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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 50:</i>	
<i>Draft Declaration on Social Development</i>	
<i>(continued)</i>	
<i>General debate (continued)</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Award of the Nobel Literature Prize to</i>	
<i>Mr. Yasunari Kawabata</i>	<i>4</i>

Chairman: Mr. Erik NETTEL (Austria).

AGENDA ITEM 50

Draft Declaration on Social Development (*continued*)
(A/7161, A/7203, chap. X, sect. A; A/7235)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. KALANGALI (Uganda) said that the inequality between developed and developing countries with respect to social conditions must be abolished, and the Committee's task was to formulate guidelines for States to use in promoting economic and social development. The principles and objectives set out respectively in parts I and II of the draft Declaration on Social Development (A/7161, annex I) should constitute the model, particularly for the developed countries, for action to do away with all differences between States in the social field.

2. Although he supported all the ideas set out in part II of the draft, he considered that an important point had been omitted, namely, protection against arbitrary dismissal from employment without any indication of the reasons.

3. The text of the document was the result of arduous debate over a period of years, and the Committee should concentrate its efforts on finding possible ways of improving the text, instead of criticizing its content. Similarly, steps should be taken to adopt the legislative measures needed to ensure that the guiding principles in the draft would be faithfully applied.

4. Miss CAO-PINNA (Italy) emphasized the importance of the draft Declaration on Social Development, and the complexity of the subject, and said that the Committee had viewed the task assigned to it not as a mere statement of principles, but as the formulation of a document of practical value that would provide guidance on the measures to be adopted in that field. However, a comparison of the original aim of the draft, as proposed by the Argentine delegation,^{1/} with the

text under consideration showed that the draft had gone far beyond that aim and had included a whole series of political questions that impaired the effectiveness of the Declaration by converting it into a political instrument, which naturally jeopardized its unanimous adoption. Similarly, the political colouring of the draft Declaration might have the effect of alienating those directly engaged in the field of social development, with the result that it would lose its value as a practical guide for action. In addition, since insufficient attention was given to the development process, the text did not represent any new step in the formulation of a sound social development policy.

5. The structure of the draft Declaration followed that of Economic and Social Council resolution 1139 (XLI), which meant that some problems were referred to in several parts of the document and that it was difficult to bring out the characteristics of the development process, the importance of social research, and the part that social research could play in constructive action. The Declaration would be stronger if the exclusively political clauses were deleted; it would then be possible to include others of a more clearly social nature on such questions as the difference between the needs in the developed and developing areas, the importance of investment in the social field, the function of the State and of private enterprise, and many other subjects. Obviously, however, such points could not be considered unless some other clauses were deleted, since the draft Declaration as it stood had sixty-nine paragraphs.

6. Once the need to amend the draft was acknowledged, there arose the problem of how to limit the number of amendments, if the Declaration was to be adopted at the current session. Since that would conflict with the need to improve the document as she had suggested, perhaps it would be preferable to ask the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development to prepare a new text in the light of the comments made by the Committee, for submission to the Commission for Social Development at its twentieth session and, after approval by the Commission, to the Committee for Development Planning.

7. In conclusion, she said that her delegation agreed on the need to co-ordinate the work being done on the charter of development and the draft Declaration on Social Development, and in that connexion she asked whether it would be possible to have a statement by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Second Committee concerning the Second Committee's debate on the United Nations Development Decade.

8. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the list of speakers should be closed.

It was so agreed.

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes, agenda item 54, document A/C.3/L.1419.

9. Mrs. CONDE (Guinea) thought that the draft Declaration under consideration could perform the same kind of service for the economic and social advancement of peoples as had been rendered in the field of human rights by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Her delegation was in favour of the draft being adopted at the current session.

10. Social progress in the developing countries depended on a radical revolution that would change social structures and bring about, *inter alia*, the full emancipation of women, compulsory education of the young, and the abolition of adult illiteracy—in other words, the vigorous participation of all segments of society in the country's activities. In that respect, the draft Declaration was an essential element as a factor for progress to improve living conditions in the developing countries.

11. Mr. OSHODI (Nigeria) felt that the draft Declaration before the Committee was a well-balanced document setting forth in great detail the principles and objectives of social development.

12. The principle of the right of peoples to self-determination and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States were firmly established in international law, and his delegation was glad that they had been included in the draft Declaration, which stated that those principles were a fundamental condition of social as well as economic and cultural progress. Consequently, the developing countries could not stand idly by while those principles were violated in Namibia, Southern Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique, to the detriment of world economic and social progress and in contravention of the spirit of the United Nations Charter.

13. His delegation whole-heartedly supported the draft Declaration prepared by the Commission for Social Development (A/7161, annex I), and was ready to agree to any amendments that could improve it.

14. Mrs. PRIKHODKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) stressed the importance of the draft under consideration, which would make an effective contribution to the removal of injustice and to social peace in the world. It would be a direct appeal to the conscience of mankind on behalf of the right of all men to social and economic advancement, with due regard to national sovereignty and human rights.

15. Clearly, some serious problems still existed in the field of social development, relating to such questions as illiteracy, the rights of women, the education of the young, the abolition of poverty and the satisfaction of various kinds of need, and the principles embodied in the draft Declaration could provide the basis for efforts to solve them. Social progress must be founded upon the resources of the community, as was proved by the success achieved in that field by the socialist countries.

16. Although her delegation found the draft Declaration satisfactory as a whole, it was prepared to agree to any amendments that would improve the text. However, it would oppose any amendment that was contrary to the principles and objectives of the document, such as one proposing the deletion of the

reference to colonialism, which was an obstacle to social progress and a denial of justice.

17. Paragraphs 9 and 10 of part II of the draft Declaration deserved special attention. In connexion with paragraph 9, she noted that during the past decade measures had been adopted in the Ukrainian SSR to aid mothers and children, including medical attention during pregnancy and up to one year after confinement; those measures had helped appreciably to safeguard the health of women and children. As to paragraph 10, no one could be indifferent to the problems of young people, who represented the future of the community. The education of youth was a part of social progress in general, and it should be designed to promote friendship among peoples. In that connexion, it was essential that children should learn from an early age to respect their neighbours and not to remain unmoved by the fact that their brothers in other countries went hungry or had no schools, since those who understood the needs of others were more willing to help to meet those needs.

18. Lady GAITSKELL (United Kingdom) said that it was no easy task to draw up any instrument relating to the broad field of social development. While she considered the requirements suggested for an ideal declaration which were to be found in the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/7203, para. 339) too ambitious, any declaration should be a torch that could shed light on the path to be followed. The principles and objectives outlined in it should therefore be attainable in the foreseeable future; it should be drafted in concise and unambiguous terms, it should not include provisions which had been stated elsewhere, and it should have a timeless quality. Only then would it serve to improve international co-operation and understanding. Unfortunately, despite the hard work which had gone into its preparation, the draft Declaration under consideration was sadly lacking in those qualities. As the USSR representative had rightly said, all United Nations instruments were inevitably compromise documents. Nevertheless, a declaration must spark the imagination if it was to fulfil its intention, and compromises did not produce that effect. Her delegation supported the proposal for a declaration on social development; however, before it could support the document under consideration without qualification, it would be obliged to make a number of comments designed to eliminate repetition and clumsy wording and remedy defects of more basic importance.

19. Although the present United Kingdom Government felt keenly about social development, the Declaration could not have the same urgency for a developed country like the United Kingdom as it had for developing countries, since it was the needs of the latter countries that the document was drawing to the attention of Governments and of the specialized agencies of the United Nations working in the economic and social fields, while at the same time stimulating reforms within those countries themselves. The effectiveness of the Declaration in that regard would depend on its being universally acceptable—in other words, on its being adopted unanimously.

20. Mr. ERMACORA (Austria) acknowledged that the draft Declaration was not perfect but said he

believed that its principles and objectives were clear enough to merit general acceptance and support. It filled a gap in the work of the United Nations, since there was no other instrument of its kind on the subject of social development and, it could represent in that sphere what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights represented in the sphere of human rights. Nevertheless, the Declaration must bring out more clearly the link between human rights and social development, which was only hinted at in paragraph 12 of part II, since social development was undoubtedly an essential prerequisite for the exercise of human rights. Similarly, some of the means and methods described in part III were not applicable to all States—a fact which detracted from the universality of the instrument. His delegation thought that work on the draft Declaration on Social Development should be completed at the current session of the General Assembly, so that the Declaration could be a contribution to the International Year for Human Rights.

21. Mr. SAINT-REMY (Belgium) said that the Declaration represented a worthy effort to lay the foundations for a common social development policy. However, if it was to be of practical use to Governments, it should shun all precepts whose inclusion in a document on social development was not fully justified. In addition, if it was to be adopted unanimously, it should adhere strictly to its true objective. It would thus be seen that the value and impressiveness of the Declaration could be enhanced by certain drafting changes.

22. Mr. LI (China) said he was convinced that the primary aim of social development was the social progress and well-being of the human person, which were often neglected in the economic development process. Although economic development and social progress were interdependent, it was nevertheless true that economic development was only a means to achieve the final goal of the well-being of the individual. In that regard, it was vitally important that social development programmes should be implemented by peaceful means and that fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person should be respected at all times. His delegation was generally in agreement with the draft Declaration, which largely reflected those considerations.

23. Mr. SHERZOY (Afghanistan) emphasized the universal importance of social progress and better standards of life, which all countries had undertaken to promote in the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations. In addition, by stimulating social development, the Declaration would promote international co-operation in the economic, cultural and humanitarian fields, in accordance with the spirit of Article 1 (3) of the Charter. It would also be an expression of support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with particular reference to the provisions of article 25 concerning the right to an adequate standard of living.

24. Many international conferences had discussed human rights in general, and particularly their observance in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and technical fields, with a view to promoting social development. However, that endeavour was beset with a variety of difficulties in the developing countries,

owing to the economic and social conditions prevailing there. Similarly, a study of the draft revealed that there was an imbalance between economic development and social progress, the causes of which varied from country to country, depending on their social and economic situation. For some, the cause might be over-population; for others, the inadequacy of the national income. Despite the efforts exerted by many countries, the progress made in social development was far from satisfactory, because of the lack of co-ordination between technical assistance projects in the social field and the priority needs of the developing countries.

25. In addition, the rivalry between the big Powers with regard to armaments of every kind and the policy of apartheid were forcing the small countries to strengthen their defensive capacity. If the more prosperous countries devoted a small percentage of their arms budget to assistance to the developing countries, in a spirit of humanitarian co-operation and with no political strings attached, social development would be an easier task.

26. His delegation was sure that any shortcomings in the draft Declaration would be remedied in a spirit of co-operation and not of criticism, since the document had been prepared by a distinguished group. For its part, it agreed with the draft which was before the Committee and hoped that it would come into force as soon as possible.

27. Mrs. PICKER (United States of America) expressed the hope that the instrument under consideration would serve to bring out even more clearly the vital importance of social development in the context of national planning and assist the plans for the second United Nations development decade.

28. The aim of the Declaration was to channel international co-operation and national efforts into the promotion of social development. Objectives had to be set the ways and means of attaining them suggested. In addition, the Declaration should be concisely worded and generally applicable, so that it could be used by all Member States, and should not reflect the views or interests of only one country or group of countries.

29. The ultimate objective of the Declaration was the human person. The Declaration should therefore point the way to the achievement of ever higher levels of living and more opportunities for each individual to develop his skills to the maximum so that he could make his personal contribution to society and receive in exchange all the benefits which society offered him.

30. Her delegation attached importance to certain points contained in the Declaration. Part I concerning principles was devoted to the individual and the family. Part III concerning means and methods brought out the need to plan social development in the context of national development. Reference was also made to the need to mobilize human resources, to promote popular participation, and to the need for integrated planning to meet the problems of urbanization.

31. On the other hand there were some paragraphs which her delegation considered inappropriate and others which could be strengthened. In keeping with

the spirit of compromise in the Commission for Social Development, her delegation had not objected to those paragraphs.

32. However, the adoption of paragraph 27 of part III had shattered the mood of hard work and compromise for a common goal. That paragraph 27 introduced into the Declaration a completely extraneous concept, namely, that aggression and illegal occupation of territory would require compensation. Her delegation could not see what relationship that concept bore to the process of social development. The best procedure would be to delete the paragraph. However, if the Committee wished to retain the paragraph, her delegation was prepared to work with other delegations to improve the wording. Agreement on language for paragraph 27 was essential if the Declaration was to command general acceptance.

33. Although her delegation was prepared to consider any amendments that might be submitted, it felt that the Committee should try not to duplicate the work already done elsewhere.

Award of the Nobel Literature Prize to
Mr. Yasunari Kawabata

34. The CHAIRMAN, following a statement by Mrs. PICKER (United States), asked the Japanese delegation, on behalf of the Committee, to convey its congratulations to Mr. Yasunari Kawabata on the occasion of the award to him of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

35. Mrs. OGATA (Japan) thanked the Chairman, the United States representative and the Committee as a whole.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.