beginning to be observed in the hitherto accepted family size of between six and eight children in the Philippines was attributable to a number of factors, primarily education. As women became better educated, their interests broadened and they tended to marry later, have fewer children and be more receptive

to family planning. Better education also resulted in women becoming more familiar with their legal rights under their national legislation. Those rights had been considerably extended in the Philippines with the introduction of the new Civil Code in 1950. While, however, Philippine legislation gave men and women equal rights in the pursuit of a profession, in practice, private and public organizations preferred to employ men rather than women and single rather than married women. Data from a survey carried out by the Bureau of Public Schools showed that women's desire to perform a job efficiently affected the number of children they had.

She hoped that the Commission would consider family planning not only in its economic and demographic aspects, important though they were to the developing countries, but also from the standpoint of its contribution to an improvement in the quality and dignity of life.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) said that the United Kingdom was conducting a comprehensive study on existing family planning services. The study was sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Security and consisted of both a survey by the Office of Population Census Surveys of the public use of and attitude to family planning services and a study of the facilities themselves by a private research organization. Women's voluntary organizations had been asked for their views on the subject. It was hoped that the findings would be submitted to the Secretary-General shortly after the deadline of 31 March 1972.

Local authorities could now provide family planning services for all who sought them. In order to encourage the development of such services, the Government would treble the rate of support grant for local authority expenditure in the period 1972/1973. Local authorities had also been asked to provide domiciliary services for those who were unable or unwilling to attend public clinics or to visit their general practitioner.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association had been founded in 1957 but had made little progress under the former régime. In 1966, it had been reorganized and its first national conference held in 1967 had gained the support of prominent government officials and community organizations. The Djakarta family planning pilot project had been launched

in 1967. The Association now had 150 branches throughout the country. Training courses had been organized for doctors, midwives, nurses, social workers and voluntary workers, and talks on family planning had been given to business, women's and other groups. The Government was supporting family planning and the President had stressed its importance in his 1967 Independence Day speech. Indonesia had signed the Declaration on Population, which had been issued on Human Rights Day in 1966 and which stressed the adverse effects of excessive population growth.

She wished to draw attention to the fact that, despite the responsibilities imposed on States and Governments by official recognition of family planning as a basic human right, such recognition had seldom been followed by the necessary systematic legal reforms.

Many of the difficulties confronting family planning workers in numerous countries were caused by legal provisions which still hampered the implementation of family planning and by the unsatisfactory legal and social status of women. Referring first to the difficulties arising in connexion with family law, she said that in some countries discriminatory features of the legal status of women were based not on statute law but on customary or religious unwritten or uncodified law. The provisions which affected marriage and parenthood were those relating to the minimum age of marriage, polygamy, common law marriage, divorce and the position of the wife in the family. Other relevant factors were the preference for sons to ensure the continuation of the family line, and the extended family.

Other branches of law relevant to family planning and the status of women were the inheritance law, where it provided for a larger share for male than for female children and thus also resulted in a preference for some individuals; the criminal code, which in some countries contained obsolete provisions prohibiting the dissemination of information on contraception or made abortion illegal; commercial and tax law, whose provisions concerning contraceptives had to be adjusted to the requirements of family planning programmes; and lastly, social security regulations, whose provisions concerning family or children's allowances could also affect the implementation of family planning programmes.

In that connexion, she mentioned that a regulation was at present before the Indonesian Parliament providing that civil servants would be entitled to family allowances for up to three children only.

It was therefore important to make a compilation of the legal provisions which might affect family planning programmes, with a view to ascertaining the state of the existing laws and determining where reforms were required. The Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association had established a committee for that purpose, which had submitted recommendations for amendments to the laws in September 1971. The Association had also established a committee to make a special survey on the status of women and family planning for submission to the Commission in 1973.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

## MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIXTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 23 February 1972, at 3.30 p.m.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (continued):

(c) STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING (continued) (E/CN.6/564, E/CN.6/NGO/232)

Mrs. PROBST (Austria), referring to the heading "The status of women as a factor affecting fertility" of part C of the questionnaire at the end of the explanatory note in the Special Rapporteur's progress report (see E/CN.6/564, annex, p. 6) said that fertility was a biological factor, whereas the status of women was a social and legal question; to establish a relationship between the status of women and fertility was to suggest indirectly that a reduction in the number of children was a sign of the biological or physical degeneration of women, which was, of course, a very dangerous conclusion, whereas in reality it was the result of a change in attitudes (improved living standards, education, information on health matters, new concepts of family life, etc.). The use of chemical or other contraceptives might, of course, affect fertility, but that was another question. It would be better, therefore, to refer to the relationship between the status of women and family size or to the influence of the former on the latter. The existing wording possibly explained why certain interested individuals and organizations, at least in Austria, had been reluctant to carry out a survey of that aspect of the problem, because fertility could not be accurately measured and was therefore hardly a suitable subject for a survey.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that since 1967 the Norwegian Health Department had been trying to improve the family planning services offered to the public. Those services, however, still left much to be desired because of the lack of qualified personnel, the insufficient education of the public and the unsatisfactory distribution of contraceptives.

Since Norwegian families were usually small, family planning in any event affected the status of women only in certain respects. There were many cases, for example, where the first child arrived too early to allow the young mother to complete her vocational training and that situation was partly due to the

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inadequacy of the family planning services. On the other hand, the number of children had relatively little effect on maternal and child welfare, because assistance services were sufficiently well developed in Norway to reduce the social and economic inequalities between large and small families. The Government and local authorities provided medical supervision and care for mothers during pregnancy and childbirth and they were entitled to 12 weeks' leave, the cost of which was borne by the Social Insurance Fund. On the other hand, the number of day nurseries and kindergartens was far too small, which probably explained why two thirds of the married women in the labour force were childless or had children of over 15 years of age.

Since 1960, abortion had been permitted by law in special cases (for example, where there was a danger to the mother's health or life, a risk of foetal disease or injury and in cases of incest, mental illness of the mother, etc.). But the abortion law had not worked as well as had been expected, owing to the inability of the various local abortion boards to agree on a definition of the concept of "health".

Measures had been taken to improve family planning services in Norway. In future, medical students at Oslo University, medical officers of health and certain other doctors would receive training in that subject. It was also included in the curriculum for midwives and public health nurses, but instruction in modern family planning techniques had still to be provided for general practitioners.

All the information media were employed to inform the public concerning family planning methods, but sex education was not yet included in the curricula of secondary schools or of the last years of primary schools. The Norwegian Family Planning Association intended, however, to organize a training course for 50 teachers and Oslo University was planning a training programme for biology students on teaching methods relating to sex education and family planning.

The Director-General of the health services had asked all pharmacies to keep a complete stock of contraceptives, thereby facilitating their purchase. It was hoped that the improvement of family planning services would, in the long run, have repercussions on the status of Norwegian women.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) congratulated the Special Rapporteur on her excellent work. She described the family planning programmes operated under Government auspices in the Dominican Republic and jointly financed by the Government and by foreign organizations, and the private programmes financed partly by international organizations and partly by national bodies. None of the women's associations in the Dominican Republic was concerned with family planning.

There were still a number of obstacles to the application of a family planning policy, in particular the attitude of men - who regarded the number of their children as an indication of their virility - and the passive attitude of women.

The Dominican Republic's present family planning policy was carried out in complete conformity with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Family planning was regarded as reflecting the right and duty of every couple to decide on the number of their children and the spacing of births.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) also congratulated the Special Rapporteur.

In Tunisia, a family planning programme was being carried out under Government auspices; it was aimed not only at limiting the number of births, but at enabling couples to have the number of children they wished and thus to become more responsible parents. An Institute for Family Planning and Maternal and Child Welfare had recently been set up and there were centres providing free advice. The public authorities' family planning work was mainly educational; it was conducted by social workers, either in the centres or in the home.

Referring to the guidelines furnished by the Special Rapporteur in the annex to her report, she suggested that a section should be added dealing with the attitude of men to family planning and the steps taken to inform and educate them on that subject.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) thanked the Special Rapporteur for her report. There had not hitherto been much emphasis on family planning in Iraq, because there was as yet no over-population. However, a number of maternal and child welfare centres provided family planning services and the Government of Iraq intended to launch a family planning programme, the details of which had not yet been worked out.

With regard to the guidelines, she supported the suggestion that questions should be included on the attitude of men; since attitudes varied according to social, economic and educational levels, the questions might be broken down on those lines.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) joined in congratulating the Special Rapporteur. Family planning already existed in Nigeria, where the need for it was felt. The main objective now was to extend the programme more widely and to overcome the population's initial mistrust of family planning.

Miss VARZI (Iran) thanked the Special Rapporteur for her excellent report.

Iran did not yet have a population problem, but without a serious family planning effort, such a problem might well arise in the future (it was estimated that, without family planning, the country's population might double in 22 years). Fortunately, the Moslem religion did not forbid the use of contraceptives and, in general, Iranian women were receptive to family planning. The main problem was to make contraceptives available to the populations of remote villages. Mobile health units had been specially organized for that work, which required trained personnel (mainly married women). A nation-wide training programme for that purpose had been launched in 1969. In 1972, there were, in all, 1,529 family planning centres in Iran, distributed throughout the country and run by various authorities and organizations, because family planning in Iran was not the concern of a single organization but was the outcome of a concerted national campaign.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) said that during the last 20 years there had been a rapid decline in fertility in Japan, which meant that the family planning policy had probably been a success. It was important that women should have the right to decide whether or not they wished to have children. In many cases, however, they had to give up their jobs when they had children, because there were not enough day-care centres and other family social services. The Commission should therefore give special attention to protecting the right of women to become mothers without being compelled to stop working.

Miss ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that UNESCO had a Family Planning Section, which worked in collaboration with the other specialized agencies. That Section had carried out two studies, one of which, dealing with the relationship between education and fertility, had been completed in 1969. The Director of the Section thought it would have been desirable for the Special Rapporteur to mention in her report the fact that family planning was a key factor in economic and social development and in the improvement of the status of women in society.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHÉ (Argentina) said that her country, which covered an area of 3 million km<sup>2</sup>, had only 24 million inhabitants. The population growth rate was only 1.8 per cent. Thus the problem was more one of under-population. That was why, for certain countries, family planning should be linked with the population growth that was essential for economic development.

Mrs. CASSINADER (International Alliance of Women), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that, in her view, leisure time was an important factor in the lives of many women belonging to the poorest classes of society. Much had been said about the effect of family planning on employment, training and educational opportunities, but there had been no mention of the need to organize activities outside the home, particularly in connexion with community development, if family planning was to be successful. That question did not arise in the developed countries, where there were evening classes, clubs, television, cinemas and theatres. In less developed countries, on the other hand, family gatherings often centred mainly around the children. In order to ensure that family planning was successful at the level where it was most needed, those social and family activities should therefore be supplemented by other recreational activities. In one country, it had been noted that many women using contraceptives went back to the clinics a few years later saying that they wanted children because they felt left out of all the social activities of the village. She therefore urged the Commission and the Special Rapporteur to take account, in any family planning project, of the need to consider organizing recreational activities.

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Mrs. ROULLETT (Pax Romana), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said she was addressing the Commission on behalf of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations and the Catholic International Union for Social Services as well as on behalf of her own organization. Analysing some of the reasons which, in her view, explained why the questionnaire in the annex to the Special Rapporteur's report elicited relatively little response, she said that when Governments were questioned on the influence of family planning on the status of women, they did not reply because they did not consider themselves affected. The subject should therefore be presented in a broader context, namely, the general advancement of women and, through women, of society as a whole. Efforts to encourage the spread of literacy and to promote access for all - beginning with the poorest sectors of the population - to education, culture, hygiene and information would undoubtedly lead to a greater awareness of the problems of fertility, since those problems could not be isolated from development as a whole. If the subject was presented in that way, Governments would reply to the questionnaire, because they would then appreciate its full significance.

It was extremely important that the problem should be correctly formulated, since, unless family planning of the Western type was desired by the countries which appeared to need it, it represented another form of recolonization. The formulation should therefore be clearer and based on better defined concepts. The questionnaire should be completely objective and allow full freedom of reply. As the Special Rapporteur had reminded the Commission, the International Conference on Human Rights, held at Teheran in April and May 1968 had considered in its resolution XVIII<sup>1/</sup> that couples had a basic human right to decide freely on the number of their children (see E/CN.6/564, annex, p. 2). The exercise of that right entailed establishing a whole infrastructure of day nurseries, social services, family housing and so on. In her view, the serious problem of abortion should not be mentioned in the questionnaire as one of the means enabling persons to decide on the number of their children, when abortion constituted a criminal offence under the laws of many countries.

In the guidelines, the responsibility of the couple, who were the sole arbiters of how many children they wished to have, should be more clearly expressed; family planning should always be envisaged and presented in the

<sup>1/</sup> See Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XIV.2), p. 14.

context of over-all development; and freedom of choice for all women should be fully respected and guaranteed, particularly by the establishment of the necessary infrastructures. She was convinced that women, as they gradually became aware of their dignity, worth and role in society, would plan their families themselves.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland), speaking in her capacity as Special Rapporteur, said that the questionnaire had been prepared at meetings attended by representatives of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. It was difficult to draw up a questionnaire which covered absolutely every aspect of a question, but each Government in its reply was free to submit its own comments and to ask why a particular question had not been included. It would thus be possible to view the whole problem in a much wider context.

It had been said that the questionnaire should also mention the attitude of men towards family planning. That might perhaps be desirable, but it should be recognized that it would be equally appropriate to refer to the influence of the whole family, including the parents, the husband and the wife.

Certain delegations had stated that family planning was not useful in all countries. Family planning meant adaptation of the family to the means available. The family could be large or small. What mattered was to ensure the well-being of all its members. Moreover, it was essential that all children born should enjoy fundamental human rights. That was the question which was of primary importance.

Several representatives had expressed regret that the questionnaire was too closely concerned with the status of women and did not take sufficient account of the well-being of society or of social development. Under its terms of reference, however, the Commission could not study social questions, which were primarily the concern of the Commission for Social Development.

The questionnaire had also been criticized for not stressing the question of crèches, day nurseries, social and other services. Those questions could be dealt with under the headings B 10 (d), C 14 and D 20 (c) and (d) of the questionnaire.

She reminded those delegations which had expressed concern that they had not yet been able to submit their replies, that the document she had submitted was only a progress report and that the deadline for replies was 31 March 1972.

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Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) observed that in certain countries where social security did not cover agricultural workers, a large family represented a kind of investment for those workers, since it was a means of ensuring that they would be provided for when they were too old to work. In view of the key role which social insurance could play in family planning, the guidelines should include a section on the attitudes of Governments in that regard and the measures taken by them.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland), speaking in her capacity as Special Rapporteur, added that in many countries it was affirmed that family planning would not be successful until social, health and other services were such that mothers would no longer need to have a large number of children in order to be sure that some of them would survive.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (E/CN.6/NGO/239):

- (a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (E/CN.6/532, E/CN.6/553 and Add.1, E/CN.6/554, E/CN.6/559, E/CN.6/NGO/230, E/CN.6/NGO/235, E/CN.6/NGO/240, E/CN.6/NGO/244, E/CN.6/NGO/245)
- (b) ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS (E/CN.4/1056, E/CN.4/1087-E/CN.6/555, ST/TAO/HR/41, ST/TAO/HR/43)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) introduced the various documents relating to subitems (a) and (b) of agenda item 6.

Miss GELBER (Canada) pointed out that the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the participation of women in UNDP-assisted activities (E/CN.6/554) did not indicate separately the number of girls and boys benefiting from UNDP activities. The Commission needed precise data on that subject, for the discussion of its long-term programme.

Miss ABERLIN (International Federation of Women Lawyers), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the Federation advocated the establishment of regional intergovernmental commissions on the status of women, with which the non-governmental organizations would be asked to co-operate. There were a number of problems which needed to be discussed at the regional

level. For example, at a biennial convention of the Federation, which had been held at Santiago, Chile, and which had been attended by a large number of representatives from the Latin American countries, there had been some discussion of the Latin American concept of paternal authority. In France, that concept had been superseded by the concept of parental authority, which recognized the rights of the father and of the mother over the child. Regional intergovernmental commissions would be particularly well placed to discuss problems which arose in their regions and to request changes with a view to eliminating all discrimination against women.

Miss VAN DER ENT (International Federation of Business and Professional Women), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that, since 1965, the Federation had been encouraging its members to participate in regional meetings, with a view to enlarging their field of knowledge. Seminars had been held in the Netherlands, France, Denmark, Austria, Greece, Malawi, Jamaica and Canada. As a result of that approach, national federations had gained a better knowledge of United Nations activities and had progressed along the road to international understanding. The Federation was already considering organizing other seminars in Australia, New Zealand and in Africa.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVENTH MEETING

held on Thursday, 24 February 1972, at 11 a.m.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued) (E/CN.6/NGO/239):

- (a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued) (E/CN.6/532, E/CN.6/553 and Add.1, E/CN.6/554, E/CN.6/559, E/CN.6/NGO/230, E/CN.6/NGO/235; E/CN.6/NGO/240, E/CN.6/NGO/244, E/CN.6/NGO/245)
- (b) ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (E/CN.4/1056, E/CN.4/1087-E/CN.6/555, ST/TAO/HR/41, ST/TAO/HR/43)

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom), referring to the Secretary-General's report on advisory services in the field of human rights (E/CN.4/1087-E/CN.6/555), expressed concern at the fact that paragraph 14 relating to fellowship awards contained no reference to women; as at present worded, the paragraph implied that the award of fellowships was based on very narrow criteria which were not easily applicable to women. She would also like an assurance that the words "human rights" in the second line of paragraph 14 included the rights and status of women.

She further pointed out that resolution 17 (XXIII) of the Commission on Human Rights, which was summarized in paragraph 4 of section I.A of the report of the Secretary-General on advisory services in the field of human rights submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its twenty-seventh session (E/CN.4/1056), called for an annual programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, consisting of at least two seminars on human rights subjects but only one or two seminars on the status of women. In that connexion, she was concerned lest the current economy campaign in the United Nations system might lead to cuts in programmes affecting the Commission. The Commission had already had to accept the change from annual to biennial sessions for reasons of economy. That change made a break in the continuity not only of the Commission's own work but also to some extent in the work of the non-governmental and women's voluntary organizations, which were doing so much to advance the cause of women. In order to remedy that situation, the Commission should do everything possible

to ensure that the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights was linked more closely with its work and, in particular, that two seminars a year were held on the status of women. It was especially important that an international seminar on a subject of concern to the Commission should be held in the non-session year. The United Kingdom Government was willing to act as host to such a seminar in 1973, subject to suitable detailed arrangements being made with the Secretary-General, and suggested that the subject should be "the one-parent family".

If the Commission wished to submit a draft resolution to the Economic and Social Council concerning annual seminars and human rights fellowships, her delegation would be glad to discuss the wording with any other interested delegations.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania), referring to paragraph 1 of the introduction to the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Comments of Governments on draft resolution VIII adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-third session, entitled 'Increased activities relating to the status of women at the regional level'" (E/CN.6/559), said that her delegation had not supported draft resolution VIII, which had now been referred back to it by the Economic and Social Council for further consideration, because it had believed that the establishment of regional intergovernmental commissions on the status of women was unnecessary. Her delegation's position remained unchanged. Indeed, it felt that there were disadvantages in the idea, one of which was that the Commission would work through intermediaries instead of maintaining and increasing its direct contacts. She nevertheless considered that there was a need for greater regional activity, since economic development required mutual understanding and co-operation between nations.

The fight for fuller recognition of women's rights was closely linked with the fight for peace and human well-being and needed the participation of both women and men. She accordingly supported the idea of an international year for the advancement of women, put forward by a number of non-governmental organizations in the statement in document E/CN.6/NGO/244, and suggested that the Commission should consider recommending a draft resolution on the subject for adoption by the Council.

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Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) supported the United Kingdom representative's suggestion concerning annual seminars and expressed her willingness to co-operate in formulating a suitable draft resolution.

Miss CHATON (France), referring to the selected list of fields in which human rights fellowships had been awarded (see E/CN.4/1087-E/CN.6/555, annex), suggested that the Commission should recommend that Governments should be encouraged to nominate candidates for subjects of interest to women. A number of fellowships had been awarded to women in 1971 and she hoped the practice would continue.

She welcomed the United Kingdom Government's offer to act as host to a seminar in 1973.

She shared the Romanian representative's views on the question of intergovernmental regional commissions. Perhaps it would be possible to enlist the assistance of the United Nations regional economic commissions. She also supported the Romanian representative's suggestion concerning a draft resolution on an international year for the advancement of women.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) supported the idea of intergovernmental regional commissions outside the United Nations, particularly in view of the Organization's current financial difficulties. Such commissions would strengthen rather than diminish the Commission's role. They would also be in keeping with the view expressed by ECA in point (c) in paragraph 6 of the report of the Secretary-General on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted action (E/CN.6/553). An example of such a commission was the Arab Women's Commission recently set up and financed by the League of Arab States.

She supported the Romanian representative's suggestion for an international women's year.

Mr. FOX (United Nations Development Programme), referring to the Secretary-General's report on the participation of women in UNDP-assisted activities (E/CN.6/554), outlined the UNDP country programming procedure. One of its main purposes was to co-ordinate technical and financial aid with national economic and social development programmes to ensure the most efficient use of such aid. The beneficiary country was responsible for defining its national

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objectives and priorities, with a view to establishing systematic information on the national resources available and the aid required from external sources. The role of the resident representatives was to assist Governments in planning and in defining their objectives. Country programmes were subject to approval by the Governing Council of UNDP in the light of the UNDP resources available to the country concerned. Seventeen country programmes had so far been approved. Since it was for Governments themselves to decide how to use the resources at their disposal, UNDP neither did nor could take the initiative in instituting projects or implementing proposals. Resident representatives could, however, bring worth-while suggestions to the attention of Governments and that was regarded as an important part of their functions.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that her delegation strongly supported the idea of an international year for the advancement of women as a means of promoting equality of women's rights and the more active participation of women in national development and international co-operation for peace and social progress.

The seminar on the participation of women in the economic life of their countries (with reference to the implementation of article 10 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women), held in Moscow in September 1970, had produced extremely fruitful discussions and had made some important recommendations (see ST/TAO/HR/41). She hoped that the Commission would take the results of the seminar into account in its long-term programme of work.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) regretted the absence of a UNICEF representative at the Commission's current session. Although primarily concerned with children's welfare, UNICEF had also of late been active in the field of women's advancement in her country and had, in particular, helped the Indonesian Government in its educational programme for women. She expressed appreciation of UNICEF's activities, and also noted with satisfaction the UNESCO programmes of special benefit to women described in the report prepared by UNESCO entitled "Study on UNESCO activities of special interest to women" (E/CN.6/557).

Turning to the report on the participation of women in UNDP-assisted activities and to the statement by the representative of UNDP, she said that the national women's organizations in Indonesia and other Asian developing countries which actively participated in the national development programmes, often encountered difficulties in enlisting the support of their Governments in putting forward their requests for UNDP assistance. She appealed for greater interest on the part of UNDP regional representatives in advising such organizations on ways and means of obtaining assistance for their projects and in encouraging Governments to give those projects due consideration. The projects concerned were in the main related to the education and training of women in rural areas, an issue of great importance in view of the growing trend towards urbanization; improved training opportunities would offer a much-needed incentive to women and young people to make their contribution to national development in the countryside.

Lastly, she supported the Romanian representative's proposal for an international year for the advancement of women and the United Kingdom representative's suggestion that international seminars on subjects related to the advancement of women should be held in the years between Commission sessions.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) also welcomed the United Kingdom representative's suggestion and thanked her for the invitation to attend a seminar on the one-parent family to be held in the United Kingdom in 1973. She likewise supported the proposal to hold an international women's year, but thought that its title might be changed to "international year for the establishment of equal status of men and women"; such a title would pinpoint the important principle that any fundamental change in the status of women necessarily implied a change in the status of men. Turning to the subject of the integration of women in the economic life of their countries, she associated herself with the views of the Finnish and Swedish Governments, as summarized in paragraph 11 of the report of the Secretary-General on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted action, and reported that her Government had just taken a decision to establish a council on the equal status of men and women. Lastly, she agreed with the remarks made during the consideration of agenda item 3 (a) by

the representative of Iraq (580th meeting) concerning textbooks at the primary school level; it was important that children should be encouraged from an early age to question the established social order and its ideas, not least in the matter of traditional sex roles.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) also supported the United Kingdom representative's proposal for the holding of international seminars in the years between the Commission's sessions and welcomed the announcement that a seminar on the one-parent family was to be held in the United Kingdom in 1973. She would, however, like to know whether the seminar would be concerned exclusively with families where the parent was unmarried. She likewise supported the proposal for the proclamation of an international year for the advancement of women, and endorsed the USSR representative's suggestion concerning the importance and success of the 1970 Moscow Seminar on the participation of women in the economic life of their countries. After thanking the UNDP representative for his explanation of the machinery for obtaining UNDP assistance, she stressed her country's need for assistance, especially in the sphere of training of women for work in agriculture; no agricultural school for women existed as yet in Uruguay, with the result that the proportion of skilled women agricultural workers was extremely low and, correspondingly, the exodus of women from the countryside was much more pronounced than that of men.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said that, like the Norwegian representative, she associated herself with the comments on the integration of women in national development contained in paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's report; she also endorsed the views of ECA expressed in point (c) in paragraph 6 of the same report. It was important that, in addition to working within women's organizations, women should also participate in the activities of political parties and trade unions, so as eventually to reach the highest decision-making level in their respective countries. She reported with satisfaction that women had occupied 21.5 per cent of seats in her country's last parliament and had obtained the same proportion of seats in the most recent elections held during the previous month. The participation of women in Finnish political life was traditionally very strong; women had formed 9.5 per cent of her country's parliament as early as in 1907.

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Endorsing the appeal made by the Indonesian representative for greater interest in women's affairs on the part of UNDP resident representatives, she expressed the hope that more women would be appointed as resident representatives or deputy resident representatives in the future; it was also to be hoped that more women would be nominated by their Governments for human rights fellowships. Generally speaking, it was regrettable that so few women participated in seminars and other international meetings in fields other than those of special interest to women; by refraining from taking part in such activities, women were in effect discriminating against themselves. It was likewise to be regretted that only one man had participated in the Moscow Seminar of 1970.

Lastly, she suggested that, by analogy with the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the proposed international women's year should be given the title of "international year for action to combat discrimination on the grounds of sex".

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) inquired whether it was possible for the Secretary-General to intervene with the Council of Europe with a view to the establishment of a permanent interregional commission for women's affairs. The establishment of such a commission or of a joint committee composed of members of the Council of Europe's Social Committee, as well as of women representatives from various European Governments and important non-governmental organizations, could be of great help to European countries, which, as a result of continuing social change, were confronted with common problems in the fields of women's affairs.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) replied that the action proposed by the Austrian representative would have to take the form of an invitation by the Economic and Social Council.

Miss GELBER (Canada) expressed gratitude for the candid report on the participation of women in UNDP-assisted activities and for the full information provided by it regarding the employment of women in senior and Professional posts. She noted the extremely low proportion of women holding Professional posts in UNDP (see E/CN.6/554, paras. 57 and 58). The situation in UNDP was no

worse than in other specialized agencies and in the United Nations Secretariat itself, but the lack of women resident representatives was a particularly serious matter because, as the UNDP representative had explained, resident representatives could bring a certain moral influence to bear on Governments in connexion with the selection of projects for UNDP assistance. It was self-evident that a male resident representative was less likely to be sensitive to projects of special interest to women. She hoped that the UNDP representative would convey to his organization the Commission's urgent wish and hope that every effort would be made in future to recruit qualified women to field posts and that a greatly improved statistical breakdown of UNDP staff would be presented to the Commission at its twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) endorsed the Indonesian representative's appeal to UNDP for greater interest in projects relating to women; her country's need for UNDP assistance was also very great, especially in the field of teacher-training for women in rural areas. She expressed appreciation of UNDP assistance in providing advisory services and training activities for the textile sector of Thai industry (ibid., para. 40), which was proving very helpful to many Thai women in the low-income group.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) agreed in principle with the Finnish representative's suggestion for the title to be given to the proposed international women's year, but wondered whether the notion of combating discrimination on the grounds of sex might not be interpreted as excluding any special protection to be given to women.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) replied that, just as the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had not excluded action aimed at redressing existing wrongs due to racial discrimination, the proposed international year for action to combat discrimination on the grounds of sex need by no means exclude action aimed at ensuring special protection of women where such protection was necessary, e.g. during pregnancy and nursing.

Mrs. OBA (Japan) said that she had been interested to hear the representative of Thailand speak of a successful UNDP assistance programme in her country, and wondered what had been the experience of other countries in that respect. In particular, she wished to know whether UNDP programmes were generally proving to be successful or effective, and whether any special problems had been encountered by Governments upon their completion; if so, she asked for information on the causes of those problems and for suggestions on possible ways of overcoming them.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHTH MEETING

held on Thursday, 24 February 1972, at 3.10 p.m.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued) (E/CN.6/NGO/239):

- (a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued) (E/CN.6/532, E/CN.6/533 and Add.1, E/CN.6/554, E/CN.6/559, E/CN.6/NGO/230, E/CN.6/NGO/235, E/CN.6/NGO/240, E/CN.6/NGO/244, E/CN.6/NGO/245)
- (b) ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (E/CN.4/1056, E/CN.4/1087-E/CN.6/555, ST/TAO/HR/41, ST/TAO/HR/43)

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) recalled that the Secretary-General, in his report to the Commission at its nineteenth session, had proposed the preparation of a programme for the advancement of women in three stages (see E/CN.6/532, para. 6): (a) the establishment of specific goals to be achieved; (b) the determination of the special needs and problems of women in relation to those goals and in relation to economic and social development; and (c) the intensification of action to meet those needs and overcome those problems in order to achieve the goals established.<sup>1/</sup> It remained for the Commission to determine the specific measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels.

With regard to national machinery, since the plan for a Philippine national commission for the status of women had not materialized, consideration was now being given to setting up an inter-departmental committee on questions affecting women: employment, education, health, etc.

The Philippine Government was in favour of extending intergovernmental co-operation; the Presidents of Indonesia and the Philippines had recently decided to strengthen the relations between the two countries, both bilaterally and within the framework of international organizations like the United Nations or regional associations like ASEAN, the Colombo Plan or ECAFE. A proposal for including a programme for the advancement of women among the activities of ASEAN had been favourable received, the main difficulty being that the scope of regional co-operation for improving the status of women was ill-defined; it was not clear where such co-operation would begin and where it would end. The Philippines was not opposed to the establishment of regional commissions on the status of women,

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<sup>1/</sup> See United Nations assistance for the advancement of women: report of the Secretary-General (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 67.IV.2), p. 67.

but it took the view that there were already enough regional organizations in Asia within which countries could work together for the advancement of women.

With regard to international action, the Philippines delegation approved the study programme recommended in the report of the Secretary-General on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted action (see E/CN.6/553, paras. 69-71), and stressed the need for further study of indicators determining the status of women, which was a concept that varied from country to country. The small number of UNDP projects relating to the status of women might also be increased. For that purpose, countries should acquaint themselves with the procedures for requesting assistance, so as to include projects for the advancement of women.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) supported the proposal for holding seminars between Commission sessions and thanked the United Kingdom for having offered to act as host to four of them. She also supported the proposal by Romania and Hungary (587th meeting) for an international women's year and expressed the hope that a programme of international co-operation would be worked out for celebrating it. In Latin America, the intergovernmental organization for regional co-operation for the advancement of women was the Inter-American Commission of Women; it would be desirable, in her country's opinion, to set up similar organizations in other regions.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) supported the proposal to hold an international year for women's rights; the year 1975, half way through the Second United Nations Development Decade, would be completely suitable. She also approved the proposal that seminars should be organized between Commission sessions.

With regard to the long-term programme, she recalled that, at its twenty-third session, the Commission, in its draft resolution II for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, had fixed a number of general objectives and minimum targets to be achieved during the Second Development Decade. At its twenty-fourth session, the Commission should adopt a resolution defining the complementary roles of each of the United Nations agencies and bodies (the ILO, UNESCO, FAO, UNICEF and the Commission for Social Development). It should also request the various organizations to indicate the main lines of their activities for the advancement of women during the next ten years.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) recalled that the Commission at its twenty-third session, in its draft resolution II submitted for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, and the International Conference on Human Rights, held at Teheran in 1968, in its resolution IX,<sup>2/</sup> had requested Member States, the specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations to implement the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. In her view, use should be made of the many existing intergovernmental organizations for regional co-operation for the advancement of women. For several years past, the need for increasing regional activities had been stressed by the specialized agencies and at various seminars. The United States delegation thought that efforts should be concentrated on implementing previous United Nations resolutions and the recommendations of seminars on that question and that the drafting of new international instruments should be avoided.

Miss CHATON (France) said that the Commission on the Status of Women should give more attention to those aspects of the world social situation which were of special interest to women: nutrition, health, education, living standards and employment. In her view, women could be regarded as belonging to the marginal groups - like migrants from the countryside - which were in need of special attention. Moreover, it was necessary to work out social indicators of the status of women: their opportunities of obtaining access to health institutions, securing decent housing and of receiving an education and passing it on. In other words, the Commission should move on from the setting of standards to more practical matters and should focus on the social sciences, if it wished to act effectively.

Mrs. ALAMI (Women's International Democratic Federation), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the Federation, which comprised 107 national organizations and represented millions of women of very differing social origins, political views and religious denominations, had been working since its establishment for the advancement of women and whole-heartedly supported all the steps taken by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in favour of the programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women (General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV)).

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<sup>2/</sup> See Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XIV.2), pp. 10 and 11.

The Federation was planning to organize a seminar in Latin America and to give increased aid to the women's organizations in the African countries fighting against Portuguese colonialism and to those in the countries of southern Africa where apartheid and racism were rife, by establishing, with the aid of national organizations and experts, accelerated training courses for women in the liberated areas of the African territories still under Portuguese domination.

The Commission on the Status of Women should propose to the United Nations General Assembly the proclamation of an "international year for the advancement of women", during which increased efforts would be made to secure concerted action by Governments and non-governmental organizations with a view to the full application of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the establishment of an international convention embodying all the principles of the Declaration. As would be seen from the statement submitted by a number of non-governmental organizations on the programme of concerted international action (E/CN.6/NGO/244), those organizations supported that proposal and several members of the Commission had made very welcome suggestions for giving greater significance to such an international year.

Mr. FOX (United Nations Development Programme), replying to delegations which had inquired about the possibility of greater assistance for women in rural areas, said that interested persons should get into touch with the UNDP resident representative, who, though mainly concerned with UNDP programmes, could also inform them of other sources which might be approached. He was in contact with diplomatic representatives who had access to bilateral sources and he knew what resources the specialized agencies, IBRD or the regional banks had to offer. The organizations concerned should not, therefore, hesitate to discuss with the resident representative the possibility of obtaining funds from UNDP or from some other organization. Responsibility for the execution of programmes within the UNDP system lay with the specialized agencies as executing agencies.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that what was important in the technical vocational training of women and young girls was to organize schemes which would enable trainees to find jobs on completing the course of training or study. If employment opportunities were lacking, the investment would be wasted.

Miss ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) drew the Commission's attention to the annex to the report by UNESCO on its activities of special interest to women (E/CN.6/557); which contained information on UNESCO's activities in the field of education. She would be glad to provide statistics on fellowships for any members who were interested.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) pointed out that the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights differed from UNDP in the sense that the projects financed and carried out under that programme were not subject to country programming, i.e. they were not established on the basis of national development priorities. The programme of advisory services thus had certain advantages for activities relating to women, but the funds available were unfortunately somewhat limited.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that, while she recognized the usefulness of country programming, there was a danger that, unless those responsible for projects relating to women themselves contacted the non-governmental organizations, no one would think of helping them and the assistance they received would continue to be very limited.

In reply to a question put by Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said it was the General Assembly which, in its resolution 926 (X), had established the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights and had authorized the Secretary-General to provide the services of experts, although little use had been made of that possibility. Fellowships could be offered and seminars organized under the programme, but the funds available were very small and the assistance requested covered the whole human rights field.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) stressed the need to send to developing countries experts who not only had the necessary knowledge but were also capable of understanding the traditions and customs of those countries.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that it was very difficult to find the ideal expert in every case. The Commission had requested that a list should be drawn up of available experts, both male and female. The Secretariat had not had time to do so, but such a list would undoubtedly be useful.

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Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that very often the experts sent to developing countries proved to be unsatisfactory. As a rule, the Governments of the countries concerned were merely informed in writing of the experts' qualifications. Perhaps they might participate more actively in the appointment of experts. Another difficulty was that the counterpart personnel might not be right for the expert.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) associated herself with the comments made by the Indonesian representative. She would like to know how the experts were chosen.

Mr. FOX (United Nations Development Programme) said that every agency had its own system but the rules applied had many points in common. As a rule, when an expert was needed for a post for an approved project, it was the specialized agency, as executing agency, that was responsible for his recruitment. Some specialized agencies proposed several candidates to the country concerned, which then made a choice. Others, in an effort to simplify matters, proposed only one candidate, and, if he was rejected, then proposed another. The United Nations never sent an expert to a country unless he had been accepted by that country. Some countries, before accepting an expert, instructed a diplomatic representative to contact him and report back. As experts came from all over the world, mistakes could be made, but the organizations took their role very seriously and did their best to propose the most suitable candidates.

Miss PLUME (Associated Country Women of the World), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, observed that, although in country programming it was the Government which took the decisions, non-governmental organizations, because of their very close links with the population, particularly in rural areas, could nevertheless play a very important part in nutrition, child welfare, social services and education. Unfortunately, the resources available to them were very small.

Possession of the required technical expertise was not all that mattered for an expert. To be really useful, he must have the necessary experience to work at the community level. He must be capable of showing the population how to use new techniques, particularly in agriculture, and of dealing also with health questions.

Mrs. JONES (Pan-Pacific and Southeast Asia Women's Association), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, supported what the Indonesian representative had said. She knew from experience that the most important thing was the attitude of the experts. They should be imbued with the idea that they had more to learn than to teach; otherwise, they would not succeed in their task.

Mr. FOX (United Nations Development Programme) explained how voluntary agencies could co-operate with UNDP. If they were represented in the country requesting assistance, those responsible for carrying out the programmes, who knew that they must first of all mobilize public opinion in favour of their activities, contacted the competent agencies. If the agencies were represented at the headquarters of the specialized agencies, they should make their needs and desires known to the agencies responsible for organizing and executing projects.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation) said that, at the request of a Government, a national non-governmental organization might be given the responsibility of carrying out a project. That had occurred, for example, in Sierra Leone. Non-governmental organizations should work in close co-operation with the specialized agencies. The ILO, for its part, recommended its experts to establish contact with trade unions and employers' organizations in the countries where they were working.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said she was not sure whether countries could not make greater use of the services of the experts available under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights or whether, on the other hand, they should not take greater advantage of fellowships and seminars.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that it was very difficult to give an opinion, since not enough experience was available in the matter. It was clear, however, that Governments could, where they thought it necessary, request the services of experts under the programme. Perhaps a little more publicity would help to make such possibilities better known.

The CHAIRMAN declared the debate on agenda item 6 (a) and (b) closed.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (concluded)\* (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3, E/CN.6/L.616, E/CN.6/L.626, E/CN.6/NGO/246)

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) introduced the revised version of the USSR draft resolution on international instruments relating to the status of women (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3). There was a further amendment to operative paragraph 3; the words "the Secretary-General," should be added after the word "Requests".

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) introduced the new text of the amendments by Tunisia and the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.626) to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3, and stated that the sponsors of those amendments withdrew the amendment to operative paragraph 2 contained in paragraph 3 (b).

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said she supported the Soviet draft resolution and proposed that the Commission should adopt it as it stood.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) proposed that the words "with regard to the upbringing of children" in the second preambular paragraph should be replaced by the words "as mothers".

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) accepted the Finnish amendment and proposed the closure of the debate.

That proposal was adopted by 20 votes to 2, with 6 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to vote on the amendments proposed by Tunisia and the United Kingdom and on the paragraphs of the draft resolution to which they related.

The amendment to the final preambular paragraph (E/CN.6/L.626, para. 1) was adopted by 16 votes to 5, with 7 abstentions.

The final preambular paragraph of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3, as amended, was adopted by 26 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said there was no need to vote again on the insertion of the words "or instruments" in operative

\* Resumed from the 585th meeting.

paragraphs 1 and 2, since the amendment which had just been adopted applied to the draft resolution as a whole.

The amendment to add, at the end of operative paragraph 1, the words "and to prepare a working paper taking into account the replies of Governments" (E/CN.6/L.626, para. 2 (b)) was adopted unanimously.

Operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

Operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3, as amended by Tunisia and the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.626, para. 3 (a)), was adopted by 24 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 3, as orally amended, was adopted by 27 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.599/Rev.3 as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 27 votes to none, with 1 abstention.<sup>3/</sup>

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) explained that she had abstained in the vote on paragraph 2 of the resolution, because she doubted whether so large a working group could be really effective, and because she thought there was a certain lack of logic between the first and last parts of that paragraph.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) explained that her delegation had been unable to support the decision to establish a working group, because that decision had financial implications and because, furthermore, the need to adopt a new international instrument had not yet been established.

Mrs. SIPIÄ (Finland) explained that she had voted for the draft resolution as a whole, even though she could see no logical link between the first and second part of the operative part; in any event, it was quite clear that, if Governments were not interested in adopting a new international instrument, they would not send representatives to the meeting of the working group.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) explained that she had abstained in the vote on paragraph 2 of the resolution, because she considered it essential that the legal instrument should be a convention.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.

3/ The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.628.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

held on Friday, 25 February 1972, at 10.55 a.m.

In the absence of the Chairman, Mrs. Andrei (Romania), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (continued):\*

(a) STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER (continued)\*\* (E/CN.6/L.613, E/CN.6/L.618, E/CN.6/L.619, E/CN.6/L.623)

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that, as one of the sponsors of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613, she wished to propose the addition of a new paragraph 3 at the end of the operative part, reading as follows:

"Recommends that consideration be given by Member States of the United Nations to the development of programmes designed to increase awareness on the part of both men and women and to bring about a balance in social attitudes towards members of both sexes in the matter of responsibility for birth out of wedlock."

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) read out a series of amendments she proposed to the last preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613.

In the last preambular paragraph, she proposed the substitution of the word "appropriate" for the word "possible" between the words "all" and "means"; certain measures, though possible, might not be appropriate from the point of view of Governments, e.g. if the unmarried mother was still a minor and incapable of assuming all the rights and duties of motherhood. She agreed to the addition to that paragraph proposed by the Norwegian representative at the 585th meeting, but suggested the deletion from it of the words "all aspects of".

In operative paragraph 1, she suggested that it would be more correct to speak of the Governments of Member States than of Governments and Member States and further proposed the deletion of the words "where this problem exists" as being redundant.

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\* Resumed from the 586th meeting.

\*\* Resumed from the 585th meeting.

In operative paragraph 2, she proposed the insertion of the words "unless on account of age or other incapacity the competent authority decides that in the interest of the child this rule should be waived" after the words "provided for by law" in subparagraph (b). The amendment, which in effect amounted to restoring part of the text of draft resolution VI submitted by the Commission to the Economic and Social Council, was an important one and, unless it was accepted, the Austrian delegation would be unable to vote for the draft resolution as a whole. She further proposed that, in view of the difficulty of concealing the fact of birth out of wedlock where the mother bore her maiden name, the words "if possible" should be inserted between the words "child" and "in such a manner" in subparagraph (b) (i). The words "the unmarried mother... shall transmit" in subparagraph (b) (ii) should be replaced by the words "the nationality of the mother shall be transmitted to the child". The principle involved in the second sentence of that subparagraph might give rise to practical difficulties, e.g. in the case of children born out of wedlock who were living with the mother but had the nationality of the father. She proposed the replacement of the word "State" between the words "by the" and "to the mother" in the third sentence of subparagraph (b) (iv) by "competent authority" and of the word "possible" between the words "all" and "assistance" by the word "appropriate" in the same sentence, to bring the text into line with the amendment she had proposed to the last preambular paragraph; she further proposed the insertion of the words "or court" between the words "authority" and "for the support" in the ninth line of that subparagraph. She supported the proposal by Belgium and France (see E/CN.6/L.618) for the deletion of subparagraph (b) (v). As far as subparagraph (b) (vi) was concerned, she drew attention to the fact that it was not always possible to ensure that the unmarried mother should enjoy the same measure of social assistance and social security as other mothers; for example, an unmarried mother could not, like a married woman, claim pension benefits on the strength of her husband's contributions.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) introduced the amendment to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613 sponsored by her delegation together with the delegation of Colombia (E/CN.6/L.623). The word "prejudice" in operative

paragraph 1, in Spanish at least, implied an irrational attitude, and she did not see how such an attitude could be modified by any legal measures; the phrase "harm caused by lack of understanding" would seem to express the Commission's intentions more accurately. The phrase "and to secure them an acceptance on an equal footing with other families" appeared to her to be too radical. In adopting a draft resolution of universal scope, the Commission should bear in mind the widely differing conditions which prevailed in different parts of the world; in some countries, where marriage entailed considerable hardship owing to local tradition and culture, treatment of unmarried mothers on an equal footing with wives might discourage women from marrying and so involve a threat to the institution of the family. In her own country, a divorce law had been enacted but had had to be repealed a year later because so many women, especially of the poorer class, had availed themselves of it. In attempting to improve the status of the unmarried mother, it was important not to take any action that might be detrimental to society at large. For all those reasons, the amendment of the Argentine and Colombian delegations proposed the replacement of the phrase in question by the words "and ensuring greater protection for the mother and her child".

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said she supported draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613. The laws of her own country fully corresponded to the spirit of the draft resolution and even went beyond it in ensuring every possible assistance to the unmarried mother and to the child born out of wedlock. She also accepted the additional paragraph proposed by the United States representative.

With regard to the amendments proposed by Belgium and France (E/CN.6/L.618), she would oppose the proposed amendment to subparagraph (a) of operative paragraph 2 because maternal filiation at least should be established automatically in all cases; the proposed amendment to the introductory sentence of subparagraph (b) was unacceptable for the same reason. She also opposed the proposed amendment to subparagraph (b) (iii). As for subparagraph (b) (v), she did not agree that it dealt exclusively with the rights of the child, since, under subparagraph (b) (iii), the unmarried mother would be vested with the right to manage her child's inheritance; the subparagraph should therefore be maintained.

She was also unable to support the first two amendments proposed by the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.619) relating to subparagraph (b) (i) and (ii) of operative paragraph 2, because the question of the name and nationality of the child born out of wedlock was extremely important and the Commission's position on the matter should be stated in the clearest possible terms. Lastly, while appreciating several of the points raised by the Austrian representative, she emphasized that the text under discussion was not an international convention but only a draft resolution and therefore proclaimed general principles rather than detailed rules. She accordingly hoped that the Austrian representative would not press her amendments.

Mrs. DEBATS-DENIS (Belgium) said that, as the representative of Hungary had pointed out, in adopting the draft resolution, the Commission could not hope to introduce a set of legal rules acceptable to all countries. It was precisely for that reason that, together with the representative of France, she was proposing the amendment to subparagraph (a) of operative paragraph 2 set out in document E/CN.6/L.618; by taking into consideration the reservations of some Governments in the matter of automatic maternal filiation, the Commission would not be weakening the general principle of the unmarried mother's right to be a mother in the fullest sense of the word. She agreed with the representative of Hungary that the proposed amendment to subparagraph (b) of operative paragraph 2 was consequent upon that to subparagraph (a). As to the proposed amendment to subparagraph (b) (iii), the text of the draft resolution as it stood was not clear and could be interpreted to mean that the unmarried mother should be vested with all rights even when paternal affiliation was established or when she did not wish to bring up her child. The proposal to delete subparagraph (b) (v) was motivated by the wish to avoid duplicating the work of another United Nations body. She was willing to accept the United Kingdom amendment to operative paragraph 2 (E/CN.6/L.619) and any other proposal aimed at eliminating the problem of the child's name and nationality from the text of the draft resolution. In the interest of unanimity, she would be prepared to withdraw the first and second of the amendments she was co-sponsoring with the delegation of France, but urged members to give unanimous support to the third and fourth amendments which, she believed, would enlist greater support from Governments for the draft resolution as a whole.

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Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) introduced her delegation's amendments (E/CN.6/L.619) to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613. In the first place, her delegation proposed the deletion of subparagraph (b) (i) of operative paragraph 2 because, under the law of England, Wales and Scotland, a child born out of wedlock acquired a surname by usage or reputation, a surname which might be that of its mother or any other surname including that of the putative father, whether or not paternity had been formally established. Her delegation considered that to require a child to be given the mother's surname in all cases where paternity had not been proved would be more restrictive than the existing United Kingdom law and that it would be improper - and impossible under United Kingdom law - to try to impose the principle on unmarried mothers and their children. Other countries might have other difficulties and it would be better to leave them free to decide the question themselves.

The second amendment, which was to replace the first sentence of subparagraph (b) (ii) of operative paragraph 2, was proposed because, under United Kingdom law, any child born out of wedlock in the United Kingdom or its colonies automatically received citizenship, whereas the child of United Kingdom citizens born outside the United Kingdom or its colonies could receive its mother's nationality only if she applied for registration of the child as a United Kingdom national.

With regard to the third amendment, which was to replace the word "State" in subparagraph (b) (iv) of operative paragraph 2 by the words "appropriate authorities", she could accept the words "competent authority" suggested by the Austrian representative.

Her delegation would be unable to vote for subparagraph (b) (i) and (ii) of operative paragraph 2 as at present drafted, since it was contrary to United Kingdom law.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) commenting on the various observations and proposed amendments concerning draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613, said she did not agree that it was impossible to establish uniform universal rules owing to the variation in laws and practices between countries. The draft resolution under consideration merely recommended certain measures and practices, as was clear from

the opening words of operative paragraphs 1 and 2. The fact that the principles set out in the text might conflict with national laws on a few points should not cause delegations to vote against it, since the principles were merely put forward as goals towards which Governments should work in eliminating prejudice against unmarried mothers.

With regard to the Belgian and French amendments to operative paragraph 2 (E/CN.6/L.618), the amendment to subparagraph (a) was not acceptable, because it would deprive the draft resolution of much of its value. The amendment to subparagraph (b) (iii) would be acceptable only if it applied to the second part of the subparagraph. She could not agree to the proposed deletion of subparagraph (b) (v), because the connexion between father and child was important and the provision would give more security to the mother.

With regard to the United Kingdom amendments (E/CN.6/L.619), the first amendment concerning the surname of the child was not acceptable. Although, as suggested in the discussion, the use of the mother's surname could be a disadvantage in a community where the mother was known, if she moved to another neighbourhood and called herself a married woman, it would be better for the child to bear her surname, since it would be living with her.

As far as the amendment of Argentina and Colombia (E/CN.6/L.623) was concerned, the sponsors of the draft resolution could accept the replacement of the words "doing away with prejudice against them" by the words "eliminating the harm caused by lack of understanding". They could not, however, accept the proposal to replace the words "to secure them an acceptance on an equal footing with other families" by the words "ensuring greater protection for the mother and her child", because that meant something different.

With regard to the amendments proposed orally by the Austrian representative, her delegation could accept the replacement of the word "possible" by the word "appropriate" in the last preambular paragraph, but she had not been able to consult the other sponsors. The proposal to delete the words "all aspects of" from the phrase added to that paragraph also seemed acceptable at first sight. With regard to the proposal to delete the words "where this problem exists" in operative paragraph 1, she suggested that those words should be replaced by the

words "which encounter this problem". In connexion with the proposed insertion in subparagraph (b) of operative paragraph 2, the sponsors had taken the text of that subparagraph from paragraph 1 of resolution VI adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session but had deliberately excluded the words in question, in order to protect an unmarried mother who was under age from undue pressure from parents or family. She accepted the first two amendments to subparagraph (b) (iv), but thought that the insertion of the words "or court" in the ninth line were unnecessary, since the court was a competent authority.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), commenting on the various amendments, said she supported the idea of automatic maternal filiation, which did not conflict with her country's laws. She thought that the mother should be free to decide on the child's surname. Where parental authority was concerned, she felt that to vest such authority in the mother might cause difficulties in some countries which recognized only a father's parental authority.

She was in favour of retaining subparagraph (b) (v) of operative paragraph 2, because she believed in the legitimate relationship between mother and child; even if the mother was not married, and therefore in the need to establish the child's inheritance rights.

The United Kingdom amendment to the first sentence of subparagraph (b) (ii) of operative paragraph 2 (E/CN.6/L.619), seemed unnecessary in view of the second sentence.

With regard to the second part of the amendment to operative paragraph 1 proposed by Argentina and Colombia (E/CN.6/L.623), she was in favour of retaining the original text but, in view of the comments made by other representatives, suggested that the last phrase should be modified to read "on an equal footing with other members of society".

She would like to know why operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution VI adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session had been omitted.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that she did not agree with the United Kingdom amendment for the deletion of subparagraph (b) (i) of operative paragraph 2, since the provision could be adjusted to the laws of most countries. She supported the Argentine and Colombian amendment.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that the Egyptian representative's suggestion regarding the last phrase of operative paragraph 1 was acceptable to her delegation and that of the United States of America but she could not speak for all the sponsors of the draft resolution.

With regard to the omission of operative paragraph 3 of Commission resolution VI, she had already explained that, since the social aspects of the problem had been covered by other resolutions adopted by the Commission and the Council, it had been thought better to restrict the present draft resolution to the legal aspects.

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that the objection raised to subparagraph (b) (v) of operative paragraph 2 might be met by redrafting it to refer to the offspring of unmarried mothers instead of to persons born out of wedlock.

She suggested that the new operative paragraph 3 proposed by the United States representative might be worded as follows:

"Recommends that where appropriate consideration should be given by Member States of the United Nations to the development of programmes , designed to increase awareness of the existing double standard in allocating social responsibility for births out of wedlock, so as to bring about a balance in those social attitudes towards members of both sexes in the responsibility for such births."

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that that text was acceptable.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) said she was in general agreement with the draft resolution. She also supported the proposed new operative paragraph 3 in the version just read out by the Canadian representative. She could support the second of the United Kingdom amendments and the amendments submitted by France and Belgium. In particular, she supported the proposal of the latter two delegations for the deletion of subparagraph (b) (v) of operative paragraph 2, since her Government was opposed to the same inheritance rights being accorded to children born out of wedlock as to children born in wedlock.

She would comment on the Austrian amendments when they had been circulated in writing.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that, after the Austrian amendments had been circulated in writing, the sponsors of the draft resolution and those of the amendments should meet to prepare a new draft.

Mrs. SIPIÄ (Finland) suggested that, when preparing a new draft resolution, the sponsors should consider accepting the Austrian proposal on nationality.

She also suggested that the word "facilities" should be inserted at the end of subparagraph (b) (vii) of operative paragraph 2.

(c) STATUS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY PLANNING (concluded)\* (E/CN.6/L.624)

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.624 on the status of women and family planning, on behalf of the sponsors.

Mrs. SIPIÄ (Finland) suggested that the words "to the Governments of Member States and" should be inserted in operative paragraph 4 after the word "appreciation". She also suggested that the second part of the paragraph should be made into a separate paragraph, preceding operative paragraph 4 and reading: "Urges the non-governmental organizations to continue to extend their valuable collaboration for this purpose;".

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) proposed the addition in operative paragraph 1 of the words "world-wide and" after the words "possibility of holding".

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) accepted those amendments.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in considering family planning, the Commission was duplicating the work of the Population Commission. Moreover, as some representatives had pointed out, family planning concerned men and women equally, so that a resolution by the Commission would reflect only one side of the problem. For those and other reasons, she could not support the draft resolution.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.624, as amended, was adopted by 20 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.<sup>1/</sup>

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

\* Resumed from the 586th meeting.

<sup>1/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.630.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETIETH MEETING

held on Friday, 25 February 1972, at 3.20 p.m.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (continued):

(b) STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW (concluded)\* (E/CN.6/L.625)

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) introduced the draft resolution on the status of women in private law submitted by Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Finland and Uruguay (E/CN.6/L.625).

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.625 was adopted by 23 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.<sup>1/</sup>

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):\*\*

(c) ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (E/CN.6/556, E/CN.6/557, E/CN.6/566)

(d) CO-OPERATION WITH INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (E/CN.6/558) 2/

Miss ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) gave an account of UNESCO's activities for the advancement of women during the last three years, and drew attention to a correction which required to be made on page 3 of the annex to the report on UNESCO activities of special interest to women (E/CN.6/557): the figures for the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen should read: "1970/1971: total 125; women 20 - 1971/1972: total 216; women 40". The figures for 1969/1970 should be deleted.

She regretted that, for technical reasons, it had been possible to prepare and circulate only in a French version the study on equality of access of girls and women to education in the context of rural development (E/CN.6/566). That study would be revised in the light of further replies to the questionnaire (ibid., annex I) sent to all members and associated members of UNESCO and would be resubmitted to the Commission at its twenty-fifth session.

\* Resumed from the 585th meeting.

\*\* Resumed from the 588th meeting.

1/ The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.629.

2/ Distributed in English and Spanish only.

For practical reasons, the study referred to covered only some of the main aspects of UNESCO's long-term programme to ensure equal access of girls and women to education. The programme was intersectoral and multidisciplinary, and was carried out partly in collaboration with other agencies associated with the United Nations.

After describing the experimental projects carried out in that field in the Upper Volta, Chile and Nepal, she reviewed UNESCO's priority areas of activity affecting the education of women: literacy, the access of girls and women to technical and vocational education, and access of both these population groups to education in the context of rural development. She then referred to the training of female cadres (a programme of fellowships and advanced study courses) and to the consideration, at various regional conferences of Ministers of Education, of questions relating to the education of women.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) thanked the representative of UNESCO for her interesting statement. She described her country's literacy campaign, which had led to its being awarded in 1971 the UNESCO prize for promotion of literacy, and she stressed the need for UNESCO to concentrate its efforts on the education of women in rural areas.

As UNESCO itself acknowledged in its report on UNESCO activities of special interest to women, the principal information media had developed considerably in recent years and could play a vital role in a mass campaign for the education and advancement of women but there were few projects using mass information media for wide-ranging action specifically oriented towards the female public (see E/CN.6/557, para. 25). It was therefore to be hoped that UNESCO would shortly undertake interdisciplinary studies on that subject, as the Commission had requested in resolution I on the influence of mass communication media on the formation of a new attitude towards the role of women in present-day society, which had been adopted during the present session (E/CN.6/L.610).

She deplored the fact that the award of fellowships under the programme for equal access of girls and women to education had been suspended until the next General Conference of UNESCO in 1973-1974.

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) said that she also hoped UNESCO would make a major effort to comply with the request made to it by the Commission in its resolution I (XXIV) on the subject of mass communication media.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) expressed her appreciation to the representative of UNESCO.

Referring to the study on equal access of girls and women to education in the context of rural development, she stressed the importance of giving those population groups access to technical and vocational education, in order to enable them to occupy their proper place in the life of their country. She also observed that all educational programmes for women should take into account the needs and requirements of the developing countries.

Miss BACON (United States of America) congratulated UNESCO on its report on UNESCO activities of special interest to women and the International Labour Office on its report on ILO activities of special interest in relation to the employment of women (E/CN.6/556). Those reports showed the efforts being made by the two organizations in areas of special interest for women. It appeared from the information given in the report of the Secretary-General on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted action (E/CN.6/553 and Add.1) that FAO was actively concerning itself with such questions as training in home economics, nutrition and rural development. It therefore appeared necessary to strengthen the co-operation among the specialized agencies and between them and the Commission. The members of the Commission had listened with great interest to the information furnished at the present session by the representatives of the ILO, UNESCO and UNDP, and it was regrettable that FAO, WHO and UNICEF were not represented at the session. Her delegation thought that steps should be taken to ensure that the last three organizations attached higher priority to those aspects of their work which were of special interest for women.

It was gratifying to note the role which the international and national non-governmental organizations were playing. In view of the limited funds available to the United Nations agencies, it might be desirable for Member States to study their problems jointly in the framework of regional women's groups dealing with questions relating to the status of women.

At the Seminar on Civic and Political Education of Women, held in Ghana in 1968, it had been suggested that individuals could act in a liaison capacity with Governments in matters of interest to women.<sup>3/</sup> Similarly, non-governmental and other voluntary organizations might appoint "collaborators" to work with the representatives of the specialized agencies in the different countries. They could draw the attention of their organizations and the specialized agencies to the most urgent problems and the means of overcoming them.

Her delegation hoped that the ILO, UNESCO and FAO would expand their activities with a view to improving the status of women, and that the other specialized agencies would lend more active assistance to other agencies, to the Commission on the Status of Women, to the regional economic commissions and to the non-governmental organizations.

Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation), introducing the report by the International Labour Office on ILO activities of special interest in relation to the employment of women (E/CN.6/556), observed that all ILO activities were of concern to women. Everything that the ILO did in the fields of working and living conditions, social security, employment, human resources development, industrial relations and the organization of co-operatives was just as important for women as for men. The ILO was convinced that the practical application of the principles it had laid down required the full co-operation of both men and women.

As was indicated in chapter II of the report, the ILO was continuing to make progress in the application of the 136 Conventions and 144 Recommendations making up the International Labour Code. It was at present particularly concerned with the problem of unemployment and under-employment in the developing countries, and with human resources development, including vocational training. However, despite the efforts made in that field, most of the projects undertaken by the ILO reached the male population only. It was therefore necessary to continue seeking means of ensuring that women had access to all types of vocational training. So far as women in rural areas were concerned, the ILO was co-operating with FAO

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<sup>3/</sup> The report of the Seminar was published under the symbol ST/TAO/HR/35.

and UNESCO with a view to increasing the contribution that women could make to rural development. Women still played too small a role in such sectors of activity as handicrafts, small industry and business management. Organizations such as the Swedish International Development Authority and certain non-governmental organizations were working for greater integration of women in economic and social life. Recently, a great deal of attention had been given to the establishment, within Ministries of Labour or other governmental services: of special bodies for promoting the status of women by affording women the same opportunities as men of playing an important role in the world of work. The ILO was at present preparing a document summarizing the information collected on that subject. The ILO was continuing to concern itself with problems connected with the effects of technological and scientific progress on the employment and working conditions of men and women; it was considering the preparation of a series of guidelines on manpower adjustment programmes. The situation of women in economic life was particularly unsatisfactory in developing countries and the ILO was endeavouring, within the framework of its World Employment Programme, to establish equal employment opportunities for men and for women in all sectors of the economy.

Although some progress had been made during the last two years with regard to the status of women in the economic field, it was still true that women were one of the most under-utilized human resources in the world. The ILO was perfectly aware of that fact and hoped, with the co-operation of the Commission, to reinforce efforts to guarantee women the right to work.

Miss CHATON (France) said that the Director-General of UNESCO, in addressing an advisory group on the advancement of women, had expressed the hope that, by the time he left his post it might be recognized that a woman could become the Director-General of UNESCO. According to the statistics, it would appear that such an appointment was still some way ahead, and UNESCO should perhaps be reminded that it ought to include more women among the members of its secretariat.

A survey was being made by UNESCO of the position with regard to education in all regions of the world. In that connexion, that organization should stress the need to apply the principle of equal access to education for men and women.

The functional literacy programmes undertaken by UNESCO should not neglect instruction in civics for women. The UNESCO study had shown the importance which countries attached to female literacy. Unfortunately, the decisions taken in that regard in various countries did not always correspond with what the study had shown to be desirable.

She considered that it would be useful to draw UNESCO's attention, in a resolution, to the various points she had mentioned.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) noted with satisfaction that UNESCO had devoted considerable attention to the education of women in the context of rural development. It appeared from paragraph 133 of the report on UNESCO activities of special interest to women that some areas connected with the education of women had been left untouched. She wondered whether it would not be possible, in the light of paragraph 131 of the same report, for those areas to be considered by UNESCO in co-operation with the other specialized agencies. UNESCO might perhaps also devote more attention to family planning in the context of functional literacy. Another area which her delegation thought had not been adequately studied was that of training programmes for women to enable them to take managerial posts in the framework of community development. That was of particular interest to the developing countries, and it would be useful if UNESCO undertook activities in that field, perhaps in co-operation with the ILO.

Reference had been made to the fact that some organizations appeared not to be taking much interest in questions concerning women. She pointed out that, in Indonesia, UNICEF had carried out many community and school education projects, while WHO was executing several projects that would have an influence on rural development, inter alia, a "community medicine" project under which medical students would take courses in rural areas.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) congratulated UNESCO on the full and constructive report it had submitted. That Organization's co-operation with the ILO and the non-governmental organizations appeared to be particularly fruitful and should contribute to improving the status of women and ensuring employment for them. The functional literacy programme was particularly useful. The number of women who had benefited from UNESCO's projects was not yet large, but in view of the

efforts made by that organization and the new activities it had undertaken, there was reason to hope that rapid progress could be made.

The International Labour Office had also submitted a very interesting report dealing with employment and conditions of work. The World Employment Programme inspired hopes that the ILO and Governments would develop a better policy with regard to employment. She noted with satisfaction the efforts being made by the ILO to promote the employment of women. Unfortunately, the progress achieved was not yet sufficient, since it could still be said that female labour was among the most under-utilized human resources of the world.

Miss GELBER (Canada) congratulated the International Labour Office and UNESCO on their reports. Referring to the report of the former, she drew particular attention to the comments of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, on the relationship between certain protective measures for female workers and equality in employment (see E/CN.6/556, para. 24). She wondered whether the Commission should not, in a resolution, request the ILO to carry out a comprehensive review of the conventions relating to the protection of women workers, unless of course such a review was already in progress.

Mrs. KANE (Mauritania) drew UNESCO's attention to her country's need for female cadres.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that the Commission was examining the various aspects of women's work too superficially. It was not taking sufficient account, for instance, of different conditions, which varied according to the social and political system of the country and its degree of development. Although the report by the International Labour Office was comprehensive, it did not, in her view, provide a truly objective appraisal of the position. She regretted, in particular, that it failed to indicate what measures had been taken to implement the specific recommendations on the subject of employment that her delegation had made at the twenty-third session. The Commission should, at the present session, stress the importance of the employment of women and of efforts to eliminate unemployment, and should request the ILO to take up the problem in depth and to submit a more detailed report that would enable the Commission to make recommendations.

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Mrs. JONES (International Federation of University Women), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the non-governmental organizations could contribute to the advancement of women by mobilizing public opinion and by encouraging the establishment of a comprehensive educational system that would assist development. A badly planned educational system was in fact often the root cause of unemployment in the developing countries. With regard to assistance for education and training programmes, the Federation wished to stress the importance of international as opposed to bilateral assistance and the need to ensure that education and training was provided locally.

Miss DEHARENG (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that in connexion with UNESCO's study on the access of women to education in rural areas, the Confederation had consulted the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers. The representatives of that Federation had stressed the importance of education as a means of improving the status of women, but also the need to create employment opportunities at the same time - in other words to improve standards of living.

The ILO's activities had the whole-hearted support of the Confederation, which continued to attach greater importance to the participation of women in those activities, particularly those undertaken as part of the World Employment Programme. With regard to the review of international labour standards which had been suggested by some delegations, she agreed that there was a need to revise some of those standards, in order to take account of technological developments. However, technology and working conditions had not changed in the same way everywhere and the repeal of legislation for the protection of women workers would not resolve the problem of women's employment. Any revision of the standards should contribute to the protection of workers and the improvement of levels of living.

Miss ZAHARAN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) thanked the members of the Commission for their kind remarks. Replying briefly to some of the questions that had been asked, she confirmed that UNESCO intended to make greater use of mass communication media with a view

to contributing to the expansion and improvement of education for women. The number of fellowships granted had been reduced in 1972 for budgetary reasons; in 1973-1974 there would still be few individual fellowships, but an experiment was to be made with collective training. In reply to a question asked by the Philippine delegation, she announced that UNESCO would submit at the Commission's twenty-fifth session a report on the education of women in rural areas. UNESCO would bear in mind the fact that the rate of illiteracy among women had, as the representative of the United States had said, shown an increase. It was doing all it could to arrest that trend. She welcomed the French delegation's suggestion that the Commission should adopt a resolution recommending that UNESCO increase the number of women in its secretariat. In connexion with the Mauritanian delegation's reference to the shortage of female cadres, she said that a co-educational training institute had just been set up in Mauritania and a preliminary evaluation of the results might be submitted at the twenty-fifth session.

Miss ARINIBAR (Inter-American Commission of Women), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, introduced the report of her organization (E/CN.6/558).

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) congratulated the Inter-American Commission of Women on its work, which was of concern to 130 million women living in the Americas. She said that the Dominican Republic had acted as host to the seventh training course for community leaders and that other courses for women in rural areas and for young women would be held there.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.

## MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIRST MEETING

held on Monday, 28 February 1972, at 10.50 a.m.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):

- (c) ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/556, E/CN.6/557, E/CN.6/566)
- (d) CO-OPERATION WITH INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (continued) 1/ (E/CN.6/558)

Mrs. OBA (Japan) endorsed the comments of the representatives of Canada and of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (590th meeting) on the possible conflict between the right to equality and the protection of women workers. The matter had been widely discussed in Japan, where women with a higher education who wanted equal access to high-grade professional occupations were critical of the provisions for the protection of women in the Labour Standards Law of 1947, which prohibited the employment of women on night work and in various jobs that were dangerous or injurious to the health and welfare of women workers, on the ground that they might hamper equal opportunity of employment, especially in professional occupations which had formerly been reserved for men but had recently been opened to women. On the other hand, employers' organizations were complaining that the legislation in question made it difficult for them to employ women in higher-grade occupations which might be suitable for them. The provisions of the 1947 Law were being re-examined in the light of recent technical advances in industry by the Ministry of Labour, with the assistance of a special expert group, and the results of the group's preliminary studies would be examined by the Commission on Labour Standards, composed of representatives of the public, labour and employers. A new bill on the safety and health of workers was to be introduced shortly.

As the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions had observed, men and women were exposed to the same risks to health and safety and should be protected equally through adequate working conditions, safety facilities and services. The old legislation on maternity protection was

being reviewed in the light of the new bill, to determine whether special regulations were still required for women, at least during the pre-natal and post-natal period, nursing, etc. It would be necessary to consider how to provide reasonable protection without detriment to the principle of women's equality with men. She hoped that the Commission and the ILO would give special attention to that subject, with the co-operation of all countries and the specialized agencies concerned.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay), referring to the report on the study on UNESCO activities of special interest to women (E/CN.6/557), stressed the importance of the two priority areas mentioned in paragraph 2, namely, education and literacy work for adult women and access of girls to scientific courses and careers, and of the problem mentioned in paragraph 3, namely equal access of girls and women to education in the context of rural development.

Discrimination in education, which was dealt with in chapter II of the report, had never been a problem in Uruguay, because no doors were closed to women, even at the university level; rather, it was the women who, until 1897, had neglected their opportunities of obtaining a university education. They had first taken advantage of university education in 1897 and the first women had graduated - in medicine - in 1908. Education in Uruguay was free of charge at all levels and furthermore compulsory for both girls and boys not only at the primary but also at the secondary level. Secondary educational qualifications were required even for lower-grade jobs, such as that of a lift operator in a department store. Uruguay might be backward in the matter of discrimination in high-level work and it had unfortunately not ratified the UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, but in the matter of educational and cultural opportunities for women it was far in advance of some countries that had ratified those instruments. As far as legal status and economic and social conditions were concerned, there was no discrimination against women in the teaching profession.

Referring to chapter III on research and information, she said that studies were being conducted in Uruguay by universities and by the Department of Statistics and the Census. A 1968 census of students at the University of the

Republic had shown not only an increase in the number of women students, but also changes in choice of courses, results achieved, and age of entrance and graduation. Women had shown a tendency to move away from shorter courses of study in the humanities to longer courses in scientific and technical subjects. Co-education, which was mentioned in paragraph 17 of the report, existed in Uruguay at all levels, although a secondary educational institute exclusively for women, with some 4,500 students, existed in the capital. In connexion with the case studies in a number of countries referred to in paragraph 18, she regretted that a study had not been made in Uruguay, where the only obstacle to women's education in rural areas was the lack of specialized agricultural schools.

With regard to chapter IV on experimental projects, the experiment in Upper Volta (*ibid.*, para. 36), under which women had been allowed to farm collective fields and to decide how the proceeds from harvests would be used, provided it was for the general good of the village, would be worth conducting in a broader framework. Regarding the participation of villagers in the construction of classrooms and village maternity units (*ibid.*, para. 40), she said that in Uruguay women were working voluntarily as builders in projects in the interior of the country.

In connexion with chapter V, dealing with the priority areas in UNESCO activities concerning women and education, she said that, contrary to the statement in paragraph 60 that female illiteracy was increasing, in Uruguay illiteracy among women had decreased and was lower than among men; according to a 1963 census, the over-all illiteracy rate was 8.55 per cent. She regretted, however, that the problem was increasing in other countries. She believed that it was closely linked with the problem of the family responsibilities of working women, which was dealt with in Commission resolution 2 (XXIII), since the dual task of work in and away from the home left women neither time nor energy for education. The reference in paragraph 61 to the hostility of family, environment and husband to women's efforts to overcome illiteracy brought out the need for efforts to change the attitudes of members of the family and of society as a whole. In that connexion, she drew attention to paragraph 81 of the Secretary-General's report on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted action (E/CN.6/553).

As far as the report by the International Labour Office on ILO activities of special interest in relation to the employment of women (E/CN.6/556) was concerned, she wished to stress that there was a need for more, and more effective, international instruments dealing specifically with women and their problems. Although it appeared from paragraph 7 of that report that poverty was regarded as an obstacle to women's advancement, in a survey carried out in Uruguay, women themselves had listed the main obstacles in the following order of priority: distance between home and work (84.63 per cent), lack of male co-operation in the home (61.5 per cent) and economic problems - i.e., poverty (32 per cent). In connexion with chapter VII of the report, dealing with discrimination, she suggested that the Commission should bear in mind that many women feared that discrimination in respect of dangerous or night work might close employment opportunities to them.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the note by the Secretary-General containing the comments of Governments on draft resolution VIII adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session entitled "Increased activities at the regional level relating to the status of women" (E/CN.6/559), stressed the importance of government measures to promote women's role in society and in the development of the national economy and to encourage women to fulfil their family and civic responsibilities. Her delegation considered that the work of the United Nations in those fields should be continued and it had accordingly proposed the preparation of an international convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.

She had, however, serious doubts about the advisability of the Commission recommending the establishment of regional intergovernmental commissions on the status of women and considered that that was a matter which should be left to the regions themselves; the League of Arab States, for example, had already taken the initiative of setting up a commission on the status of women without any recommendation by the Commission. Draft resolution VIII had had a mixed reception and the arguments supporting it had not been convincing. She saw no reason for considering it at the present session, particularly in view of the Secretary-General's call for a reduction in documentation. Moreover, Government comments

did not reveal any widespread support for the idea of regional intergovernmental commissions. Her delegation considered that it would be better to make use of existing organizations and it would not support any draft resolution seeking to impose the idea.

Mrs. SIPIÄ (Finland), referring to the report by the International Labour Office (E/CN.6/556), said that while, generally speaking, the ILO's practice of dealing with labour questions without emphasizing the distinction between the sexes was desirable, it also had disadvantages, in that special attention was still needed for the particular problems of women and girls, who still to some extent lacked equal opportunities and who had to be granted different treatment in cases of maternity. There was, however, a danger of women being given unnecessary protection and of men and women with family responsibilities being treated differently, although, apart from maternity, their treatment should be the same. She agreed with representatives who had said that an urgent review was needed to amend discriminatory provisions in the ILO instruments and she also believed that obsolete provisions should be brought into line with modern requirements. But unless women themselves took action to ensure that qualified women were included in their country's delegations to ILO meetings, they could not reasonably complain of the present situation. Encouraging items in the ILO report were the international Seminar held in Turin on the training of girls and women in relation to employment opportunities in Europe, the seminars and courses for women trade unionists and the regional and national seminars for trade union leaders, labour educators and others.

She welcomed the activities of UNESCO and the ILO in educating and training women for new careers and in trying to eliminate distinctions between men's and women's occupations. The situation in Finland had greatly improved in that respect since 1967. The Finnish State Committee on the Status of Women had paid great attention to men's and women's sex role in education and their presentation in textbooks and had recommended in its report to the National Board of Education that all discussion on such matters should be based on equality of the sexes. The Committee had also noted that the mass media and advertising generally presented a stereotyped picture of women as passive and dependent which was unfavourable to women's advancement.

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Referring to the report by UNESCO on its activities of special interest to women, she said that further studies were needed on the reasons for the increase in female illiteracy and the high drop-out and wastage rate among women attending literacy courses and possibly on the hitherto untouched problems mentioned in paragraph 133 of the report, namely, women's leisure and free time, the role of the family, and particularly the mother, in children's education, and the education of working women and married women. Although the reasons for the lack of study of women's special problems included inadequate participation of women in decision-making at all levels, local, national and international, and, as mentioned in paragraph 135 of the report, their lack of participation in meetings and conferences, she had been impressed by the almost equal participation of men and women in the meeting of experts on the equality of access of girls and women in technical and vocational education in Arab States, held in Kuwait in 1968 (see E/CN.6/557, para. 73). She had noted with satisfaction UNESCO's comments on the increasing interest of non-governmental organizations in practical programmes for the advancement of women in the developing world (ibid., chap. VII).

Regarding the report of the Inter-American Commission of Women (E/CN.6/558), she said that that Commission appeared to co-ordinate efforts for the advancement of women in a large area comprising over 20 countries. Since, however, the implementation of decisions and recommendations was the responsibility of each country, she wondered how much influence women had at the decision-making level. Referring to the statistics on the number of women holding high political and official posts, given in paragraphs 46-48 of the report, she said it would be useful if, in future, information could be provided on the ratio of women to men in such posts. Another question of interest was women's participation as national delegates to the General Assembly of OAS. She welcomed the programme for training in leadership; the best practical training was active participation in community affairs at all levels.

In view of the possible creation of more regional commissions for women, it was important to keep in mind that the main object of such commissions should be to make themselves unnecessary once they had achieved their aim of equality between the sexes and non-discrimination on the ground of sex.

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Mrs. JOHNSTONE (International Labour Organisation), replying to questions raised during the discussion, said that, as far as the inclusion of qualified women in delegations to ILO meetings was concerned, the memorandum sent to Governments in connexion with each session of the International Labour Conference specifically stated that women were eligible equally with men for appointment as representatives and technical advisers.

With regard to protective legislation applying to women only, there was some conflict of opinion on the matter and some indication of changing views in recent years. The process of revision on ILO Conventions was at present under serious review by the Governing Body as a result of a proposal by the Canadian Government. The fact that there were very few instruments for women's protection was the result of a deliberate policy to single out women for special protection only when necessary because of their biological function of reproduction. The question of the revision of the maternity protection conventions had been taken up six years earlier and, on the basis of an international survey, the Governing Body had concluded that their revision was unnecessary at that time. The Standing Orders and Applications Committee of the Governing Body had recently discussed the possible revision of the night work instruments and, on the basis of its decisions, the Governing Body had asked the International Labour Office to prepare a report on national law and practice which would be circulated to all member States for comment; a decision would then be taken by the Governing Body at its November 1973 session.

On balance, a Commission resolution would neither help nor hinder the process of revising the protective legislation applying to women only. Much of what the Canadian, and possibly the USSR, representative had in mind was in fact already being done. In any case, she thought there were dangers in unqualified opposition to the concept of protective legislation for women only, since women would always need special protection in the sphere of maternity, which was often a heavy burden on employers and on the State. There would always be many who would be anxious, for non-social reasons, to reduce the protection women really needed in that connexion and perhaps in the related fields of occupational safety and health. Furthermore, as the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions had pointed out, women's needs and problems varied widely in different countries and regions.

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Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that the Inter-American Commission of Women had made a dynamic contribution to the solution of the problems of Latin American women and was to be congratulated on its excellent report. That Commission had not only been of great assistance to the countries of the region, but was prepared to play an active part in the promotion of women's role in society at the international level. Accordingly, it would be desirable to strengthen co-ordination between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Inter-American Commission of Women.

Mr. GERBER (International Student Movement for the United Nations), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that his organization also appreciated the report of the Inter-American Commission of Women. He drew particular attention to the section dealing with the political rights of women (ibid. paras. 44-48) and pointed out that, without the participation of women in government, the hundreds of existing legal instruments designed to improve the status of women would never be implemented. The USSR proposal for the holding of a conference to narrow the gap between theory and practice was therefore most interesting. Moreover, the fact that the representatives in the Commission on the Status of Women were all women also served to keep open the gap between ideals and reality. His organization would therefore suggest, not only that Governments should be encouraged to send mixed delegations, but that women representatives should refuse to attend without men. Unless men were represented, the Commission's recommendations would fall on deaf ears; the problem was one of mutual involvement.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) said she could only partly agree with the views just expressed by the representative of the International Student Movement for the United Nations. Some ten years previously, practically every delegation to the Commission had contained at least one man, but that had been because there had been not enough qualified women and because Governments did not trust women to attend international meetings by themselves. The fact that all the representatives and most of their advisers were now women proved that Governments placed more confidence in them and that there were more women in foreign services.

On the other hand, it was regrettable that the point of view of men was never expressed, since it might well stimulate the Commission's thinking; furthermore, the co-operation of men was necessary for governmental acceptance of many of the Commission's recommendations.

(a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION  
(continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.612)

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica), introducing her delegation's draft resolution on the establishment of regional and national centres for the development of women and the family (E/CN.6/L.612), said that the purpose of the proposal was simply to enlist moral support for regional and national centres designed to eliminate the various aspects of discrimination against women. In Latin America, women had particularly few opportunities to exercise their civic rights; they were prevented from standing for election, did not have equal opportunities with men in employment and did not receive equal pay for equal work. The key to the solution of that problem was education, but in practice it was extremely difficult to obtain educational opportunities for women; in most Latin American countries, only women of the élite went to universities or even to secondary schools. Although many of those countries, like her own, had a system of free and compulsory education, poverty often forced children to leave school early and left large groups of people uneducated. For the economically integrated Central American area, the Centre referred to in the operative paragraph of the draft had been found to be the best way of obtaining training for women.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) said she could not quite understand the role of the proposed centres.

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) said that the objectives of the centres were, first of all, to develop the personality of women, without forgetting their role of wife and mother; secondly, to ensure that women's activities were as comprehensive as possible; thirdly, to see to it that no group of women was

\* Resumed from the 588th meeting.

excluded from opportunities for study and training; fourthly, to achieve a co-ordinated approach to the problem of women's education; fifthly, to seek a pragmatic way of enhancing women's rights; sixthly, to provide for an exchange of information on similar programmes in other areas; and lastly, to stimulate activities for improving women's integration in society. It must be emphasized that the movement was completely apolitical and would not overlap with the activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations.

The functions of the existing Centre included a programme of basic education for the benefit of women themselves and of their families, training for activities outside the home, a programme of family development, with a view to eliminating obstacles to the advancement of women, a programme enabling women to reach an adequate educational level so that they could undertake community activities at times when employment was scarce, and cultural programmes to make women aware of regional, national and local values, care being taken to ensure that the Centre's programmes were not confined to women in urban areas.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that, although she was in favour of the idea underlying the draft resolution, she wished to suggest three amendments. The last phrase of the third preambular paragraph, referring to the "generally passive attitude of women" should be deleted, since the inclusion of such a statement suggested that it was an eternal truth. Similarly, the phrase "which is structured around women" in the fourth preambular paragraph should be changed to "which has traditionally been structured around women". Finally, in order not to omit all reference to men in the draft resolution, the words "women and the family" in the second line of the operative paragraph might be changed to "equal status for men and women".

Miss GELBER (Canada) supported those suggestions.

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) accepted the Norwegian amendments.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that, although she did not wish to make any formal amendment to the draft resolution, it would be wise to bear in mind the opportunity provided by the centres for utilizing the resources of non-governmental organizations to create a climate for the acceptance of new ideas which women themselves could put forward.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) asked to whom the draft resolution was addressed. It might be advisable to specify whether Governments or non-governmental organizations were supposed to take action.

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) said that the purpose of the draft resolution was not to address Governments or other bodies, but merely to enlist moral support.

In Latin America, the sociological phenomenon of machismo, or male superiority, prevailed in the relations between men and women. Women were imprisoned in a situation from which they should have emerged long ago; they were subject to every whim of men and were regarded as inferior human beings. Accordingly, it was not enough merely to raise the educational level of women; efforts should also be made to change the attitude of men.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) said she agreed with the Costa Rican representative that the draft resolution should not be addressed to any particular body, but was designed to enlist moral support on a broad basis.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) suggested that the words "interest in promoting" in the operative paragraph should be replaced by "moral support for", in order to show that the resources of the Governments concerned would be used and that there would be no financial implications for the United Nations.

Miss CHATON (France) suggested that the words "women and the family" in the second line of the operative paragraph should be replaced by "balanced participation of the spouses in responsibility for and welfare of the family".

STATUS OF WOMEN IN TRUST AND NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (agenda item 7)  
(E/CN.6/560)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the report by the Secretary-General entitled "Information concerning the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories" (E/CN.6/560) had been prepared in pursuance of Commission resolution 1 (XXI), under which the Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Commission biennially, beginning with the twenty-second session, a report containing information relating to the status of

women in both Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, based on information received from the Governments concerned and on any relevant reports and records of the Trusteeship Council and of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Each of the five chapters of the report was accompanied by notes on the extremely voluminous documentation which had had to be examined. The report contained information up to 1 December 1971, most of it taken from the reports of the administering Powers; very little information had been found in the many other documents consulted, including petitions and discussions of the reports of administering Powers in the Trusteeship Council.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said she was unable to comment on the report because she had not yet received it in Russian.

Mrs. ALAMI (Women's International Democratic Federation), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that her organization appreciated the report, which showed that women in dependent territories suffered doubly under the oppression of colonialism and of feudal and retrograde prejudice. It had been rightly pointed out that the status of women was enhanced by national independence and that countries which had won the struggle for national liberation and were free from colonial exploitation were ensuring equal rights for men and women. Her organization had provided the Commission on Human Rights with authentic evidence of the way in which women were oppressed in Angola and Mozambique.

The Federation was certain that the Commission could help to cast light on the appalling conditions of women in Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories and was prepared to collaborate in every way with the United Nations bodies concerned.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SECOND MEETING

held on Monday, 28 February 1972, at 3.25 p.m.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):

- (a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued) (E/CN.6/L.612)

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) read out the new version of the operative paragraph of the draft resolution on the establishment of regional and national centres for the development of women and the family (E/CN.6/L.612), as suggested by the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic at the 591st meeting:

"Expresses its moral support for the promotion of the establishment of regional and national centres for the balanced participation of men and women in the well-being of the family in the various areas of the world, and its interest in observing the experience to be gained through the Centre for the Balanced Participation of Men and Women in the Well-Being of the Family in the Central American Area, planned by Costa Rica."

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) found it surprising that the first part of the paragraph was not addressed to anyone in particular.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) proposed that the regional and national centres should be described as "centres for the development of identical status for men and women and their balanced participation in the well-being of the family", so as not to limit their activities exclusively to questions concerning the family.

Mrs. SIPIÄ (Finland) thought that delegations could scarcely be asked to support the establishment of a centre about which they knew very little and which might not correspond to the type of centre advocated at the beginning of the paragraph. Her delegation urged Costa Rica to agree that the Commission's support for its project should merely be reflected in the minutes and not to press for its expression in a resolution.

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Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that the words "to the Costa Rican Government" should be inserted after the words "moral support".

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) inquired whether it was in accordance with normal procedure to address such a resolution to a single Government.

Miss GELBER (Canada) suggested that a passage should be included in the Commission's report indicating that it had been informed of the Costa Rica project to establish a centre to ensure the equitable distribution of responsibilities between men and women in family life and expressing the Commission's moral support for that project.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) supported the suggestions made by Finland and Canada.

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) requested that the Commission should vote on the new text and on the Norwegian amendment.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said it would be preferable not to take a vote until a text taking account of all the amendments was before the Commission.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) proposed that, in the Spanish version, the Norwegian amendment should be rendered by the words "para la formación de la condición idéntica" and requested that the Commission should take a decision on the draft resolution without further delay.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) and Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) supported the proposal that no vote should be taken until the revised text of the draft resolution was available to members of the Commission.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) also supported the request for the postponement of the vote and proposed that the word "centres" in the second line of the operative paragraph should be replaced by the words "socio-educational facilities" or "socio-educational institutions".

The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, the Committee would vote on the revised draft resolution<sup>1/</sup> on the following day.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY (agenda item 5) (concluded):\*

(a) STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER (concluded)\*\* (E/CN.6/L.613/Rev.1, E/CN.6/L.618, E/CN.6/L.619, E/CN.6/L.623, E/CN.6/L.631)

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) introduced the revised version of the draft resolution on the status of the unmarried mother (E/CN.6/L.613/Rev.1). The sponsors had accepted the amendments submitted at the 589th meeting and in documents E/CN.6/L.618, E/CN.6/L.619, E/CN.6/L.623 and E/CN.6/L.631, which did not weaken the recommendations contained in the draft resolution, and had rejected those which described existing legislative provisions. The intention of the sponsors was to establish standards to be attained and to formulate general principles to be followed, with a view to eliminating any legislative discrimination against the unmarried mother.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) noted that most of the amendments to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613 she had proposed in document E/CN.6/L.631 had been incorporated in the revised text of the draft resolution. She wished, however, to maintain paragraphs (3), (6) (c) and (7) of her amendments.

Miss GELBER (Canada) urged the Austrian delegation to withdraw those amendments, since it was impossible to take account of existing legislative provisions, given the variety of legal systems in force in the various countries. The intention of the sponsors of the draft resolution was to lay the bases for a future charter for the unmarried mother.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland), supported by Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary), put forward a number of objections to paragraphs (3) and (6) (c) of the Austrian amendments.

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\* Resumed from the 590th meeting.

\*\* Resumed from the 589th meeting.

<sup>1/</sup> Subsequently circulated under the symbol E/CN.6/L.612/Rev.1.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) proposed that, in order to meet the objections raised by various delegations, the phrase "without taking into account legal considerations" should be added at the end of the introductory sentence of operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council; that amendment would replace the previous amendments proposed by her delegation.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom), referring to her delegation's amendments (E/CN.6/L.619), said that the only amendment which remained to be considered was the one to subparagraph (b) (ii) of operative paragraph 2, since the other amendments had been taken into consideration in the revised text of the draft resolution.

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium), referring to the amendments proposed by Belgium and France (E/CN.6/L.618), said that, in the interests of compromise, the sponsors were prepared to withdraw the first two amendments to operative paragraph 2 (one relating to subparagraph (a) and the other to the first sentence of subparagraph (i)), but wished to maintain the two other amendments, relating to subparagraph (b) (iii) and (v).

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that the delegations of Argentina and Colombia withdrew their amendment (E/CN.6/L.623) to operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, since it had been taken into consideration in the revised text of that proposal.

Miss GELBER (Canada), referring to the oral amendment by the representative of Austria, observed that the draft resolution under discussion was concerned with general principles, as was made clear in the introductory sentence of operative paragraph 2, and not with existing legislation in the various countries.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) said that her oral amendment could be worded "without prejudice to national legislation". She asked for a separate vote on that amendment.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said that she too was opposed to the Austrian amendment. The draft resolution under consideration was a recommendation, which had no legal or binding force; its application in the national legislation of countries adopting the recommendation was a completely different question.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) moved the closure of the debate. The motion for closure of the debate was adopted.

The oral amendment by Austria to the introductory sentence of operative paragraph 2 was rejected by 19 votes to 1, with 7 abstentions.

The first sentence of operative paragraph 2 was adopted by 19 votes to 1, with 7 abstentions.

The amendment by the United Kingdom to subparagraph (b) (ii) of operative paragraph 2 (E/CN.6/L.619, para. 2) was rejected by 17 votes to 1, with 11 abstentions.

The amendment by Belgium and France to subparagraph (b) (iii) of operative paragraph 2 (E/CN.6/L.618) was rejected by 12 votes to 3, with 13 abstentions.

The amendment by Belgium and France to subparagraph (b) (v) of operative paragraph 2 (E/CN.6/L.618) was rejected by 17 votes to 2, with 10 abstentions.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.613/Rev.1 was adopted by 22 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.<sup>2/</sup>

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):

(a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued) (E/CN.6/L.627)

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) introduced the draft resolution on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted international action, submitted by Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Finland, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Liberia, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Uruguay and Zaire (E/CN.6/L.627); Argentina had also asked to be included among the sponsors. In operative paragraph 2, the words "more technical assistance" should be replaced by the words "more of their technical assistance funds".

<sup>2/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.640.

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Miss CHATON (France) proposed that the following phrase should be added at the end of operative paragraph 2: "in so far as such assistance could be included in the programme of technical assistance of the beneficiary countries".

The amendment proposed by the French representative was adopted.

Miss GELBER (Canada) suggested that, in operative paragraph 2, it should be specified that the programmes were "for women", so that the Commission could not be reproached for going beyond its terms of reference.

The amendment proposed by the Canadian representative was adopted.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.627, as amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>3/</sup>

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.

<sup>3/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.641.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-THIRD MEETING

held on Tuesday, 29 February 1972, at 10.35 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The CHAIRMAN welcomed the Secretary-General of the United Nations, pointing out that the Commission had never before been honoured by a visit from a Secretary-General. The Commission had noted with great pleasure the Secretary-General's expressed opinion that more of the highest posts in the United Nations Secretariat should be held by women.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said he was fully aware of the importance of the Commission's functions and of its efforts to further the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter. He was therefore following its work very closely; as a token of his understanding and sympathy, he proposed shortly to create a precedent by appointing a woman to a top-level post. Finally, he expressed his best wishes for the success of the Commission's deliberations.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.636, E/CN.6/L.637):

(b) ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.632)

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights (E/CN.6/L.632) on behalf of the sponsors, said that Canada's name had been substituted in error for that of the Dominican Republic. The purpose of the proposal was to cover some outstanding points and to ensure that two seminars on the status of women should be held annually, especially in years when the Commission was not meeting. The United Kingdom had issued an invitation for such a seminar in 1972. An important provision of the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council was the one in subparagraph (a) of paragraph 2, namely the invitation to Governments of Member States to nominate more women and more persons involved in activities to eliminate discrimination on grounds of sex for human rights fellowships.

Miss GELBER (Canada) supported the draft resolution.

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\* Resumed from the 588th meeting.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) suggested that the words "more fully" should be inserted after "to avail themselves" in subparagraph (c) of paragraph 2.

In response to criticisms of subparagraph (a) of paragraph 2 by Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GEYENECHÉ (Argentina), Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) and Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq), Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) suggested that the words "and of more persons involved in eliminating" should be replaced by the words "and of those involved in the work of eliminating". She accepted the Philippine amendment.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.632, as amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>1/</sup>

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania), introducing a draft resolution on the programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and to increase their contribution to the development of their countries (E/CN.6/L.637) on behalf of her delegation and those of Egypt, Finland, France, Hungary, the Philippines and Tunisia, said that the development of action to promote the advancement of women during the past 25 years showed the necessity of bringing about a new international awareness of women's problems, especially of the economic and social discrimination that was being practised against women in many developing countries. That was why the sponsors were proposing the proclamation of an "International Women's Year", which would provide an excellent opportunity for world-wide action in depth to promote the advancement of women and help to increase their contribution to national development.

Some reservations had been expressed about using such a broad title as "International Women's Year", and it had been suggested that there should be a reference to women's rights in the title. She did not think that that would be desirable, since women's rights were only a distant goal in many countries. On the other hand, she would not object strongly to changing the title to "International Year for the Status of Women" or "International Year for Non-Discrimination against Women".

Miss GELBER (Canada) said that, although she had had some doubts as to the wisdom of proclaiming yet another international year, she had no objection to the proposal. Nevertheless, she considered that the title was very reminiscent of Mothers' Day and that that might cause the Year to be taken less

<sup>1/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.643.

seriously than it should be. The title should clearly show that the purpose of the Year was to promote action for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of sex.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said that she too had found the title unsatisfactory, but had failed in her efforts to find a better one. The aims of the Year would have to be made clear in other ways.

In reply to Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America), Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the action called for in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution for submission by the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly had no financial implications, although the execution of the programme drafted on the basis of replies might have such implications.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) proposed that the words "within existing resources" should be inserted after "non-governmental organizations" in operative paragraph 3.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) accepted that amendment.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said she shared the Canadian representative's misgivings concerning the title of the Year and formally proposed that it should be changed to "International Year for the Status of Women".

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) said she could not agree with the Canadian representative that the title should be based on the elimination of discrimination, since that seemed to be a negative approach. She proposed the title "International Women's Year as an Instrument for Promoting National Development", which would be more positive.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said she could not agree that the title should refer to women's rights, since that implied a disregard of women's responsibilities. Nor could she support the Norwegian proposal, because no one really knew what the term "status of women" meant and, moreover, the word "status" carried a connotation of stagnation. The term "advancement of women" was equally unsatisfactory, for it disregarded the essential concept of women's participation in society. She could, however, support the Argentine proposal.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said she agreed with the Finnish representative's views on the term "status of women", but could see no objection to the title "International Women's Year" used in the draft resolution. Women's Day was celebrated in many parts of the world and carried no derogatory connotations. The Argentine representative's addition might strengthen the title, but was not suitable from the point of view of form, and might perhaps be used as a subtitle.

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that, in Spanish at least, the title "International Year for Women's Rights" was not negative, since the need to promote those rights was so clear.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that the title must be short and striking rather than explanatory. She would have hesitated to recommend the use of the title appearing in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution for an event sponsored by a non-governmental organization, for example, but in the case of an international year promoted by the United Nations, it would be obvious to every one that the specific purposes of the Year would be set out in its programme and related publications.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the Argentine proposal. The title of the Year could not be limited to women's rights, since that would make it one-sided. The real purpose of the Year was to promote women's multilateral participation in the economic, social, political and cultural development of their countries.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) agreed with the Indonesian representative's views on the title of the International Year. She proposed that the fifth preambular paragraph should be moved to become the first preambular paragraph of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the General Assembly and that the sixth preambular paragraph should be deleted. She further proposed that the word "scientific" in the last line of the first preambular paragraph should be deleted and that the word "realization" in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly should be replaced by the word "recognition".

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said that she would accept those amendments if they were agreeable to the other sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) opposed the Uruguyan representative's proposal for the deletion of the sixth preambular paragraph, since that paragraph expressed the whole reason for an international women's year. With regard to that representative's amendment to operative paragraph 2, she thought that the word "realization" might be more satisfactory in English. She supported the Argentine representative's proposal concerning the title of the Year. She could accept the other amendments proposed.

Mrs. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) proposed that the title should read "International Year for Action to Eliminate Discrimination against Women". She also proposed that the words "and International Women's Day" should be inserted after the title in the third line of paragraph 3.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that what was wanted was a title expressing the need to eliminate discrimination in order to improve women's status in countries which needed the contribution of their women. In order to cover that point and to allow for the adaptation of programmes to the needs of individual countries, she suggested the following title: "International Year for Equal Rights and Responsibilities of Women".

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) withdrew her proposal. The United States representative's proposal was a good one, although she felt that the meaning of the words "equal rights" was not clear unless they were qualified.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) proposed that the title "International Women's Year" should be retained but that the meaning should be clarified by adding the following words to paragraph 1: "... for intensified action to increase women's contribution to national and international life".

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), speaking as a sponsor of the draft resolution, supported the Finnish representative's views on the proposed amendments to the preambular paragraphs. With regard to the title, the Philippine proposal was the most acceptable. As an alternative, she would suggest that the words "for equal rights and responsibilities with men" might be added to paragraph 1.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) agreed with the Norwegian representative's comment on the United States proposal. She supported the Philippine proposal relating to

paragraph 1, but suggested that the additional phrase should be expanded on the following lines: "for intensified action to promote equality between men and women and to increase women's contribution to national and international development".

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) was in favour of retaining the title as set out in paragraph 1, since its meaning was clarified in paragraph 2. She proposed that the words "and for their application for national and international development" should be inserted after the word "women" in the second line of paragraph 2.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said she preferred paragraph 2 as it stood. She proposed as the title: "International Women's Year to Contribute to National and International Development".

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) proposed the wording "International Year for Full Integration of Women in National and International Life", so that the purpose would be clearly understood at all levels.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said she supported the Finnish representative's proposal concerning the addition to paragraph 1.

Miss CHATON (France), speaking as a sponsor of the draft resolution, said she favoured the title "International Women's Year". In all past International Years, the United Nations and the specialized agencies had tried to find a cipher of not more than three letters. Moreover, the title was close to that of International Year for Human Rights, with which the Commission's activities were directly related. A neat title would also be more suitable for publicity purposes. She supported the Hungarian proposal as a subtitle. She was in favour of retaining the sixth preambular paragraph.

Mrs. SIPILA (Finland) proposed that a new operative paragraph should be inserted between operative paragraphs 1 and 2 on the following lines: "Decides to devote this Year to intensified action to promote equality between women and men and to increase women's contribution to national and international development".

In response to a suggestion by Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the CHAIRMAN proposed that the meeting should be suspended to enable the sponsors to prepare a final text.

The meeting was suspended at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 12.35 p.m.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) announced that the sponsors had agreed to the following amendments: the word "scientific" was to be deleted in the last line of the first preambular paragraph and the fifth preambular paragraph was to be transferred to the beginning of the draft resolution proposed for adoption by the General Assembly; the new operative paragraph proposed by the Finnish representative was to be inserted after paragraph 1, the remaining paragraphs of the operative part being renumbered accordingly, and the words "within the limits of existing resources" were to be added after the words "non-governmental organizations" in paragraph 3, which would become paragraph 4. The sponsors had decided to retain the sixth preambular paragraph.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.637, as amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>2/</sup>

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) introduced the draft resolution on increased activities at the regional level relating to the status of women (E/CN.6/L.636) on behalf of the sponsors. As indicated in the first preambular paragraph, draft resolution VIII had been approved by the Commission by an overwhelming majority at its twenty-third session but had been referred back to it by the Economic and Social Council for further consideration. The sponsors had reviewed the draft resolution in the light of the comments of Governments reproduced in document E/CN.6/559 and also of a number of comments in documents E/CN.6/532, E/CN.6/533 and E/CN.6/554.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) expressed her full support for the ideas embodied in the draft resolution. She suggested that the words "the social, economic and cultural" at the end of paragraph 1 of the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council should be replaced by the words "all sectors of the".

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) accepted that amendment.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.636, as amended, was adopted by 23 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.<sup>3/</sup>

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

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<sup>2/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.644.

<sup>3/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.647.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOURTH MEETING

held on Tuesday, 29 February 1972, at 3.40 p.m.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.638):

(b) ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS (concluded) (E/CN.6/L.632)

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that she had unfortunately not been present for the vote on draft resolution E/CN.6/L.632 (593rd meeting). She whole-heartedly supported that resolution and would have voted in favour of it had she been present.

(c) ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (E/CN.6/L.633)

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) introduced, on behalf of her delegation and that of France, a draft resolution on activities of agencies in the United Nations system which are of special concern to women (E/CN.6/L.633) and announced that Uruguay and Colombia had become sponsors of the draft. She drew attention to the fact that the beginning of operative paragraph 2 should be corrected to read: "Expresses also the hope that the Secretary-General of the United Nations will invite the executive heads of UNESCO, the ILO, FAO, WHO, UNICEF and UNDP to continue to recommend...".

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHÉ (Argentina) said that her delegation wished to be included among the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that operative paragraph 3 should be modified, since the Commission could not directly request the executive heads of the specialized agencies to keep the Commission informed of the extent of the participation of women. The request would have to be transmitted through the Economic and Social Council.

The paragraph was perhaps, however, superfluous, since it seemed to duplicate the provisions of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.602/Rev.1 already adopted by the Commission at the 583rd meeting, for submission to the Council, on the employment of women in senior and other Professional positions by the secretariats of organizations in the United Nations system.

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Mrs. SIPILA (Finland) pointed out that paragraph 3 referred back to paragraphs 1 and 2, implying that the Commission should be kept informed not only of the participation of women in the specialized agencies' secretariats, but also in national delegations, general conferences, national commissions and other national liaison bodies. In her view, therefore, the paragraph should be maintained.

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) said that she was in favour of maintaining paragraph 3 and deleting paragraphs 1 and 2, but she would have no objection to the text being altered so as to constitute a draft resolution for submission to the Economic and Social Council.

It was so decided.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.633, as thus amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>1/</sup>

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) introduced, on behalf of her delegation and those of the Dominican Republic, Finland, France and the Philippines, draft resolution E/CN.6/L.638, which was submitted under agenda item 6 and not agenda item 4, as was erroneously indicated in the document itself.

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) said that her country wished to be included among the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) proposed that the following text should be added at the end of operative paragraph 2:

"as well as to other appropriate resolutions recommended by the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-fourth session under agenda item 6 concerning the further elaboration of a programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women and the increased activities at the regional level related to the status of women".

The Commission had, in fact, already adopted a resolution on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted international action and would probably adopt others; it was therefore necessary that the meeting of experts should take them into consideration.

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<sup>1/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.654.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) and Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) supported that amendment.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.638, as thus amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>2/</sup>

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued)\*\* (E/CN.6/L.635)

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.635 on agenda item 4, on behalf of her delegation and those of the Dominican Republic and Liberia.

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) said that her country wished to be included among the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) proposed that the beginning of operative paragraph 2 should be amended to read: "Requests the Secretary-General, Member States and specialized agencies concerned...".

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to the fact that the Commission had set up at its 580th meeting a Working Group to draw up its programme of work. The Commission had, however, adopted a large number of resolutions on different subjects, stressing, each time, their importance and urgency. It should be borne in mind that the Secretary-General had requested the Commission to confine its work to the most important questions. The involvement of women in all facets of agricultural development certainly required more thorough study, but, in view of the Secretary-General's directives she wondered whether it was essential to include that question in the agenda for the twenty-fifth session. It might perhaps be wiser to await the recommendations of the Working Group before taking a decision on draft resolution E/CN.6/L.635.

Miss CHATON (France), referring to operative paragraph 2, pointed out that UNESCO had already, at the Commission's request, submitted a report on the status of women in rural areas (E/CN.6/566), and its representative had announced, at the 590th meeting, that the report would be revised for the twenty-fifth session. The Commission had not had time to consider that report; it should not, therefore, make difficulties for UNESCO by asking it to submit another document.

\*\* Resumed from the 583rd meeting.

<sup>2/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.648.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) proposed that the Commission's consideration of the draft resolution should be postponed until the Working Group had submitted its recommendations on the programme of work.

It was so decided.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EMERGENCY AND ARMED CONFLICT IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE, SELF-DETERMINATION, NATIONAL LIBERATION AND INDEPENDENCE (agenda item 8) (E/CN.6/561 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/NGO/243)

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) introduced the Secretary-General's report on the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence (E/CN.6/561 and Add.1 and 2).

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that the report showed that the 1949 Geneva Conventions<sup>3/</sup> were not fully applied in the occupied territories. It was therefore essential for the Commission to encourage the application of adequate measures for protecting women and children in periods of armed conflict, by endeavouring to obtain information on the situation of women and children in similar cases and by obtaining the support of public opinion. All the examples quoted in the Secretary-General's report tended to prove that women and children were particularly vulnerable in periods of armed conflict. Unfortunately, their sufferings did not necessarily end with the cessation of hostilities. In that connexion, she drew attention to the position of women in the occupied territories in the Middle East which were subjected to foreign domination and incessant violations of human rights. The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories had quoted examples of women and children being held as hostages, of heads of families being expelled and of the deportation of whole families. The children whose names appeared on the lists of UNRWA were also living in distressing conditions, since, according to that Agency's report covering the period from 1 June 1970 to 30 June 1971,<sup>4/</sup> there were more than 300,000 children over one year of age who, on 30 June 1971, were not receiving rations on a permanent basis.

<sup>3/</sup> United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75 (1950), Nos. 970-973.

<sup>4/</sup> A/8413.

The Egyptian delegation also wished to refer to the case of women subjected to the contemptible apartheid system in southern Africa and, in particular, to that of African women in South Africa, where as many African women and children as possible were being expelled from the Johannesburg area. The Egyptian delegation appealed to the Commission to spare no effort to secure the application of humanitarian measures for protecting women and children within the framework of the international instruments which were being prepared to ensure the safeguarding of human rights in periods of armed conflict.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the question of the protection of women and children in emergency was of particular topical interest, since war was raging in several parts of the world and in others tension was very high. The General Assembly, in its resolution 2675 (XXV), had approved the basic principles for the protection of civilian populations in armed conflicts and her delegation wished to draw attention to the third of those principles, which stated that "in the conduct of military operations, every effort should be made to spare civilian populations the ravages of war, and all necessary precautions should be taken to avoid injury, loss or damage to civilian populations". In that connexion, there were two countries, the United States of America and Israel, which, although they had ratified the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, did not respect it. The United States army was subjecting the civil population of South Viet-Nam to air raids which were destroying villages, forests and crops. It was using chemical substances (defoliants) to destroy all vegetable life, without taking account of the consequences for future generations, and was thus committing veritable genocide in Viet-Nam.

Her delegation considered that all inhuman acts suffered by women and children should be condemned, whether it was a question of the privations suffered by mothers and children in East Pakistan or of the treatment inflicted on the populations under the domination of Portugal and South Africa. More specifically, the Commission should devise effective measures for the protection of women and children in the event of war and, in that regard, her delegation thought that the aim should be to prepare a draft convention or declaration

supplementing existing instruments for the international protection of civil populations. The Commission in so doing would not be duplicating the work of other bodies, such as the Commission on Human Rights, for example, since its work would relate specifically to the protection of women and children.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) said that, if the Commission thought it necessary that special measures should be devised for the protection of women and children in armed conflicts, it had an opportunity to make suggestions in that regard, since the whole question of international humanitarian law in armed conflicts was under review and draft additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions were being prepared. The drafts that had been submitted to Governments for comment already contained provisions concerning children, mothers of very young children and expectant mothers; it might be appropriate to add provisions similar to those of article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (concerning the treatment of women) which would be applicable in armed conflicts other than international armed conflicts. The Commission should therefore follow closely the work of the second session of the Conference of Government Experts on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, which was to meet from 3 May to 3 June 1972 under the auspices of ICRC and would examine the draft additional protocols to the four Geneva Conventions and the work of the Third Committee of the General Assembly, which was also going to study the question in 1972 (see General Assembly resolutions 2852 (XXVI) and 2853 (XXVI)).

The lack of interest shown by women in the question was to some extent responsible for the scantiness of the information on the condition of women and children in particular situations (see E/CN.6/561, chap. II); that state of affairs could be remedied only by more active participation by women themselves.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) said it was essential that the new international instruments to be examined at the second session of the Conference of Government Experts in 1972 should contain provisions ensuring the effective protection of women and children; members of the Commission should therefore follow closely the work of that conference and seek to persuade their respective Governments to

send to the Conference representatives who had the interests of women and children at heart. It would also be desirable for the Commission itself to be represented at the Conference.

Lastly, the Commission should in the future base its consideration of the question on the conclusions of the Conference of Government Experts and on more detailed reports by the Secretary-General.

Miss GELBER (Canada) urged the members of the Commission not to begin a discussion of particular situations, since no country in the world was guiltless with regard to those situations, whether by action or by omission. A heavy responsibility lay on the whole international community with respect to the acts committed against women in many regions of the world.

She fervently hoped that the Commission would have the courage to rise above political and geographical considerations in order to set forth, if not at the present session at least at some future session, general principles which would be in the interest of all women and which could be taken into account in the preparation of new protocols to the Geneva Conventions.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America), referring to the statement by the Byelorussian representative, observed that all alleged cases of genocide should be brought before the International Court of Justice and not before the Commission.

She too thought that the Commission should strive to isolate broad general principles and refrain from treating the question from a political standpoint. In order that the question might be treated in a more direct manner and within the Commission's terms of reference, it would perhaps be better to change the wording of the item.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):

(a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.612/Rev.1, E/CN.6/L.634)

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.634 on the further elaboration of a programme of concerted international action,

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\* Resumed from the 592nd meeting.

on behalf of the sponsors. She proposed the following drafting amendments: in the fifth preambular paragraph, the words "such a programme" should be replaced by the words "the programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women", and in the sixth preambular paragraph the words "a programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women" should be replaced by the words "such a programme"; lastly, operative paragraph 5 should begin with the words "Urges UNDP to consider the full integration of women...".

Those amendments were adopted.

Miss CHATON (France) suggested that, in the fourth preambular paragraph the words "women at low levels of development" should be replaced by "least favoured women".

The amendment was adopted.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.634, as amended, was adopted by 28 votes to none, with 1 abstention.<sup>5/</sup>

Mrs. NAZANJO (Costa Rica) introducing draft resolution E/CN.6/L.612/Rev.1 on the establishment of regional and national centres for the development of identical status for men and women and their balanced participation in the well-being of the family, on behalf of the sponsors, said that if that text was not adopted by the Commission, she would request that it should be included in the Commission's report, as had been suggested by the Canadian representative at the 592nd meeting.

Mrs. TILNEY (United Kingdom) requested that, in accordance with rule 51 of the rules of procedure, consideration of the draft resolution should be deferred until the following day, since delegations had not had time to study the text, which had only just been circulated.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) proposed a new version of the draft resolution, which she felt should enable the Commission to break the present deadlock:

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<sup>5/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.649.

"Having been informed of the plan to establish in the Central American area a regional body for women and the family and of the offer by Costa Rica to act as host to that body,

"Expresses its appreciation of this regional initiative and encourages other regions to undertake similar studies in the light of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women."

Miss GELBER (Canada) and Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) supported that proposal.

The CHAIRMAN invited the representative of the Dominican Republic to submit her draft resolution in writing to the Secretariat and said that further consideration of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.612/Rev.1 would be deferred until the following day at the request of the United Kingdom representative, in accordance with rule 51 of the rules of procedure.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIFTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 1 March 1972, at 11.05 a.m.

In the absence of the Chairman, Mrs. Kolstad (Norway), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):

- (a) FURTHER ELABORATION OF A PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION (concluded) (E/CN.6/L.612/Rev.1)
- (c) ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (concluded) (E/CN.6/L.639)

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that the sponsors of the draft resolution on the establishment of regional and national centres for the development of identical status for men and women and their balanced participation in the well-being of the family (E/CN.6/L.612/Rev.1) wished to withdraw it, in response to the suggestion made at the 592nd meeting by the Canadian representative in the light of her long experience. She thanked the representative of the Dominican Republic for the solution she had suggested at the 594th meeting.

She wished to place it on record that, far from feeling criticized, her delegation had greatly appreciated the Commission's sympathetic attitude. As the representative of a country which, though small, had a strong belief in the equality of men and women, she had come to the Commission to learn.

She then read out a proposed paragraph for inclusion in the Commission's report.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur would take note of the text.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania), introducing her delegation's draft resolution on UNESCO activities of special interest to women (E/CN.6/L.639), said it was prompted by the conclusions in paragraphs 133 and 134 of the report on UNESCO activities of special interest to women (E/CN.6/557) concerning areas in the application of the principle of equal access of girls and women to education,

science and culture which, for practical reasons, i.e., financial and technical difficulties, had been left untouched. Girls had special problems, which were distinct from those of women, and she felt that greater attention should be given to educating them so as to inculcate a sense of civic responsibility and an awareness of the need to devote their energies and abilities to the public well-being and the general interest of the nation. Higher priority should indeed be given to the moral and civic education of all young people, in order to create the conditions for their participation in the social and political life of their countries; the first step was to make them aware of the need for such participation.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria), Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium), Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) and Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that their delegations strongly supported the draft resolution and wished to become sponsors.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.639 was adopted by 29 votes to none, with 1 abstention.<sup>1/</sup>

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.635)

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), referring to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.635 on agenda item 4, which she had introduced at the 594th meeting, said that the sponsors had been joined by Colombia, Mauritania and Thailand. She also pointed out that the words "The Commission on the Status of Women," had been omitted from the beginning of the draft resolution. She proposed that the last four words in paragraph 2 should be replaced by the words "in 1974", since the specialized agencies mentioned, in particular FAO, had indicated that they would be able to submit reports to the Commission in that year, when the revised report by UNESCO on access to education for women in rural areas was also expected to be received.

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<sup>1/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.652.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that her delegation also wished to join the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.635, as amended, was adopted unanimously.<sup>2/</sup>

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EMERGENCY AND ARMED CONFLICT IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE, SELF-DETERMINATION, NATIONAL LIBERATION AND INDEPENDENCE (agenda item 8) (continued) (E/CN.6/561 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/L.642, E/CN.6/NGO/243)

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the question covered by agenda item 8 (E/CN.6/561 and Add.1 and 2) and drew attention to the references to the shortage of information (see E/CN.6/561, paras. 5 and 50). One of the possible causes of that shortage of information was that women and children were not treated separately from the civilian population. Her delegation would support any draft resolution calling for the use of all ways and means of obtaining more detailed information.

Her delegation was concerned - from a humanitarian point of view, since the political aspects were a matter for other bodies - over the conditions reported in chapter II, especially in the Middle East where the problem was a continuing one owing to the determined policy of occupation and expansion pursued by the Government concerned. She referred in particular to the statistics reported by UNRWA (ibid., para. 20). It would be useful if WHO or UNRWA could supply information on the death and sickness rates resulting from those conditions.

In connexion with paragraph 36 of the report, she said that every individual had the right to know the facts of his origin; historical reality should not be distorted.

She welcomed the reference in paragraph 51 to the possibility of the Commission recommending guidelines and principles for consideration in formulating safeguards for women and children in situations of armed conflict or emergency and said that the excellent study by ICRC (ibid., annex) would be useful in that connexion.

Mrs. CHATER (Tunisia) drew attention to some points which had not been raised in the Secretary-General's report. The problem was an urgent one, but,

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<sup>2/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.653.

desirable though it would be for the Commission to draw up the guidelines and principles referred to in paragraph 51, it had no time to do so at the present session. It was therefore essential to assign a high priority to the question at the end of the session. She agreed with the previous speaker that there was no question of injecting politics into the Commission's deliberations; the political aspects of the matter were being dealt with by other bodies.

In connexion with the second session of the Conference of Government Experts on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, to be held in May/June 1972 under the auspices of ICRC, she stressed the need for women to take part in the review of the relevant international instruments. She accordingly proposed that, if no such arrangement had been made, the Commission should press for the participation of qualified women in that Conference.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said that even if the Commission was not concerned with politics, it should not overlook the fact that politics affected the condition of women and children, for example, in the struggle for independence and self-determination in the developing countries. She agreed that the Commission should concentrate on guidelines and principles for international bodies such as ICRC. Such guidelines would necessarily involve other matters besides the protection of women and children, such as legal questions relating to national sovereignty, particularly in connexion with non-international conflicts such as guerilla warfare. It should also be remembered that women were not always civilians: they were often combatants involved in military and para-military operations. All those aspects should be taken into account in the guidelines. She hoped that the Commission would express its concern to the forthcoming ICRC Conference.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said it was clear from all decisions of United Nations bodies which had led up to the discussion of the item, and particularly from Economic and Social Council resolution 1515 (XLVIII) entitled "Protection of women and children in emergency or wartime, fighting for peace, national liberation and independence", that the protection of women and children in certain situations had to be given special

consideration. It was stated in the concluding remarks of the Secretary-General's report that information on the specific condition of women and children in particular situations was scarce (ibid., para. 50); that was, of course, true if the only sources drawn upon were documents of United Nations agencies and ICRC, since none of those bodies had concerned themselves directly with the specific situation of women and children. Nevertheless, there was abundant information from other sources which proved that women and children, who constituted the majority of the civilian population, were the first to suffer from bombing, occupation and so-called liberation. The Secretary-General could have used the information provided by the press and by various conferences and commissions set up to study the crimes committed by the United States in Viet-Nam, the cruelty of certain occupational authorities to the civilian population, including women and children, and the situation of the women in South Africa who were participating in the struggle against racism and imperialism. The two resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on respect for human rights in armed conflicts (resolutions 2852 (XXVI) and 2853 (XXVI)) did not specifically mention women and children and, although the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, contained a few provisions on the subject, those were inadequate and did not cover all the situations envisaged in the item on the Commission's agenda. However, the suggestion in paragraph 17 of the report that children under 15 were to be among those given priority in a system of safety zones implied that they would be separated from their mothers, which was inadmissible.

A discussion of the specific problem of the protection of women and children could well be conducted side by side with that of the general problem of respect for human rights in armed conflicts. That was borne out both by Council resolution 1515 (XLVIII) and by the conclusions in paragraph 51 of the Secretary-General's report. She believed that the Commission should proceed to prepare a declaration on the subject and that the proposal made at the 594th meeting that it should draw up a set of principles for incorporation in a new additional protocol to the Geneva Conventions was impracticable, owing to lack of time.

Mrs. KANE (Mauritania), introducing draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642 on behalf of the sponsors, said that it concerned a problem of vital importance which had widespread implications. She welcomed the action to be taken at the forthcoming ICRC-sponsored Conference of Government Experts to be held in May/June 1972 at Geneva but said that it was essential for the Commission to fulfil its responsibilities on the lines indicated in the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

Miss DEHARENG (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that she wished to appeal to the Commission to concern itself with the tragic situation of large numbers of girls and women, particularly in parts of the Indian subcontinent, in the aftermath of war. She supported the statement by a number of non-governmental organizations in document E/CN.6/NGO/243, entitled "Protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict", and expressed the hope that the Commission would make an urgent appeal to all competent bodies, in particular to UNICEF, for immediate aid and rehabilitation.

Mrs. AGUAYO (Chile) stressed the need for a global approach to a subject of such far-reaching importance. Member States were united by their desire for peace, but at the same time all had to bear some responsibility, through sins of commission or omission, for the conflicts which broke out in the world. No individual Government should be singled out for criticism, but the Commission could not remain passive in the face of the appalling plight of women and children in many parts of the world.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) said that her country was concerned with the protection of the entire civilian population in armed conflicts and pointed out that the Fourth Geneva Convention contained articles on the specific situation of women and children. Nevertheless, it was a fact that the Convention was not yet being fully implemented. In view of the need for the better application of existing instruments, her delegation welcomed the forthcoming second session of the ICRC Conference of Government Experts, at which special measures for the protection of women and children could be considered.

Mrs. ALAMI (Women's International Democratic Federation), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that her organization was convinced of the need to study the specific problem of the protection of women and children, in view of the reports received from its affiliates concerning the horrible suffering of women and children, especially in Indo-China. The Federation would suggest that the Commission should recommend the General Assembly to prepare a declaration on the subject and to request the Secretary-General to take steps to encourage Governments of Member States to assume responsibility for implementing the existing conventions and for drawing up new instruments. It also hoped that the Conference of Government Experts would succeed in drafting an additional protocol and would be attended by experts on the particular problems under discussion. The Federation was prepared to contribute to the work of the Conference by providing information from its affiliates in all continents.

Mrs. HARELI (Observer for Israel), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that her delegation was greatly concerned by the general humanitarian problem of the protection of the civilian population, since the Jewish people had endured unparalleled suffering during the Second World War. Nevertheless, it did not believe that women and children should be singled out; for instance, old and sick men were no less in need of protection. It had been clear from the outset that the inclusion of the item in the Commission's agenda had been an undisguised attempt to slander Israel and to use a humanitarian subject for political ends.

The over-all situation of women and children in the areas administered by Israel was one of quiet and constructive development. Autonomous local authorities administered most sectors; the pre-existing educational system remained unchanged except for the addition of further facilities; the same applied to social and health services; Arab students were free to choose whether they wished to attend Israeli or Arab universities; an Arab university was being set up on the West Bank, and large sums were being spent on training women and on crèches for their children. Since UNRWA rations were insufficient, they were supplemented by the Israeli authorities. The residents of the areas in question were visited by ever-increasing numbers of their friends and relatives from the surrounding Arab countries.

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All those facts had been witnessed by large numbers of foreign tourists and representatives of diplomatic missions and national organizations. Indeed, the President of ICRC had recently referred to the close co-operation between his organization and the Israeli authorities. An objective perusal of paragraphs 11 and 28 of the Secretary-General's report would show that the Commission had singled out for adverse comment a local situation where the conditions enumerated in the title of the item did not exist.

Mrs. TALLAWY (Egypt) said it was difficult to understand why the right of free speech had been extended to an observer for a country which was denying the enjoyment of that and other fundamental human rights to Arab populations. Moreover, many of the statements made by that observer were untrue. The item had been included in the agenda, not with a view to slandering Israel, but because respect for human rights in armed conflicts had become one of the most important issues in the United Nations in recent years; ICRC had reported in one of its bulletins that Israel had refused to comply with the Geneva Conventions in respect of the occupied territories; the world press, and even the Israeli press, reported inhuman treatment of women and children in those areas; the latest report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA to the General Assembly<sup>3/</sup> contained alarming reports of the demolition of shelters and other structures in the occupied territories; as far as education was concerned, recent resolutions of the UNESCO Executive Board expressed concern at Israel's failure to grant import permits for UNRWA/UNESCO textbooks; and the 1971 World Health Assembly had adopted a resolution noting that ICRC had drawn attention to the violation of a basic human right by Israeli occupying authorities in connexion with the distribution of medicaments.

The Arab peoples were not responsible for the sufferings of the Jews during the Second World War and, indeed, had opened their countries to many Jewish refugees, yet Israel was pursuing a policy of expelling Arabs from their homes and calling upon Jews outside Israel to supplant them. Thus, the documentation of a number of international organizations proved that it was Israel, not the Arab countries, that was injecting politics into a debate on humanitarian subjects.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said she was sure that no member of the Commission would be misled by the hypocritical demagogery of the observer for Israel.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) said that the Commission could judge for itself the truth of the allegation that the item had been included in the agenda with the express purpose of slandering Israel. Furthermore, if conditions in the occupied territories were as idyllic as those described by the observer for Israel, why had that escaped the notice of United Nations agencies and why had the Secretary-General seen fit to issue a report on the situation?

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIXTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 1 March 1972, at 3.40 p.m.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (continued):

- (d) CO-OPERATION WITH INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.645)

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.645 on co-operation with intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system, on behalf of its sponsors and indicated a number of drafting changes to be made in the text.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) proposed a number of amendments to strengthen the draft resolution, namely: the insertion of a new paragraph after the first preambular paragraph, reading: "Recalling further General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) on the programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women"; the redrafting of operative paragraph 3 to read: "Expresses the hope that other appropriate regional intergovernmental organizations will implement to the fullest degree possible the United Nations programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women as outlined in General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) and will be represented at future sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women"; and the redrafting of operative paragraph 4 to read: "Requests the Secretary-General to transmit the present resolution to Member States and to the secretariats of intergovernmental organizations, including copies of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV), with a view to encouraging co-operation between Member States and intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system in the implementation of programmes for the advancement of women."

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that the regional intergovernmental organizations referred to in operative paragraphs 3 and 4 should be named.

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\* Resumed from the 591st meeting.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that delegations which had proposed amendments should consult with the sponsors of the draft resolution, in order to prepare an agreed text.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) requested that the consideration of the draft resolution, the text of which had only just been circulated, should be postponed until the next day.

It was so decided.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EMERGENCY AND ARMED CONFLICT IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE, SELF-DETERMINATION, NATIONAL LIBERATION AND INDEPENDENCE (agenda item 8) (continued) (E/CN.6/L.642)

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642 on the question covered by agenda item 8, on behalf of the sponsors. She said that the word "self-determination" in the first preambular paragraph should be deleted and she proposed that a new paragraph should be inserted between operative paragraphs 3 and 4 reading: "Requests the Secretary-General to transmit the views of the Commission on the Status of Women on the question of the protection of women and children in periods of armed conflict to the aforementioned Conference."

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) proposed that the words "... or any other objective source of information found relevant by the Secretary-General" should be added at the end of operative paragraph 6.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported that amendment.

Miss GELBER (Canada) urged the sponsors of the draft resolution to delete any specific geographical reference; there were many parts of the world where the situation of women and children left much to be desired and the Commission should defend the interests of women all over the world and not only in certain areas.

Referring to operative paragraph 2, she questioned whether, in view of recent developments and in particular the work being done on the preparation of additional protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, it was still really necessary to draft a declaration on the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that, in her delegation's view, the Commission should make it clear that what the draft resolution referred to was the protection of non-combatant women and children. Account should also be taken of the distress of women and children who did not know whether their husbands, sons or fathers who had been taken prisoner were alive or dead. She therefore proposed the following amendments: (a) to change the title of the draft resolution to read "Special problems of non-combatant women and children in emergency or war-time"; (b) to change the second preambular paragraph to read: "Noting that the Geneva Conventions relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to the Treatment of Prisoners of War are not being fully implemented in armed conflicts and that women and children are as a consequence suffering anguish because of their inability over a long period of time to obtain information on such basic facts as whether their husbands, sons or fathers are alive or dead, contrary to the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949"; (c) to add a new preambular paragraph, reading: "Aware that if women are acting either openly or covertly in a combatant role, they cannot expect to be accorded special protection as non-combatant civilians"; (d) to delete the words "the International Committee of the Red Cross" in the first line of operative paragraph 4 and insert the words "together with the International Committee of the Red Cross" in the second line after the word "non-governmental organizations"; (e) to insert a new operative paragraph 6, reading: "Requests the Secretary-General and Governments of Member States to mobilize world opinion in support of women who are suffering because of the failure of some of the parties to conflict to implement the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War"; (f) to insert the words "who do not take part in conflicts as belligerents or combatants" after the words "women and children" in operative paragraph 7 and add the word "non-combatant" before the words "women and children" in all the other operative paragraphs where those words occurred.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General), referring to the amendment to operative paragraph 6 proposed by the representative of Iraq, said that it would be difficult for the Secretary-General to determine which sources of information could be regarded as "objective".

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Iraqi amendment might be altered to read: "... or any other objective information from governmental or non-governmental sources".

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) asked the representative of Iraq if, having regard to the suggestion made by the USSR representative, she would accept the wording: "... and other objective information received from Governments or non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council".

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) accepted that suggestion.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that she saw no need to specify in the draft resolution that it referred to "non-combatant" women and children, since it was obvious, in view of the discussion on item 8, that the Commission was concerned with the lot of women and children belonging to the civilian population. The text of the draft resolution should not be rendered unnecessarily cumbersome.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that it had to be recognized that in periods of emergency or armed conflict there were women and children who, in one way or another, took part in the fighting. Several delegations had pointed out that a distinction should be made between such persons and true civilians.

Mrs. NAHAS (Egypt) said that the title of the draft resolution was that of agenda item 8; it was therefore too late to alter it. The adoption of the title proposed by the United States representative would, moreover, tend to make the question a political issue.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) said that the study by ICRC included in the report by the Secretary-General (see E/CN.6/561, annex) clearly indicated that the question involved was that of protecting the non-combatant civil population. There was no need, therefore, so to specify in the draft resolution.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that there was a contradiction in the amendments submitted by the United States representative. The latter wished on the one hand to stress that protection was

accorded only to persons who were not engaged in military activities, yet on the other, she proposed to refer to prisoners of war. The Commission did not have to concern itself with prisoners of war.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that what she wished to stress was the suffering of women and children whose husbands, sons or fathers were prisoners of war. That was surely a problem of direct concern to women and children. It was mentioned in one of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and attention should be drawn to it, since the provisions of those Conventions were not being applied.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said there was no doubt that the Fourth Geneva Convention applied to non-combatants. She therefore hoped that the United States representative would withdraw her proposal to add the words "non-combatant" in various paragraphs of the draft resolution. She also asked the United States representative not to press her proposal to add a new paragraph 6 dealing with prisoners of war. The resolution should be as concise as possible.

With regard to the Canadian proposal not to refer to any particular area in the last preambular paragraph, she pointed out that the report by the Secretary-General had given the Commission very comprehensive information on the Middle East. It was logical, therefore, for the Commission at its present session to deal specially with women and children who were suffering as a result of the armed conflict in the Middle East. At a future session, the Commission might concern itself with another region.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the discussion of agenda item 8 was concerned only with the civil population and it was obvious that it was to non-combatants that the draft resolution referred. The position of prisoners of war had nothing whatsoever to do with the item under discussion. The amendments proposed by the representative of the United States were therefore unacceptable.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) explained that the amendment to move the reference to ICRC in operative paragraph 4 was intended clearly to indicate ICRC's independence. The wording relating to non-combatant women would

be useful, because, as she had previously mentioned, there was no assurance that in the event of a conflict, civilians would necessarily be non-combatant.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) supported the Canadian proposal to omit any reference in the last preambular paragraph to any particular area.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) urged the United States delegation not to introduce into the draft resolution an issue that was not on the agenda by adding a paragraph relating to prisoners of war, but rather to concentrate on the protection of the civil population, which was precisely the matter which was to be taken up by the ICRC Conference of Government Experts.

Mrs. SIPIILÄ (Finland) said that, by referring only to one area where children were being deprived of the basic necessities of life, the Commission appeared to be showing a lack of interest in other areas in which children were also suffering, particularly in Asia, where recent events had wrecked the lives of a very large civil population. Consequently, she proposed that the last preambular paragraph should be deleted, to keep the draft resolution in general terms.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) suggested to the United States delegation that non-combatant women and children should be mentioned only in the third preambular paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the meeting should be suspended to enable the sponsors of the draft resolution to reach agreement with the sponsors of amendments on a compromise text.

The meeting was suspended at 5.10 p.m. and resumed at 5.55 p.m.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) read out some changes which had been made in draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642. The sponsors had agreed to place the reference to ICRC in new operative paragraph 5 and they proposed the following text for the last preambular paragraph: "Realizing that children are suffering from the lack of basic needs of life in many areas of the world, especially in those areas referred to in the report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/561 and Add.2), namely the Middle East and Africa." She drew attention to the fact that the reference to occupied territories was now deleted.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) read out a new wording which she proposed for the second preambular paragraph:<sup>1/</sup> "Noting that the Geneva Conventions relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August 1949 are not...". She also proposed that there should be inserted, after the third preambular paragraph, a new paragraph reading: "Aware of the psychological effects suffered by women and children as a result of the lack of information as to the fate of their relatives who are victims of armed conflict." Lastly, she proposed the addition, at the end of the preamble, of a new paragraph reading: "Aware that if women are acting openly or covertly in a combatant role, they cannot expect to be accorded the special protection as non-combatant civilians." In the view of her delegation, the question of women as members of the non-combatant civil population had not been examined thoroughly enough for there to be no need to draw a distinction between combatant and non-combatant women.

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland), referring to the new wording for the last preambular paragraph as read out by the representative of Egypt, proposed that the word "especially" should be replaced by the word "including".

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) accepted that amendment.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, if reference was to be made to territories where children lacked the basic needs of life, all such territories should be mentioned, including Indo-China. Otherwise, a general formula such as that proposed by the Canadian delegation should be used.

Mrs. AKRAWI (Iraq) proposed that the phrase in the last preambular paragraph under discussion should read "..., including the Middle East and Africa and any other area of the world for which relevant data are available".

Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland), noting that, in his report the Secretary-General referred to the plight of those persons, the majority of whom were women and children, who, owing to the recent hostilities on the Indian subcontinent and also to the cyclone that had hit the area some months before (see E/CN.6/561/Add.2), had had to leave their homes, proposed that Asia should be added to the areas mentioned.

<sup>1/</sup> The United States amendments to draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642 were circulated later under the symbol E/CN.6/L.651.

Miss GELBER (Canada), suggested that the Commission should adopt the following formula: "..., including those mentioned in the two reports of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/561 and E/CN.6/561/Add.2)".

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia) supported the formula proposed by the Canadian delegation, which had the advantage of providing for situations that might arise in the future.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) accepted the Finnish delegation's proposal to add a reference to Asia and said that she had no objection to the inclusion of a reference also to the two reports of the Secretary-General.

Mrs. BOKOR (Hungary) asked the United States delegation not to make, in its amendments, a distinction between women who were participating "openly or covertly" in combat, since such a distinction might have the effect of depriving a person of the protection to which he would normally be entitled. There was, moreover, in the Geneva Conventions, a very clear formula to designate combatants.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) agreed to the deletion of the words "openly or covertly".

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in her view, the paragraph proposed by the United States concerning women who lacked information as to the fate of their relatives who were victims of armed conflict was unacceptable, since it was clearly a reference to those who, in Viet-Nam, were slaughtering women and children, and it was precisely the latter that the draft resolution aimed to protect.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said it was a well-known fact that the victims of an armed conflict were just as likely to be civilians who happened to be in the area, as military personnel.

The CHAIRMAN said that she proposed to adjourn the debate until the following day, when the Commission would have before it the revised version of draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.

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MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVENTH MEETING

held on Thursday, 2 March 1972, at 10.30 a.m.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EMERGENCY AND ARMED CONFLICT IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE, SELF-DETERMINATION, NATIONAL LIBERATION AND INDEPENDENCE (agenda item 8) (concluded) (E/CN.6/L.642/Rev.1, E/CN.6/L.651)

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt), introducing the revised text of the draft resolution relating to agenda item 8 (E/CN.6/L.642/Rev.1), on behalf of the sponsors, said that, for the sake of complete accuracy, the word "self-determination" should be deleted from the first preambular paragraph, since it had not appeared in Commission resolution 4 (XXII), but had been introduced into the text submitted to the Economic and Social Council. In operative paragraph 5, the reference to ICRC should be transferred to the last part of the paragraph, the words "together with ICRC" being inserted after the words "support to them". The sponsors had taken into account a number of points made during the debate and had amended the seventh preambular paragraph so as to ensure a general approach to the question and, at the same time, to avoid vagueness. The problems were now placed in their geographical context, but there was no condemnation of any Government. They had also added an eighth preambular paragraph stressing some aspects of the suffering of women in war-time situations.

Finally, she appealed to the United States representative not to press the first two of her proposed amendments (see E/CN.6/L.651, paras. 1 and 2), since the treatment of prisoners of war was not in the title of the draft resolution and, even if it were decided that it came within the Commission's sphere of competence, it should be dealt with in a separate draft resolution. Finally, the third United States amendment seemed to be superfluous, since the third preambular paragraph specifically referred to the fate of women and children of the civil population.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that the required protection went much further than the protection of the physical person; the rights of women and children, as well as their psychological well-being, should

also be taken into account. Her delegation did not wish to withdraw any of its amendments, being convinced that women were not entitled to special protection when they were acting in a combatant role. With regard to operative paragraph 5, she suggested that the words "the International Committee of the Red Cross" should be deleted from the first line and that the words "requests these bodies and the International Committee of the Red Cross" should be inserted before the words "to develop" in the fourth line.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) asked the sponsors whether they would agree to change the words "any other objective information from" in operative paragraph 7 to "any other information furnished by", in order to avoid difficulties for the Secretary-General.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) accepted that amendment and the change suggested by the United States representative in operative paragraph 5.

Mrs. MACHADO BONET (Uruguay) proposed that all references to specific areas should be deleted from the draft resolution; that would affect the sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs, on which she requested a separate vote. It would be most undesirable to refer to the protection of women and children in some areas and not in others, particularly since the Secretary-General stated in his report (E/CN.6/561) that information on the subject was scarce. The Commission should have the moral strength to condemn ill-treatment of women and children wherever it occurred. She also supported the third United States amendment; it must be specified that the women and children involved were civilians, since otherwise women and children engaging in terrorist activities might be able to claim protection.

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) pointed out that the Commission was not competent to decide who was a combatant and who was not, for that complex legal question was being studied by experts. Adoption of the United States amendment would enable aggressors arbitrarily to include women and children among combatants and to invoke self-defence as a pretext for ill-treatment.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said it was perfectly clear from the draft resolution that the persons involved were women and children of the civilian population.

Miss CHATON (France) proposed that the following phrase should be added at the end of operative paragraph 3: "and expresses the wish that among the government experts participating in the Conference which ICRC will convene at Geneva in May 1972, the Governments of Member States will appoint women who are making a fundamental contribution to the development of humanitarian laws for the protection of women and children". The reason for her proposal was that, of the 178 participants in the first session of the Conference of Government Experts in March 1971, only 7 had been women.

She could not support the United States amendments, because the first two were not germane to the subject under discussion and the third raised the difficult problem of defining a combatant role.

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) accepted the French amendment, but said she could not agree to the Uruguayan representative's suggestions. The references to specific areas were made in connexion with a Special Committee of the United Nations and with a report by the Secretary-General which had been requested by the Commission itself; it would be discriminatory to omit all reference to the Special Committee and to the report.

Mrs. ANDREI (Romania) said that she too could not support the United States amendments, since the Commission's terms of reference in the matter did not include treatment of prisoners of war, the psychological effects of the results of armed conflicts on women and children outside the areas of combat or the definition of "a combatant role".

She suggested that the role of ICRC would be more accurately described in operative paragraph 3 by deleting "ICRC" from the first line and inserting "convened by ICRC" after "Conference of Government Experts" and replacing the words "development of humanitarian laws" in the fourth line by "development of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts".

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Mrs. NAHAS (Egypt) accepted the Romanian amendments and said that her delegation would vote against the United States amendments.

She moved the closure of the debate.

The motion was carried by 21 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) asked for a separate vote on the last phrase of operative paragraph 2: "and, if necessary, to draft a declaration on the subject".

At the request of the representative of the United States of America, the Chairman put draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642/Rev.1 to the vote paragraph by paragraph.

The first preambular paragraph was adopted by 25 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

The United States amendment to the second preambular paragraph (E/CN.6/L.651, para. 1) was rejected by 12 votes to 4, with 11 abstentions.

The second preambular paragraph was adopted by 26 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

The third preambular paragraph was adopted unanimously.

The United States amendment to insert a new preambular paragraph after the third preambular paragraph (E/CN.6/L.651, para. 2) was rejected by 11 votes to 6, with 12 abstentions.

The fourth preambular paragraph was adopted by 24 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

The fifth preambular paragraph was adopted unanimously.

The sixth preambular paragraph was adopted by 17 votes to 4, with 8 abstentions.

The seventh preambular paragraph was adopted by 15 votes to 2, with 12 abstentions.

The United States amendment to insert a new preambular paragraph before the eighth preambular paragraph (E/CN.6/L.651, para. 3) was rejected by 13 votes to 7, with 9 abstentions.

The eighth preambular paragraph was adopted unanimously.

Operative paragraph 1 was adopted unanimously.

The last phrase of operative paragraph 2 was adopted by 20 votes to 6, with 3 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 2 as a whole was adopted by 21 votes to 4, with 4 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 3 was adopted unanimously.

Operative paragraph 4 was adopted unanimously.

Operative paragraph 5 was adopted by 26 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 6 was adopted by 24 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 7 was adopted by 23 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 8 was adopted by 22 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.642/Rev.1 as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 18 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.<sup>1/</sup>

Miss EDELSTEIN (Canada) said that she had voted in favour of the resolution as a whole because, although it did not fully represent the strong moral statement that her delegation would have wished for, it did represent some measure of progress. She had supported the first two United States amendments, interpreting them as being of a purely humanitarian character and not as applying to particular areas of the world, but had abstained on the third United States amendment since the meaning of "combatant role" was not entirely clear. She had abstained on the seventh preambular paragraph, because, although she had no objection to its substance, she would have preferred a broad general statement. She had reservations concerning the wording of the last two operative paragraphs and, in particular, had doubts on the advisability of the Commission discussing the subject every two years, in view of the numerous other items on its agenda.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the resolution but was not entirely satisfied with the way in which it treated the subject. Neither the resolution nor the Secretary-General's report fully reflected the importance and complexity of the situation. Many experts considered that the Hague and Geneva Conventions were outdated and that

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<sup>1/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.657.

the rules of conventional warfare were not appropriate for nuclear warfare, urban and rural guerilla warfare, or for the new intensive and sophisticated weapons of war. A clearer distinction should be drawn between international and non-international conflicts. ICRC had not even reached agreement on national armed conflicts and whether the rules of war should extend to guerilla warfare, or on the question who were civilians and who were combatants. Her delegation therefore hoped that in future discussions the Commission would consider the subject more in terms of general principles than of specific cases. She hoped that her comments would be taken into account in the Commission's report.

Mrs. KOLSTAD (Norway) said that she had voted in favour of the resolution as a whole solely on humanitarian grounds. For the same reason, she had voted for the United States amendments as being applicable to armed conflict in general and not to particular conflicts in any part of the world.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that she had voted against operative paragraphs 2 and 6 in view of their financial implications.

With regard to her delegation's amendments, she felt that the debate on them had at least indicated an interest in exploring the issues they raised. She hoped that the Commission would recognize the need to change the title of agenda item 8 because it was outdated and its scope should be extended to cover those exposed to sufferings which were the by-products of emergencies and wars.

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHÉ (Argentina) said that she had abstained from voting on the resolution as a whole because of her opposition to the sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs on the ground that regions or places should not be singled out for special attention. Her delegation had supported the third United States amendment, because it concerned a new situation which ought to be taken into account. It had also supported operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 on humanitarian grounds, despite their financial implications.

Miss CHATON (France) said she had abstained in the vote on the resolution as a whole, because she did not consider the subject appropriate to the Commission and because her delegation had voted against some of the resolutions mentioned in it. Economic and Social Council resolution 1515 (XLVIII),

in particular, referred to the drafting of a declaration which her delegation considered unnecessary in view of the very precise provisions contained in the Geneva Conventions. Moreover, her delegation believed that the Commission should deal with the problem in its universal aspects and not in relation to particular cases of the type mentioned in operative paragraphs 7 and 8, which were the responsibility of other bodies. Her delegation had also been concerned about the financial implications of some of the paragraphs. It had not voted against the draft resolution, in view of its humanitarian aspects.

Mr. ELLISON (United Kingdom) said that, not having participated in the debate because it considered the subject inappropriate for the Commission, his delegation had been unable to express its concern at the plight of the persons mentioned in the Secretary-General's report. His delegation had voted in favour of the United States amendments, which would have broadened the scope of the draft resolution and reduced the degree to which it applied to particular situations. It had voted against the preambular paragraphs referring to specific areas and countries. It had voted against operative paragraph 2 because, for the reasons expressed by other representatives, the United Kingdom Government was opposed to the idea of a separate declaration. It had abstained on paragraphs 5 and 6. It had voted against paragraphs 7 and 8 because they incorporated the unacceptable proposition that participants in individual armed conflicts should be given different treatment according to the perceived justice of their cause. In his Government's view, all victims of armed conflict should receive the same treatment. Protection of the victims of armed conflict should be based on objective, not subjective, criteria. His delegation had abstained on the resolution as a whole.

Mrs. CURLING (Costa Rica) said that her delegation had abstained on the resolution as a whole, because it did not agree with the mention of specific areas and because it did not consider the subject an appropriate one for the Commission.

Mrs. HISLAIRE-GUISLAIN (Belgium) said that her delegation attached great importance to humanitarian principles; it had therefore voted for all the paragraphs which reflected the humanitarian aspect of the subject and abstained

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on the paragraphs that did not. Because of certain paragraphs which were not in keeping with a general and non-political approach to the problem, her delegation had abstained on the resolution as a whole.

Mrs. PROBST (Austria) said that, as representative of a neutral country, she had abstained on the resolution. Her delegation fully sympathized with the victims of emergencies and wars but could not accept the political aspects of the resolution.

Mrs. HUVANANDANA (Thailand) said that she had abstained on the resolution because she believed that, if women wanted complete equality with men, they should be prepared to suffer equally with men as part of the civilian population.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES (agenda item 6) (concluded):

(d) CO-OPERATION WITH INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (concluded) (E/CN.6/L.645/Rev.1)

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), introducing the revised draft resolution relating to agenda item 6 (d) (E/CN.6/L.645/Rev.1), which included the amendments submitted by the Philippine representative at the 596th meeting, said that the word "useful" should be inserted in the third preambular paragraph before the word "report" and that the words "of Women" should be inserted in the first line in operative paragraph 1 after the word "Commission".

Mrs. MARINKEVITCH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) asked whether the Commission was entitled to take the action proposed in operative paragraph 1. She knew of no precedent for submitting questions to an organization which was not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General), replying to the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, said that the Commission was master of its own procedure, and that, generally speaking, was not bound by precedent. In the present case, the invitation might have to be transmitted through the Economic and Social Council.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) inquired what organizations were implied by the words "other appropriate regional intergovernmental organizations" in operative paragraph 3 and suggested that they should be named.

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) thought that the inclusion of the names of organizations would make the draft resolution unduly long and would lead to complications. It was merely a question of appealing for co-operation by appropriate organizations in the regions.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) agreed with the previous speaker.

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) also supported the views of the Philippine representative. In accordance with rule 48 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, she moved the closure of the debate.

The motion for closure of the debate was adopted by 20 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.645/Rev.1, as amended, was adopted by 21 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.<sup>2/</sup>

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of her vote, said that she had no objection to the substance of the resolution just adopted, but she considered that the procedure proposed in operative paragraphs 1 and 3 was incorrect.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued)\* (E/CN.6/L.650)

Mrs. SIPILA (Finland) introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/L.650 on the implementation of the programme of work. In view of the increased burden of work that the Commission was placing on the secretariats involved, it was only reasonable to ask that adequate staff should be made available to implement programmes.

\* Resumed from the 595th meeting.

<sup>2/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.655

Mrs. MARTE de BARRIOS (Dominican Republic) said that she wished to join the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution E/CN.6/L.650 was adopted unanimously.<sup>3/</sup>

Report of the Working Group (E/CN.6/L.646)

Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), Chairman of the Working Group established by the Commission at its 580th meeting, introduced the Group's report and the draft programme of work (E/CN.6/L.646).

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) asked whether projects resulting from the decisions taken at the present meeting would be included in the programme.

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that the only item concerned was agenda item 8. A project relating to that item would be included, in view of the last operative paragraph of resolution E/CN.6/L.642/Rev.1, which the Commission had just adopted on the protection of women and children in emergency or war-time, fighting for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence.

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that that project should be given first priority.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) proposed that the following subtitle should be given to the project referred to in paragraph 8 of the resolution: "Special problems of women and children in emergency or war-time".

Mrs. BRUCE (Representative of the Secretary-General) pointed out that that proposal really concerned the wording of the Commission's agenda, which was a separate issue to be decided at the twenty-fifth session.

Mrs. KOONTZ (United States of America) said that she would not press her proposal, on the understanding that the Commission would not decide at the twenty-fifth session that a subtitle could not be added to the item.

The report of the Working Group (E/CN.6/L.646) was adopted unanimously.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

<sup>3/</sup> The text of the resolution adopted was subsequently circulated as document E/CN.6/L.656.

MINUTES OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHTH (CLOSING) MEETING

held on Friday, 3 March 1972, at 3.30 p.m.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ON ITS TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION (agenda item 9) (E/CN.6/L.614 and Add.1-9)

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, presented the draft report of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Economic and Social Council on its twenty-fourth session (E/CN.6/L.614 and Add.1-9) and said that a number of amendments to the text had already been proposed; she had accepted them and they would be read out to the Commission during its consideration of the report.

Organization of the session (E/CN.6/L.614)

Chapter I (E/CN.6/L.614) was adopted.

Implementation of international instruments and national standards relating to the status of women (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.1)

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) read out the amendments accepted by the Rapporteur. In paragraph 13, the words "Reference was also made to" at the beginning of the third sentence should be replaced by the words "Widespread criticism was directed at"; the words "as at November 1971" should be inserted after the words "that report" in the fourth sentence; at the end of that sentence, the words "and only one woman at the D-1 level" should be added; and the following sentence should be added at the end of the paragraph: "In this connexion, it was further noted that women should urge their Governments not only to appoint more women to the General Assembly but to consider them for assignments that represent a broad cross-section of General Assembly activities". The last sentence of paragraph 22 should be redrafted to read: "It was also said that the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be observed, along with the right of individuals personally to apply...". The reference to "Belgium" in paragraph 39 should be deleted. In paragraph 49, the words "and others questioned whether a convention were needed or desirable" should be added to the second sentence and the words "and there had been insufficient time to study the report" to the sixth sentence.

Chapter I (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.1), as amended, was adopted.

Programme of work and establishment of priorities. Control and limitation of documentation (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.2)

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.2 was adopted.

The role of women in the family (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.3)

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) said there was a proposal that the words "daughters and sons alike" in the English text of paragraph 6 should be replaced by the words "sons as well as daughters".

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, accepted that amendment.

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.3, as amended, was adopted.

The role of women in the family (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.4)

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) said that the Rapporteur had accepted an amendment to redraft the beginning of the penultimate sentence of paragraph 3 as follows: "Through such legal practices as a newspaper notice, it was common to find a wife...".

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.4, as amended, was adopted.

Programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and to increase their contribution to the development of their countries (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.5)

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) read out the amendments accepted by the Rapporteur: in paragraph 8, the words "and in formulating relevant projects" should be added to the penultimate sentence, and the following new sentence should be added to paragraph 12: "The absence of representatives from specialized agencies such as FAO and WHO and of that of UNICEF during this session of the Commission, which was concerned specifically with the problems of women, was noted by several representatives".

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) thought that the proposed new sentence was too vague and suggested that the words following "which was concerned specifically with" should be redrafted to read as follows: "... the role of the various United Nations agencies in developing a programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women".

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Miss CHATON (France) proposed the following text: "The absence of representatives of FAO, WHO and UNICEF during this session, which dealt especially with women's problems that come under the programme of these bodies, was noted by several representatives."

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, thought that a text could be prepared combining the amendments of Egypt and France.

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) said that the following sentence might be added: "Note was taken of the absence of representatives from specialized agencies such as FAO and WHO, as well as of a representative of UNICEF, during this session, which dealt especially with women's problems that come under the programme of these bodies."

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, accepted that text and proposed that it should be included in the report.

It was so decided.

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) read out three amendments that had been proposed to paragraph 14. The first was to insert the following sentence after the third sentence of the paragraph: "One representative informed the Commission of the recent formation of an Arab Women's Commission within the League of Arab States." The second was to insert the following text before the last sentence of the paragraph: "Some members of the Commission believed that the creation of regional intergovernmental women's organizations depended on the initiative of the regions themselves." The third amendment was to replace the whole of paragraph 14 of document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.5 by the following text:

"In the course of the discussion, despite some divergent views, the need for a greater co-ordination of activities relating to women at the regional level, as referred to in the Secretary-General's report, was expressed. In the view of some representatives, however, this channel would be an obstacle between the United Nations and national commissions and duplicate the tasks of other organizations. In view of other representatives, on the contrary, regional commissions would not duplicate the work of existing United Nations organizations, but would provide new

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channels of communication and action for the Commission in the implementation of its programmes. It was further felt that this channel would reinforce the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the long-term programme for the advancement of women. A resolution was approved for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, recommending the establishment of commissions on the status of women at the regional level."

Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said she would prefer the wording of paragraph 14 as it appeared in document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.5, with the first two amendments read out by the Secretary of the Commission, to be retained.

Miss CHATON (France) said that, in the last sentence of paragraph 14, it should be made clear that the reference was to United Nations regional "economic" commissions, if that was indeed the case.

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia), supported by Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines), said she shared the USSR representative's views. She would, however, like the words "regional intergovernmental women's organizations" in the second amendment read out by the Secretary of the Commission to be replaced by the words "regional commissions on the status of women".

Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that she too preferred the wording of paragraph 14 as it appeared in the draft report. If any delegation considered that the organizations in question were likely to duplicate the work of other United Nations organs, it could ask for the addition of a sentence to cover that point.

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, proposed that the text of paragraph 14 in the draft report should be retained as it stood, with the first two amendments read out by the Secretary of the Commission and taking into account the Indonesian and French amendments and the comments made by the Egyptian delegation.

It was so decided.

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) read out some amendments proposed to paragraphs 15 and 17: the words "more active participation" in the second sentence of paragraph 15 should be replaced by the words "greater contribution" and the words "the legal" in the third sentence of paragraph 17 by the words "other related".

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, accepted those amendments. Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.5, as amended, was adopted.

Programme of concerted international action to promote the advancement of women and to increase their contribution to the development of their countries (continued) (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.6)

Mrs. NAHON (Secretary of the Commission) said that the preamble to the draft resolution in paragraph 24 of document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.6 had been omitted by mistake from the English and Spanish versions. The complete text would of course appear in the final report.

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.6 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the meeting should be suspended until the remaining addenda to the draft report had been circulated in all the working languages.

The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m. and resumed at 6.05 p.m.

Consideration of draft resolutions and decisions (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.7)

Mrs. NOOR (Indonesia) suggested that mention should be made in the report of the contribution of non-governmental organizations, to which several delegations, including those of Finland, Indonesia, the United Kingdom and the Philippines, had paid tribute.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur would take the Indonesian delegation's comments into account.

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.7 was adopted.

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Protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence  
(E/CN.6/L.614/Add.8)

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, read out amendments which certain delegations had proposed to document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.8. The following sentence should be added to the end of paragraph 4: "Some representatives stated that reference to special situations of armed conflicts were needed to illustrate the scope and nature of the problem in certain areas, in order to enable the Commission and other competent organs to develop ways and means of more effective protection." The second sentence of paragraph 9 should also be amended to read as follows: "The view was expressed that the Fourth Geneva Convention was not fully implemented. Moreover, it did not cover all aspects of protection measures needed to meet present-day requirements and consequently there was a need to redefine the rules of war."

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.8, as amended, was adopted.

Resolutions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-fourth session (E/CN.6/L.614/Add.9)

Miss SANCHEZ-TORRES (Colombia), Rapporteur, pointed out that the resolution appearing on page 15 of the English text had not been numbered and that the figure "III" should be inserted above the title. The same applied to the resolution on page 23, where the figure "IX" had been omitted in the middle of the page, after paragraph 4 of the preceding resolution.

Document E/CN.6/L.614/Add.9, as amended, was adopted.

The draft report (E/CN.6/L.614 and Add.1-9) as a whole, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Mrs. ZAEFFERER de GOYENECHE (Argentina) emphasized the importance of the Secretary-General's proposal to appoint Mrs. Sipilä, the representative of Finland in the Commission on the Status of Women, to the post of Assistant Secretary-General in the United Nations Secretariat; that proposal was an honour to all women.

Miss GELBER (Canada) read out a press release relating to that proposal and to the work done by the Commission on the Status of Women.

After the customary exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRMAN declared the twenty-fourth session of the Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.