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**President: Mr. Muhammad ZAFRULLA KHAN**  
(Pakistan).

In the absence of the President, Sir James Plimsoll  
(Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

## AGENDA ITEMS 12, 34, 35, 37 AND 84

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters I to VI)  
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United Nations Development Decade: report of the  
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REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE (A/5344)

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(chapters I to VI) (*continued*)

Progress and operations of the Special Fund

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- (a) Review of activities;
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## AGENDA ITEM 38

Population growth and economic development

REPORTS OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE (A/5354)  
AND OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/5375)

*Pursuant to rule 68 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss the reports of the Second Committee and of the Fifth Committee.*

1. The PRESIDENT: I will now ask Miss Sellers of Canada, the Rapporteur of the Second Committee, to present, in one intervention, the reports of that Committee on the agenda items which we are taking up.

2. Miss SELLERS (Canada), Rapporteur of the Second Committee: I shall be exceedingly brief. It would take a far better mind than mine to do justice to the nineteen draft resolutions which are presented to the plenary meeting of the General Assembly in the report [A/5344] now before representatives, which report represents the outcome of more than eighty meetings of the Second Committee at the seventeenth session of the Assembly. I shall only say this. The nineteen draft resolutions here recommended for adoption represent the Second Committee's views on the priority areas in which the United Nations can advance the economic development of its Member States: technical, pre-investment and capital assistance to developing countries; the training of skilled manpower and the equally necessary infrastructure of sound educational development; land reform measures to offset fluctuations in primary commodity prices; economic development and the conservation of nature; inflation and economic development; population growth and economic development; the adaptation of United Nations administrative framework to meet the increasing demands imposed on the Organization in the pursuit of economic development. All these are represented in the four reports now before the Assembly.

3. Ten of the nineteen draft resolutions recommended for adoption were approved unanimously in the Committee, but one was—if I may adopt the phrase—more unanimous than the others. The declaration on the conversion of the resources released by disarmament to peaceful needs was not only approved unanimously by the Second Committee without a vote; its passage was greeted by a spontaneous burst of applause.

4. The nineteen draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee for adoption by the Assembly represent the Committee's attempt to fulfil its share of the obligations imposed on the United Nations by Article 55 of the Charter.

5. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take up agenda items 12, 34, 35 (a) to (f), 37 and 84. The Second Committee has recommended thirteen draft resolutions on these items, which are contained in the Committee's report [A/5344]. We shall vote successively on each item, taking first draft resolution I.

*Draft resolution I was adopted by 78 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution II was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution III was adopted by 80 votes to 1.*

*Draft resolution IV was unanimously adopted.*

*Draft resolution V was unanimously adopted.*

6. The PRESIDENT: I would remind Members that draft resolution VI on agenda item 39 was adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December, at its 1194th meeting.

*Draft resolution VII was adopted by 80 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.*

7. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now vote on draft resolution VIII. Separate votes have been requested on operative paragraphs 3 and 5 (c).

*Paragraph 3 was adopted by 74 votes to 3, with 9 abstentions.*

*Paragraph 5 (c) was adopted by 79 votes to 4, with 8 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution VIII as a whole was adopted by 85 votes to none, with 12 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution IX was adopted by 85 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution X was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution XI was adopted by 82 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution XII was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution XIII was adopted unanimously.*

8. The PRESIDENT: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolutions on agenda items 12, 40, 41 and 78, which are annexed to the report of the Second Committee [A/5360 and Corr.1].

*Draft resolution I was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution II was adopted by 81 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution III was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution IV was adopted unanimously.*

9. The PRESIDENT: Before we take up draft resolution V, of which the financial implications are contained in the report of the Fifth Committee [A/5374], I invite the Assembly to turn its attention to the draft resolution by Bolivia and Niger [A/5360 and Corr.1, para. 27] which refers to "Operational, administrative and executive personnel"; this draft resolution was not discussed by the Second Committee. The Committee has recommended to the General Assembly that this draft resolution should be sent to the Economic and Social Council, at its resumed thirty-fourth session, for any appropriate action, including, *inter alia*, its transmittal to the Technical Assistance Committee. May I take it that the Assembly agrees to this procedure?

*It was so decided.*

*Draft resolution V was adopted by 81 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.*

10. The PRESIDENT: The Second Committee has unanimously recommended the adoption of the draft resolution contained in the Committee's report [A/5361].

*The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.*

11. The PRESIDENT: The Soviet Union has asked for the floor in explanation of his vote on agenda items 33 and 94.

12. Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): It was with deep

satisfaction that my delegation voted for the Declaration on the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament.

13. The unanimous adoption by the United Nations of this Declaration, which reflects primarily the proposals made by the Soviet Government for an economic programme for disarmament [A/5233], must unquestionably be regarded as a constructive action by the United Nations and a definite advance along the road to general and complete disarmament.

14. The effectiveness of any resolution or declaration adopted by the General Assembly depends, *inter alia*, on the extent to which the countries which voted for it are resolved to implement it and on whether they are prepared to carry out in full the obligations which they have assumed. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, our delegation is authorized to declare that our State and Government fully support the lofty and noble principles of this Declaration and that we are ready to exert every effort to bring about their practical implementation as rapidly as possible.

15. We wish we could believe that the other countries which supported this Declaration and voted for it were as sincere and determined in this matter as we are. My delegation hopes, in that connexion, that the Declaration's appeal to the Governments of all countries concerning the vital need for the prompt achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict international control will induce the delegations of the United States and the other Western Powers to support that objective, which is of the most fundamental and vital importance, in the Eighteen-Nation Committee at Geneva. A unanimous appeal by the United Nations cannot be permitted to remain just so many eloquent but futile words.

16. The Declaration which has just been adopted affects not only the so-called major Powers but all countries, whether great or small, industrially developed or economically less developed, since the achievement of disarmament will bring real, tangible benefits to all countries and peoples without exception.

17. It is, of course, not by chance that the Declaration recognizes, on behalf of the United Nations, that general and complete disarmament will benefit all countries and will lead to the improvement of economic and social conditions throughout the world. It follows from this—and my delegation considers it its duty to lay particular stress on this point—that all States must mobilize every effort to achieve a practical solution of the problem of disarmament, since the benefits referred to in the Declaration can be obtained only through general and complete disarmament.

18. Bringing disarmament nearer is our common concern, the sacred obligation of all peace-loving countries and peoples, and the first duty of the United Nations.

19. The Declaration which we have adopted is also important in that it provides a goal and a sense of purpose for all countries and peoples. Another point of great significance is that it was drafted jointly by the Soviet Union and the United States, that is to say, by the two great Powers which bear the greatest responsibility for the fate of the world.

20. It was, in fact, an awareness of this responsibility that prompted my delegation to join with the United States delegation, with a view to arriving at an

agreed decision, in preparing a draft declaration [A/5361, para. 9] in which the viewpoints of the various groups of countries are taken into account.

21. We hope, in this connexion, that the Soviet Union's constructive ideas for a basic economic programme for disarmament, which are reflected to some extent in the Declaration, will be taken into account in any further consideration of this question by United Nations bodies.

22. My delegation takes the adoption of this Declaration to mean that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Governments of Member States, in particular the Governments of the developing countries, will set about the study and formulation of specific plans and projects connected with the utilization for peaceful purposes of part of the funds and resources which will be released by disarmament.

23. We feel that the regional economic commissions, the specialized agencies and other appropriate United Nations organs can be of great assistance to them in this work.

24. Finally, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the Secretary-General of the United Nations has been invited to present to the General Assembly, at its next session, a report on this question in which account is taken of any relevant projects and proposals put forward by the Governments of economically under-developed countries. We trust that the Secretary-General will carry out in a creditable manner the important task entrusted to him by the General Assembly.

25. The PRESIDENT: We come now to agenda item 38. The financial implications are contained in the report of the Fifth Committee [A/5375]. A number of representatives have asked to make explanations of vote before voting.

26. Mr. AYARI (Tunisia): Before voting on the draft resolution on population growth and economic development [A/5354], I would like to state, for the last time, the meaning and the foundation of our draft resolution as an explanation of vote.

27. In her recent book Economic Philosophy, the famous economist Joan Robinson<sup>1/</sup> gives one of the best syntheses and exposés of the controversial problems which are raised by this question of population, and I would like to quote from this book. Mrs. Robinson states:

"The question of population raises much emotion and touches on such deeply rooted complexes that logic plays very little part in the discussion, and the above simple point is often overlooked or even denied.

"Orthodox Catholicism and orthodox Marxism agree in protesting that there is no such thing as a population problem, and it would be possible to understand the religious argument if it ran thus: the explosion of population now going on is causing great misery in very many lives and preventing very many from attaining modest comfort, but contraception is a sin. It is wrong to help others to commit sins, even if they are not Christians, and avoiding misery is no excuse.

"The Fascists advanced the thesis that with every mouth God sends a pair of hands. The conclusion is this: true enough, but He does not send a combine harvester."

<sup>1/</sup> Joan Robinson, Economic Philosophy, Chicago, Aldine, 1962.

During the long debate on this question in the Second Committee we endeavoured to explain why, as long as this pair of hands remain without any productive tools, without this combine harvester, it is likely that these new mouths will have to rely on charity to be fed.

28. An increasing population, indeed, might be a blessing and a continuous stimulus for demand and, thus, for investment and general welfare. We admit this, but we believe that there is no such thing as an optimum rate of population in general nor a permanent problem of population. We hope that we have clearly shown that we stand firmly behind those who disregard Malthus' prophecies as well as neo-Malthusian theories.

29. However, nobody is more aware than we are of the fact that it is the inadequate allocation of wealth and resources throughout the world, the accumulation of unused surpluses, the slow rate of accumulation of capital, the former, and still prevailing, colonial exploitation, which gives a dramatic significance to the rate of growth of the population of many developing countries.

30. Today, we know that no philanthropy nor stagnant state of affairs in the Western industrialized economies, nor even our terms of trade and conditions of exchange could be incentives to stimulate capital accumulation and to create new opportunities for the developing economies.

31. Yet, the traditional rules of the game have changed. International economic co-operation has given birth to new hopes for those countries which would have starved had the rule of maximum profit continued to be the only law for investment. Moreover, regional economic integration or association might also increase opportunities for investment in the developing nations. Yet, we are far from the objectives. We think it is our duty, as developing countries, to understand clearly that no miracle can happen by international or regional co-operation. The incentives provided by international or regional bodies are likely to disappear in a very short time if we continue to ignore the components of our internal weakness, if we try to hide our problems behind conventions which stand as obstacles in the way of our rapid development.

32. Today, I doubt that any responsible economist in Asia, Africa or Latin America could afford to treat population as one of those statistical data, one of those unchanging factors which imposes itself upon our action. No one could seriously do this.

33. In answering certain observations raised during the debate in the Second Committee, I had the opportunity to explain how twenty-five years of research and experience in the field of economic development have definitely established that the population variable is necessarily inside the model of growth, not outside; that no one could expect a steady and satisfactory rate of growth as long as the discrepancy between population growth and capital rate accumulation grows ever wider and wider. As long as the expected rate of investment and capital in our countries is far below the rate of increase of population, as long as we turn to the international Organization and to the individual countries which help us to emerge from our backwardness, it is logical that we should be given the right to explain our problem here and to try to find a solution to it in co-operation with all of you.

34. I appeal to those countries from the developing areas, and especially from Africa, to evaluate these arguments and to understand that neither the Scandinavian countries nor the African or Asian countries which are co-sponsoring this resolution are defending particular or selfish interests. We rather intend to bring to the attention of those who are helping us, at all levels, that we are fully aware of all our problems and that we intend to face them at any price. We cannot be blamed for our courage.

35. It is with this hope that I recommend that the resolution be adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

36. Mr. BERNARDO (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Since my delegation clearly established its position on this item during the debate in the Second Committee, we do not consider it necessary now to stress our view that the United Nations is not competent to deal with the item in the form and scope given it in the memorandum from the Swedish and Danish Governments<sup>2/</sup> requesting its inclusion in the agenda of the sixteenth regular session of the General Assembly.

37. The draft resolution submitted this year and the supporting statements by its sponsors definitely confirm the fact that what is involved is the introduction of birth control methods through the technical assistance services of the United Nations; this is incompatible with the neutral character of this Organization, not only because it poses religious, moral and political problems but also—and above all—because it appears to conflict with the conclusions of economic and demographic science, which show, as experts have repeatedly made clear, that population growth, far from being detrimental to economic development, actually promotes it.

38. The resolution adopted by the Committee would have represented a sound compromise if it had simply requested the Secretary-General to conduct an inquiry among Governments concerning the problems confronting them as a result of the reciprocal action of economic development and population changes and recommended that the Economic and Social Council should intensify its studies on the interrelationship of population growth and economic and social development. However, since there is also a recommendation that the Council should report on its findings to the General Assembly, it seemed obvious—and still seems so in our opinion—that the Assembly cannot and should not take any initiative or action whatsoever on this problem until the inquiry and studies have been completed and their results are available. To act otherwise would be to prejudge those results.

39. However, without awaiting the findings, the sponsors of the draft resolution have introduced into operative paragraph 6 the idea—purporting to represent the view of the Population Commission—that the United Nations should provide technical assistance in controlling population growth. Although the wording of the paragraph is vague and confused, the interpretation placed on it by its sponsors, particularly by the representative of Sweden in her statement before the Committee [874th meeting] at the end of the general debate, leaves no room for doubt concerning its purpose. Paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 on page 6 of the

<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 84, document A/4849.

Swedish representative's speech are particularly illuminating in that regard.

40. The apprehensions to which operative paragraph 6 gave rise in the Second Committee became apparent when a vote was taken on the four-Power amendment [A/5354, para. 6] calling for its deletion, which was rejected by only 32 votes to 30, with a large number of abstentions. The resolution as a whole was adopted by only 43 votes to 14, with 42 abstentions, which shows that a majority of the delegations did not share the views of its sponsors.

41. In our opinion, paragraph 6 of the draft resolution now before the Assembly is incompatible with the rest of that document and introduces an element of confusion which should be avoided in resolutions as important as this one. We agree with the representative of Lebanon, Mr. Hakim [874th meeting], that it is not for the General Assembly to endorse the views of a technical body composed of experts who are acting as individuals and not as representatives of Governments. Above all, however, we maintain that paragraph 6 does not reflect the views of the Population Commission as expressed at its eleventh regular session and that the scope and interpretation given that paragraph by the sponsors are entirely foreign and contrary to what is said in the report of the Commission.<sup>3/</sup> Indeed, the document on which the Swedish representative's statement was based is the draft report of the Population Commission,<sup>4/</sup> in paragraphs 12-16 of which the "objectives of the United Nations" are defined. There is no reference whatever in these paragraphs to technical assistance in the demographic field; that subject is considered separately in section VI of the report, which was circulated as addendum 2 to the original document.

42. During its discussions, the Commission also had before it the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5/</sup> in which the "objectives and accomplishments of the United Nations in the field of population" are summed up through the statements previously made in that regard by the members of the Commission.

43. In presenting this document at the 147th meeting, the Secretary of the Population Commission pointed out that one delegation in the General Assembly had challenged the approach taken by the United Nations in the field of population. At the same meeting, Mr. Benjamin, the United Kingdom representative, stated:

"In examining the world demographic situation and the data available to it, the Commission had to follow a somewhat delicate policy. It should refrain from imposing any strong suggestions as to Government policies. It should remain neutral in that regard ..."

Endorsing that view, Mr. Tsao, the representative of China, stated at the same meeting:

"... the Commission should maintain its neutrality with regard to Government demographic policies, bearing in mind the different religious, social and historical traditions of the various countries. The Commission could only encourage countries to take stock of their demographic problems and improve their knowledge of demographic trends."

44. Mr. Sauvy of France, Mr. Taichi of Japan and others concurred in this view. At the 148th meeting, Mr. Rodriguez Fabregat of Uruguay stated:

"A body such as the Population Commission ... should emphasize the fact that the solution was to improve economic conditions rather than to allow them to dictate what the size of the population should be. It should not be forgotten that the world was passing through a period of incredibly rapid development and change. In such a period, the Malthusian theories no longer held true. The new-born child should be regarded not as an extra mouth to feed, but as an additional mind and an additional pair of hands which could make a contribution to the progress of mankind. The answer to demographic pressures had to be sought in economic expansion; forecasting population of the world in twenty or forty years' time was an exercise *in vacuo* unless it was related to the growth of the economic potential. He was concerned over the statement in paragraph 12 of the Report of the Secretary-General<sup>6/</sup> that each Government must decide for itself whether or not any measures should be taken for the purpose of modifying the trends of population', because he was not in favour of any special measures designed to modify demographic trends."

45. This draft report was considered at the 158th and 159th meetings of the Population Commission. At the latter meeting, paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 were amended so as to eliminate anything that might commit the Commission to a particular view on the question of population growth. Paragraphs 12 to 14 were adopted without discussion, but paragraph 15 was the subject of two amendments, the second of which was proposed by Mr. Berg Nielsen of Norway, who observed at the 159th meeting that "it would be appropriate for the report to include a reference to the United Nations technical assistance programme in the field of population in the section on objectives as well as in the section on accomplishments".

46. The CHAIRMAN then suggested "that the Norwegian representative's proposals might be embodied in a sentence to the effect that technical assistance was a particularly appropriate means of achieving the objectives of the United Nations in the population field", and it was so agreed.

47. It will be noted that there is a wide gap between this background material and the text of paragraph 15 of the final report of the Population Commission, as well as between these documents and the way in which they are quoted and interpreted by the sponsors of the draft resolution now before us. In order to preserve the seriousness and accuracy that should characterize decisions of the Assembly, we feel that paragraph 6 of the resolution recommended by the Committee should be deleted. However, we are prepared, in a spirit of compromise, to accept any suggestion involving the deletion of at least the last part of the paragraph. We also feel that this is an important question, as the sponsors of the resolution have contended, and we shall support any request that it should be treated as such, in conformity with the decisions of the Assembly.

48. In the event that the Assembly decides, as we hope it will, to take a separate vote on paragraph 6, or on the last part of that paragraph—the part containing the misleading reference to United Nations

<sup>3/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 3.

<sup>4/</sup> E/CN.9/L.71.

<sup>5/</sup> E/CN.9/158 and Corr.1.

<sup>6/</sup> Ibid.



technical assistance for population projects—our delegation will vote against the paragraph or the part thereof, and if the result of the vote is unfavourable from our point of view, we shall, to our regret, be obliged to vote against the resolution as a whole.

49. Mr. VIAUD (France) (translated from French): I shall spare the General Assembly this evening a recital of our many objections to the draft resolution [A/5354] now before us, which we discussed in detail in the Second Committee.

50. The debates on this draft resolution have been long and difficult. My delegation joined with the delegations of Spain, Gabon, Lebanon, Liberia and Spain in submitting a series of amendments [A/5354, paras. 6 and 11], and I must say, in fairness to the sponsors of the original draft resolution [*ibid.*, para. 3], that all but one of these amendments were adopted; the sole exception, unfortunately, was the most important one of all: that which concerned operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution [*ibid.*, para. 9(f)]. We cannot accept paragraph 6 in its present form; to be more specific, we would like to delete its final part, in which it is suggested that the United Nations should give technical assistance, as requested by Governments, for national projects and programmes dealing with the problems of population.

51. Why are we opposed to the use of technical assistance funds to help Governments which wish to do so to control changes in their national population? A number of arguments can be put forward in support of our stand: the fact that technical assistance funds are limited, the fundamental objections which many Governments have to the utilization of their contributions for this purpose, and the existence of other technical assistance projects which are perhaps more urgent. I shall not dwell on these points, although for many of us they touch a special chord. I prefer this evening to draw your attention to the simple fact that in paragraph 3 of this very same draft resolution the General Assembly:

"Requests the Secretary-General to conduct an inquiry among the Governments of States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies concerning the particular problems confronting them as a result of the reciprocal action of economic development and population changes."

52. Similarly, in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly recommends that the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, in particular the Population Commission, should intensify their studies and research on population problems, taking into account the results of the inquiry to be conducted by the Secretary-General.

53. The purpose of all this preliminary work is to prepare a sound, objective basis for subsequent activities of the United Nations with regard to population problems. We ourselves called for these inquiries and related projects, but we feel that once the General Assembly decides to undertake them it should refrain from taking any decisions in as controversial a field as that of technical assistance in population matters. We think it should at least await the results of the inquiries and studies before embarking upon a course of action for which we do not at this time see sufficient justification.

54. Before it decides to allocate technical assistance funds for a purpose which is not yet generally approved,

our primary—I would even say our vital—concern is that the General Assembly should concentrate, this time, on the inquiries and studies which it regards as necessary. At the same time, however, we ask it most earnestly to defer taking a decision on this problem which does not appear to command the unanimous support of the General Assembly.

55. It is for this reason that we associate ourselves with the delegations which are asking for a separate vote on the final part of paragraph 6, starting with the words "and that the United Nations give technical assistance ...", so that we can take a separate decision on this passage without causing the rest of the draft resolution to suffer.

56. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) (translated from Spanish): Although I did not participate in the interesting discussion that took place in the Second Committee when this item was being considered, its intrinsic importance is so great, and—in the form in which it has been presented, at least as regards operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution—it raises such serious problems with respect to what we might call the competence and scrupulousness with which the General Assembly should consider these matters, that I have felt it my duty—my unavoidable duty—to present an explanation of my vote, as the representatives of Argentina and France have done.

57. I approach this item with the profound respect that must always be shown for the problems of life. Albert Schweitzer, the philosopher and philanthropist whom we all admire, has said that life is sacred. Life, is moreover, a great mystery, and all phenomena relating to its origin, development and manifestations must be treated with the utmost delicacy. This is not a matter of dogmatism, as some believe. It is simply a question of pondering the seriousness of the problem and the difficulties involved in solving it.

58. Every problem has an economic, a legal and a moral aspect. There are schools of thought that seek to simplify problems, reducing them to their simplest expression, in the belief that they are simply moral, simply religious, simply legalistic or, sadder yet, simply economic. Every human problem has these three aspects, and when the United Nations approaches such a problem it has no right to disregard any of its facets. This is not prejudice, sentimentality or religious dogmatism; it is pure logic, reflecting a consciousness of reality as a whole. In the name of logic and of an awareness of reality, we maintain that a resolution inspired by the very noble aim of examining the impact of population growth on economic development and that of economic development on population growth calls for thorough study, full analysis and exhaustive research. And such was the purpose of the draft resolution and the spirit which to some extent inspired it.

59. We do not know enough about these population problems. Many people believe that if the population is limited by mechanical means a better distribution of wealth will thereby be achieved. But are we certain that if the population is limited, wealth will not decrease? How can we plumb the mystery of those who might have lived but remained unborn? How can we be certain that they would not have brought with them a new message for mankind? Our greatest resource is the inventive power of man, and to this day no one has been able to solve the mystery of how that power is created. It appears in mysterious fashion, sometimes in an era of national decline. It appears at

moments of despair but often fails to appear at moments of hopefulness.

60. The phenomenon of life cannot be treated lightly. It is our duty to study the moral aspect of the problem. Do we know what moral consequences may flow from population control measures which assume that biological functions are performed without any responsibility, without regard for even the moral responsibility of procreation and the need to perpetuate the species?

61. Do we know what effect a wide-spread tendency to interfere with the normal genetic processes through so-called population control measures would have on the very spirit of future generations? Is it necessary to recall the example of Rome and of other great empires which declined spiritually and hence in culture and productivity? Is it necessary to recall here that cultural development is indissolubly linked with economic activity? I do not wish to cast aspersions on any people, past or present. Every personality is sacred. However, historians are well aware that attempts to assume responsibility for the genetic processes have brought about the collapse of civilizations.

62. Thus, in the face of a problem of this kind it would be absurd to rely solely on superficial studies of mathematical charts showing production and population growth. There is something here that goes much deeper and that must be studied.

63. That is why, as the representatives of France and Argentina have very appropriately recalled, the Committee's draft resolution refers to the forthcoming World Population Conference and Asian Population Conference and states that they "might throw new light on the importance of this problem". In other words, the sponsors of the draft resolution are themselves aware that the problem has to be studied in a new light.

64. And what is the meaning of the other paragraph suggesting that the Secretariat should encourage and assist Governments in undertaking exhaustive studies of the population problem? Operative paragraph 3 reads as follows:

"Requests the Secretary-General to conduct an inquiry among the Governments of States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies concerning the particular problems confronting them as a result of the reciprocal action of economic development and population changes."

65. And so, without even awaiting the results of this inquiry, are we to adopt in an oblique, indirect manner, indeed almost by stealth, an extremely serious decision to extend United Nations technical assistance to projects with which we are not acquainted and for which we are not in a position to assume responsibility?

66. Finally, it is recommended that the Economic and Social Council should report to the General Assembly. Yet, we are about to take a drastic step before that report is submitted!

67. I appeal to the General Assembly. My age and the years I have devoted to serving the United Nations may provide an excuse for the passion, whose warmth makes it no less sincere, honourable and just, with which I am participating in this debate.

68. Until the Secretary-General submits his reports and conducts his inquiries, until the Economic and

Social Council submits its report, until we have the results of the World Population Conference, how can we possibly decide that technical assistance should be provided to Governments? Why should the United Nations commit itself indirectly? Why should it sign a blank cheque and give an implicit, roundabout indirect endorsement in the last part of an operative paragraph?

69. The United Nations may at times make mistakes in resolutions dealing with economic matters. It may arrive at political compromises which are perhaps not very laudable. However, the United Nations must respect the moral objections which every Government is fully entitled to raise. Any Government may take any measure that it pleases in the exercise of its sovereignty and on its own responsibility, but no Government has the right to involve another Government in a policy which is mistaken, false, ill-conceived or contrary to the conscience or to the interests of that other Government or to the responsible character and august reputation of the United Nations. What is at stake, then, is more than a mere paragraph in a resolution.

70. Accordingly, my delegation, associating itself with the statements of the French and Argentine delegations, emphatically maintains that the final part of operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution brings about a radical change in the spirit and even the letter of the draft resolution and is a matter of far-reaching importance, since it implies United Nations endorsement of measures with which we are not acquainted and which we have not studied. At the same time, my delegation requests a separate vote on this part of the draft resolution. I should like to point out that strict application of the rules of procedure requires a two-thirds majority for its retention. My delegation hereby states that if this provision is retained it will find itself in the unhappy position of having to vote against the resolution.

71. I appeal to all countries which wish to retain their national personality—and a country's personality comprises not only its political sovereignty but also its culture, its traditions and its outlook on life—not to vote for a provision which compromises the honour and responsible character of the United Nations General Assembly.

72. The PRESIDENT: The delegation of France has asked for a separate vote on the latter part of operative paragraph 6; which states:

"... and that the United Nations give technical assistance as requested by Governments, for national projects and programmes dealing with the problems of population;"

and the representative of Peru has proposed that this be regarded as an important question.

73. Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon): After the eloquent statements we have heard from the representative of Peru, I think I do not need to argue long in proposing that this question be considered an important question under rule 87 of the rules of procedure. Rule 87 states:

"Decisions of the General Assembly on questions other than those provided for in rule 85, including the determination of additional categories of questions to be decided by a two-thirds majority, shall be made by a majority of the Members present and voting."

74. Rule 85 gives a list of questions on which decisions shall be made by a two-thirds majority. However, under rule 87 the Assembly may decide by a simple majority that any question before it is an important one and requires a two-thirds majority. Already the representative of Argentina and, just before I spoke, the representative of Peru have asked that this question should be considered an important question. Not only do I agree with them, but I should like to give the reasons why my delegation also believes that this question of population growth and economic development should be considered by the General Assembly as an important one.

75. I recognize the fact that, usually, questions relating to economic matters are not so considered and, in any case, the problem does not arise because most of the draft resolutions are approved unanimously in Committee and again unanimously in plenary session. Even in those cases where unanimity does not exist, the majority is so overwhelming that the question does not arise whether a simple majority or a two-thirds majority is required. But in this particular instance we have heard how important the relationship between population growth and economic development is and what important aspects of life it involves. It involves moral, cultural and fundamental questions in the life of peoples. We have to recognize that many people have very deep convictions regarding this question of control of population growth, on the limitation of births and on family planning. This matter relates to some of the most fundamental aspects of human life and, in our opinion, it must be considered an important question under our rules of procedure.

76. Of course, the draft resolution before us [A/5354] mentions certain studies to be made, but it does make important pronouncements about the very fundamental relationship that exists between population growth and economic development. In particular, paragraph 6 contains a proposal to endorse the view of the Population Commission that the United Nations should give technical assistance as requested by Governments for national projects and programmes dealing with the problems of population. I think that this view which, to my mind, is not substantiated, nor has it been investigated with adequate thoroughness, is a most important view on which the Assembly cannot pronounce itself without getting involved in matters of great significance for Governments and peoples all over the world. In fact, if the United Nations were to put itself on record as favouring technical assistance for projects and programmes leading to the limitation of populations, of births, and of the size of families, it would be risking its prestige in a matter which is a most serious one for peoples of many cultures and of different parts of the world.

77. In this connexion I would add that at the sixteenth session [1084th meeting] the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Mongi Slim, made a ruling that the question of population growth was an important question which required a two-thirds majority. I am not asking for a ruling from you, Mr. President; I am simply asking that you put to the vote this proposal and that the Assembly decide by a simple majority, under rule 87, that the question before us is an important question requiring a two-thirds majority.

78. Mr. MALM (Sweden): The draft resolution concerning the item "Population growth and economic development" which is now before the Assembly [A/5354] was adopted by the Second Committee after a full

debate in which many delegations explained their views on the subject. The draft resolution is the result of sincere efforts to arrive at a compromise which would be acceptable to the General Assembly. During the discussions in the Committee, the sponsors accepted several amendments. The final text was adopted by a substantial majority after a number of separate votes had been taken. As the Swedish delegation sees it, the text is now quite well balanced. It would be unfortunate to disfigure it by the exclusion of any paragraph.

79. Operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution endorses a statement by the Population Commission concerning the interests and objectives of the United Nations in the field of population. This statement is included in the report of the eleventh session of the Commission and constitutes, according to paragraph 14 of the report, a summing up of the views of the Commission in this respect. No doubt should exist regarding the validity of official reports by organs of the United Nations. I should like to repeat here that, according to the opinion of the original sponsors of the draft resolution, neither operative paragraph 6, nor any other paragraph, creates any collective responsibilities—moral, financial or other—for States Members which are not interested in the subject matter of these paragraphs.

80. On behalf of the original sponsors of the draft resolution, I wish to oppose the motion to apply the two-thirds majority rule to the item. We have always been of the opinion that the population question is important, in the same manner as other questions concerning economic development which are dealt with in the Second Committee are important. However, Second Committee items are not enumerated in Article 18, paragraph 2, of the United Nations Charter as questions on which decisions shall be taken by a two-thirds majority. It is true that the Assembly may, according to Article 18, paragraph 3, decide that additional questions require a two-thirds majority. Such decisions have been taken by the General Assembly mainly concerning items which had important political aspects. On 14 December 1962 [1193rd meeting] the Assembly took the exceptional step of deciding that a two-thirds majority was required for a Second Committee item, namely, the question of permanent sovereignty over natural resources. Here, however, the Assembly was called upon to adopt a declaration on far-reaching principles of international co-operation, a declaration with important legal and political aspects. The item on population growth and economic development has no such aspects; it merely brings to a focus certain aspects of those development problems which are normally the subject of discussions in the Second Committee. My delegation would consider it anomalous and an unfortunate precedent if the Assembly were to decide that the two-thirds majority rule should be applied in this case.

81. It is, I must say, somewhat surprising, also, that the proposal to apply the two-thirds majority rule has been presented here by the representatives of Argentina, Peru and Lebanon. Their delegations were among those who, during last year's Assembly, considered that the population item was not an important question, even on the agenda of the Second Committee. Thus, it seems impossible to accept the suggestion that the population item is of such an extraordinary nature that it must be singled out from other development questions and be subject to the two-thirds majority rule.



82. Consequently, my delegation will vote against the proposal of the representatives of Peru, Argentina and Lebanon.

83. Mr. MALHOTRA (Nepal): The issue before us is certainly important. As a matter of fact, in our view, it deals with one aspect, perhaps one of the most important aspects, of the whole problem of economic and social development of the under-developed countries: namely, the question of the rate of their economic and social development in relation to their rates of population growth.

84. This question is one with which the United Nations, in particular, and the whole United Nations family, has been concerned over the past number of years, and with which, indeed, it will be concerned for several years to come. The whole problem of the economic and social development of developing countries has assumed greater significance in this decade of development, particularly in view of the fact that the General Assembly set the target, at its sixteenth session, that each developing country should achieve a 5 per cent per annum rate of growth in its national income [resolution 1710 (XVI)]. It is exactly in relationship to this concept of this desirable and minimum rate of growth that the question of the interrelationship of the rates of population growth in a given country, with respect to the rate of its economic and social growth, assumes greatest significance strictly in an economic sense. This is exactly the issue with which the draft resolution of the Second Committee, now before the Assembly [A/5354], deals.

85. It is only appropriate that, after having decided upon the minimum desirable rate of growth that each developing country should achieve at the end of the present decade, the Assembly should give closer examination to the whole question of the rate of growth in the per caput income in each developing country—a question that can hardly be discussed without reference to the rate of population growth in the given developing country.

86. It is, therefore, certainly a very important question. But that is not the reason why the representative of Argentina, and others who have opposed the draft resolution, have asked for a two-thirds majority vote for adoption of the draft resolution by the Assembly. It is their preoccupation with matters that, in our view, are extraneous to the purpose and intent of the draft resolution that impels us to oppose their motion for a vote by two-thirds majority.

87. We oppose their motion on the basis of a simple argument which, we hope, will appeal to every objective mind here. It is this: issues that are decided in the Assembly by a simple majority are not necessarily unimportant issues; and issues of economic development are certainly very important issues, particularly to developing countries like my own; and these issues have normally been decided on by a simple majority vote. We do not see any reason why the particular draft resolution before us should be regarded as different from all those that have preceded it and should require a two-thirds majority vote.

88. My delegation sincerely hopes that representatives will maintain the same objectivity about the true purpose of the draft resolution and will not let extraneous factors enter into their judgement of its intrinsic merits or demerits, even when they are voting on procedural issues regarding the adoption of the draft resolution by the Assembly.

89. The draft resolution now before us has been recommended by the Second Committee and certainly no longer belongs to the original sponsors. But in so far as attempts have been made here to sow—if I may use the term—seeds of doubt in the Assembly about its intent and purpose, may I, as one of the original sponsors of the draft resolution, say here that it means exactly what it says: namely, it is directed towards a more intensive study and analysis of the interrelationship between population growth and economic development. This phrase occurs and recurs throughout the text of the draft resolution, and, indeed, nowhere in the text has population growth been mentioned in isolation from its significance in relation to the broader issue of economic and social developments of the developing countries. It is this broader aspect that is at issue here, and not the isolated issue of population growth. Put differently, the aspect of population growth that is brought before us in the draft resolution is only the economic aspect.

90. The representative of Peru has rightly said in his statement that which my own delegation has always said in the Second Committee, that the question of population growth, like indeed any other question, has several aspects—among them legal, political and moral—besides economic and social aspects. But in the draft resolution, it is only with the economic and social aspects that we are concerned. The consequences that may follow from a study of the economic and social aspects of the population growth may, indeed, again have moral, political, and several other aspects. But that should really be the concern of the Government, which, alone, will have to be the sole judge of what action to undertake, or what conclusions to draw, from the results of the studies referred to and sought in the draft resolution.

91. May I humbly submit, it is not for us here to decide what action Governments should undertake on the basis of objective demographic studies made by the United Nations. It is for the Governments concerned to do so, and the draft resolution makes it very clear, in its fourth and eighth preambular paragraphs, and again in operative paragraph 6, to which so much objection has been raised.

92. Why should we prejudice the issues or consequences before studies have been undertaken, again, at the specific request of Governments concerned, as has been envisaged in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution? My delegation is a bit dismayed that certain delegations have chosen to read into operative paragraph 6 approval for measures for birth control and so forth.

93. Although I can speak for my delegation only, may I assure the delegations concerned, and the Assembly in general, that the original co-sponsors of the draft resolution, including my own delegation, have not approached the issue of the interrelationship between population growth and economic and social development in any preconceived manner, and sincerely felt that this prerogative for each country, in the context of its own culture, religion and its stage of economic development, should rest with the Government of the country concerned, and that the Assembly should not attempt to read into the draft resolution that which the co-sponsors did not intend to mean in the first place.

94. I hope, the Assembly, in its collective and objective wisdom, will keep this uppermost in mind

while voting on the procedural issue before us, as well as the substance of the draft resolution itself.

95. The President: We shall now proceed to the vote. The first question I shall put to the vote is the proposal that this be declared an important question. A roll-call vote has been requested.

*A vote was taken by roll-call.*

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

*In favour:* Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Netherlands, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Rwanda, Senegal, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo (Leopoldville), Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Israel, Italy.

*Against:* Jordan, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia, Algeria, Ceylon, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Iceland, Iraq.

*Abstaining:* Laos, Mexico, Mongolia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Poland, Romania, Tanganyika, Thailand, Togo, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Ethiopia, Federation of Malaya, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Japan.

*The proposal was adopted by 42 votes to 26, with 32 abstentions.*

96. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has therefore declared that this is an important question, requiring a two-thirds majority.

97. We shall now proceed to the vote on the draft resolution [A/5354]. The delegation of France has asked for a separate vote on the last part of operative paragraph 6, that is, the following words: "and that the United Nations give technical assistance, as requested by Governments, for national projects and programmes dealing with the problems of population". I shall now put those words to the vote. A roll-call vote has been requested.

*A vote was taken by roll-call.*

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

*In favour:* Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Upper Volta, Yugoslavia, Algeria, Australia, Burundi, Ceylon, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Federation of Malaya, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Iceland, India, Iraq, Japan, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sweden.

*Against:* Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo (Leopoldville), Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Liberia,

Luxembourg, Madagascar, Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Senegal, Spain.

*Abstaining:* Togo, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Afghanistan, Albania, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Canada, Cuba, Ethiopia, Haiti, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Laos, Mexico, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanganyika.

*The result of the vote was 34 votes in favour, 34 against, with 32 abstentions.*

*The words were not adopted.*

98. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now decide upon operative paragraph 6 in its new form, that is to say, paragraph 6, stopping at the word "problems". Is there any objection to the adoption of that paragraph?

*The paragraph was adopted.*

99. The PRESIDENT: I will now put to the vote the draft resolution [A/5354] as a whole, with the amendment that the Assembly has just adopted.

*The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by 69 votes to none, with 27 abstentions.*

100. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote.

101. Mr. KLUTZNICK (United States of America): The United States delegation wishes to explain its vote on operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution. In our opinion, operative paragraph 6 does not add to, or subtract from, the authority which the United Nations already possesses as a result of resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council concerning the granting of technical assistance upon request to Member States. In our view, the paragraph is therefore superfluous.

102. While the United States believes that the authority to lend technical assistance in all aspects of population problems already exists, we also believe that assistance by the United Nations should emphasize those three areas in which there appears to be broad agreement among Members, namely, the encouraging and assisting of Member Governments to obtain factual information on the demographic aspects of their economic and social development, the training of nationals of Members for demographic work, and the promotion of full and responsible discussion of population problems.

103. It was in the light of these considerations that the United States decided to abstain on the separate vote on the phrase "and that the United Nations give technical assistance, as requested by Governments, for national projects and programmes dealing with the problems of population".

104. The United States voted for the resolution as a whole, because of the importance we attach to the relation between population growth and economic development, and because we regard the resolution as broadly consistent with the views of the United States as put forward by my colleague, Mr. Richard Gardner, during our intervention in the general debate in the Second Committee [869th meeting].

105. The United States welcomes the approval of this resolution. The discussions and the final vote, we believe, constitute the clearest kind of mandate for

the Secretariat, and the other organs of the United Nations system to proceed with vigour to a further exploration of population growth and its relation to economic and social development. This had been our hope and our aim in the interest of progress in this vital area.

106. Mr. CUBILLOS (Chile) (translated from Spanish): In voting for the draft resolution on population growth and economic development, my delegation was mindful of the need to press forward more rapidly with world-wide studies of the possible influence of accelerated population growth on the economic development of the developing countries.

107. While we are not unaware of the studies being conducted by various competent bodies, we feel that they should be speeded up through the United Nations and the specialized agencies, acting in conjunction with the regional economic commissions.

108. Our favourable vote in no sense means that in agreeing to these studies we are prejudging the advisability or inadvisability of any particular population policy. The text of the resolution seemed clear to us, and its contents raised no questions in our minds.

109. We feel that the proposed studies will shed new light on the influence of high population growth rates in countries with limited material resources and a slow rate of economic development. These studies should be analysed by States, so that they can make such comments and take such measures and decisions as each one deems appropriate in its particular case.

110. I repeat, then, that we have had no difficulty in voting for the resolution just adopted, since its basic purpose is to call for studies of the interrelationship of population growth and economic development.

111. Mr. TCHEN (China) (translated from French): My delegation voted for the draft resolution which has just been submitted to us because its primary purpose is to promote studies on the reciprocal action on population growth and economic development.

112. Population growth is currently a matter of concern throughout the world, and we are of course anxious to ensure the continuation of the research work already begun. Hence, we greet with satisfaction the decision just taken by the Assembly.

113. I should like to point out, however, that my delegation voted against the last part of paragraph 6—and

indeed, if a vote had been taken on paragraph 6 as a whole, we would have voted against its retention—because, as some representatives have already noted, this paragraph seems to prejudge the results of the studies and research recommended by the General Assembly.

114. Mr. BUTTI (Iraq): The delegation of the Republic of Iraq voted in favour of the resolution on population growth and economic development. My delegation wishes to congratulate the sponsors of the resolution, particularly the delegation of Sweden, on their efforts in bringing this important matter before the United Nations.

115. My delegation views the question of population growth as one of the utmost importance. We particularly wanted to draw the attention of representatives to the fact that, among the causes of population expansion which may yield dangerous results, is the abnormal method of expanding or enlarging the population of any country or, on the other hand, of shrinking the population. One of these methods is that referred to by Mrs. Lindstrom, the representative of Sweden, and I should like to refer to the speech which she made in introducing the draft resolution which the Assembly has just adopted in which she said that the removals of large national groups to other countries may give rise to ethnical, political and emotional and economic difficulties [see A/5354, para. 10]. My delegation suggested to the sponsors of the draft resolution that they include this statement in the resolution, which they kindly did, with the word "economic" added to the sentence as suggested by my delegation.

116. My delegation is confident that the resolution, which has just been adopted by the General Assembly, will be of great value in our attempt to solve the problems of population growth. We hope that this resolution will contribute to a solution of some of the problems of the world. In addition, it is a fact that the removal of national groups from one country and forcing them to live in other countries gives rise, in most cases, to colossal problems. There have been such cases in the contemporary history of the world, and it is therefore highly significant that the General Assembly has recognized the problems which arise from such abnormal methods in the population expansion or in the shrinking of the population of any country.

*The meeting rose at 11 p.m.*