

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TENTH SESSION

Official Records



THIRD COMMITTEE, 680th

MEETING

**Friday, 2 December 1955,
at 3.30 p.m.**

New York

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Chairman: Mr. Omar LOUTFI (Egypt).

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters V and VI) (A/2943, A/C.3/577, A/C.3/L.500) (*continued*)

1. Mr. BOERSMA (Netherlands) said that for the past two years his delegation had been advocating in various United Nations organs a better balance between the United Nations field activities in the economic sphere and those in the social sphere. Economic and social development were not two different problems, but two aspects of the same problem. His delegation welcomed the interest shown by the Economic and Social Council in the social aspect.
2. In view of the many social activities that devolved upon the specialized agencies, the responsibility of the United Nations itself in the social field was limited, and it should therefore be expected to do satisfactory work within that field, in social welfare for instance. Some Government requests for aid could be met under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, but the remainder had to be dealt with by the United Nations advisory social welfare services. It was therefore important that those services should be in a position to supply the aid requested of them.
3. The sum of \$768,500 set aside by the Secretary-General for advisory social welfare services in his annual budget, under General Assembly resolution 418 (V), was no longer adequate. The Netherlands delegation therefore welcomed the recommendation made in Council resolution 585 G (XX) for a significant increase in the allocations for those services, and was glad that the Secretary-General had been able to increase the appropriation to \$1 million, which should be adequate. It was to be hoped that in the programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies a proper balance would be struck between social welfare and economic activities.
4. Finally, he expressed the hope that the draft resolution (A/C.3/L.500), of which the Netherlands was one of the sponsors, would be adopted unanimously.
5. Mr. ZDANOWSKY (Poland) regretted that in its resolution 585 H (XX) the Council had done no more than repeat the well-known fact that the reduction of armaments and the improvement of social conditions were closely linked. It should have appealed to the

major Powers to reduce their armaments, so as to make the reduction of expenditure in that field available for raising living standards. However, the first part of the resolution was an improvement on past resolutions.

6. The *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1)¹ mentioned in resolution 585 H (XX), which had been carried out by the Secretariat in co-operation with various specialized agencies, should have provided full and accurate information concerning the various programmes; but it failed to do so. On the contrary, the economic and social conditions of the capitalist countries were reported in the most favourable light, while the achievements of countries with socialist economies were belittled or ignored.

7. A few examples would prove the point. A Polish programme of private house construction in the Stalinograd industrial district was described in some detail in chapter IV of the *Survey*, whereas the State building programme was given only a few lines, despite the fact that 652,000 houses had been built under State auspices between 1950 and 1954. The nursery schools of Poland were not mentioned in the chapter on education programmes, although they were most efficiently operated, whereas considerable space was given to the nursery schools of other countries. No mention was made of Poland or the other peoples' democracies in the section on out-of-school education, although there were correspondence and radio courses at university level in Poland. In the chapter on labour programmes there was no mention of the comprehensive insurance schemes and labour inspection systems organized by the Polish workers themselves, nor of the fact that Polish women workers received equal pay for equal work. Finally, the section on the social plans and programmes of the countries of Eastern Europe distorted the facts: it suggested that the main purpose of such programmes was to increase industrial production, whereas the increase in industrial production was only a means to improve living standards, not an end in itself. He expressed the hope that the implementation of parts II and III of resolution 585 H (XX) would enable the Secretariat to produce a more satisfactory *Survey*.

8. His delegation strongly objected to paragraph 3 of Council resolution 590 B (XX), suspending all United Nations work in the field of maternal and child welfare. It could not be argued that there was not enough money available: maternal and child welfare was an item on which economy was out of the question.

9. Mr. LUCIO (Mexico) said that his Government attached the greatest importance to the chapter on the world social situation in the report of the Economic

¹ United Nations Publication, Sale No.: 1955.IV.8.

and Social Council (A/2943) and to Council resolution 585 (XX), notably parts C, E and H. The resolution laid down the purposes to be aimed at and the measures for achieving them, and it answered the wishes of the under-developed countries, in particular, which were striving to raise their living standards.

10. The importance that Mexico attached to community development and housing was demonstrated by the Government programmes in those fields. At the ninth session of the General Assembly Mr. Lucio had stated that there were 49 rural welfare centres and related social welfare services in Mexico, serving 400,000 people.² There were now 103 centres, serving 304 rural communities with a total population of 1,700,000. Furthermore, there were 4,260 welfare committees, which were doing excellent work in fostering social solidarity and co-operation.

11. A National Housing Institute had been set up, with the status of a ministry, to co-ordinate the activities of the various housing bodies, both public and private. It had been given an adequate budget and was responsible for the planning of all housing construction throughout Mexico.

12. He paid a tribute to the work of UNICEF and welcomed the programme of UNICEF activities, to which Mexico had contributed \$150,000 for 1955. Two new UNICEF programmes were under way in Mexico, a milk-drying plant and a malaria-eradication campaign. The latter project would take five years to complete and would cost about \$21 million, of which \$12,500,000 was being contributed by the Mexican Government.

13. Referring to chapter VI of the report (A/2943), he said that Mexico was deeply interested in all activities connected with the status of women. Mexico defended political rights for women and other measures aimed at putting women on an equal footing with men not merely for sentimental reasons, but also because women were essential to the country's progress. In the elections of July 1955, in which women had participated for the first time, nearly half the voters had been women. The President of Mexico had paid a special tribute to their sense of civic responsibility.

14. Mr. HAKIM TABIBI (Afghanistan), speaking with reference to paragraphs 605 and 606 of the report (A/2943), said that his country deeply regretted the fact that it had been unable to send a representative to the United Nations Opium Conference held in June 1953. Afghanistan qualified as an authorized opium exporter under article 6 of the United Nations Opium Protocol of 1953 (E/NT/8) signed at that Conference. Opium was produced in only three provinces of Afghanistan, one of which was so poor in other natural resources and had such an adverse climate that the cultivation of opium was essential to the livelihood of its population. The best opium in the world, with a morphine content of 17 per cent, was produced in Badakshan, and most of the inhabitants of that province derived their sole cash income from the sale of opium to the Government. The Government had authorized opium production in Badakshan because of the quality of the opium and because control was easy owing to the small size and geographical characteristics of the region. The sale of opium was entirely under Government control. Furthermore, a commission had recently

been established to draft stringent regulations for the control of illicit traffic and of the cultivation of the opium poppy.

15. If Afghanistan failed to obtain United Nations authorization to export opium, the consequences for the precarious economic balance of Badakshan would be serious. When the Government had prohibited poppy cultivation in 1945, the resulting crisis had been so grave that it had been obliged to rescind its decision.

16. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had given the Afghan case a sympathetic hearing at its tenth session, and had advised the Government of Afghanistan to follow the procedures specified in article 22 of the Protocol. It had also recommended that the case should be considered at the Commission's eleventh session. The modification of the Protocol desired by Afghanistan would be discussed in connexion with the single convention. The Economic and Social Council had already shown its sympathy with the position of Afghanistan; he expressed the hope that the Third Committee would take the same attitude. The accession of Afghanistan to the Protocol would strengthen the control of the international opium trade; and in view of their small volume, Afghan opium exports could not upset the balance of the world opium market.

17. Mrs. QUAN (Guatemala) said that the Council's report (A/2943) was one of the most important items on the Committee's agenda, being an account of the most dynamic and positive work of the United Nations. She hoped that at the next session the Committee would take it up at an earlier stage, so that the discussion would not be hampered by lack of time.

18. During the year under review the Council had worked in an atmosphere of optimism well justified by its achievements. Its ten years of experience had enabled it to chart its future course with a firm sense of social responsibility. She echoed the Council's hope that, in the near future, funds currently spent on armaments would be devoted to making the world a better place to live in. She believed that the strong sense of human solidarity which was developing in the United Nations would soon come to be shared by all peoples and would become an active factor in their daily lives.

19. Turning to chapter V of the report, she welcomed the publication of the *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1), a study of great practical value for governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with such programmes. She felt justified in hoping that the next study on the subject would be even better, in that it would devote more attention to such problems as those of peoples undergoing rapid transition through the process of urbanization.

20. Her delegation, representing a country which was making a valiant effort to hasten its economic and social development, deeply appreciated the work of the United Nations in the field of community development and the work of the Economic and Social Council in co-ordinating community development programmes. The application of the principle of self-help in connexion with such programmes helped communities to discover their own potentialities and to make the best use of their resources.

21. So far as housing was concerned, the Committee should support the Council's request to the Secretary-General to convene regional meetings of experts to

² Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Third Committee, 588th meeting.

³ United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 1953.XI.6.

consider methods of financing housing, with special emphasis on housing for low-income families.

22. The shortage of social welfare personnel was world-wide, but it made itself felt with particular force in countries where social work training schools were only a recent development. She therefore agreed with the Council that a high priority should be given to the training of social workers.

23. The Council's work in the social field had made the United Nations a world centre of social research, operated for the benefit of all peoples.

24. Economic and Social Council resolution 585 D (XX), on the training of welfare personnel, dealt with a matter which, in her view, called for study and co-operation on a regional basis. In Central America, for example, social work training schools were unable to cope with the demand for social workers; that was a problem which could be solved by a regional approach under the auspices and with the assistance of the United Nations.

25. In its resolution 585 G (XX) the Council had asked for an increase in allocations for the programme of advisory social welfare services; the Third Committee should urge the Fifth Committee to approve the request.

26. The great services performed by UNICEF were known to all the world. She wished in particular to commend it for the high priority it had given to anti-malaria programmes. It was about to launch an anti-malaria campaign in Mexico and Central America; there again the regional approach was a guarantee of success. Guatemala was grateful to UNICEF for all it had done for the country's greatest treasure its children.

27. Turning to chapter VI of the report (A/2943), Mrs. Quan said that now that a programme of advisory services in the field of human rights had been established, seminars should be organized to inform women of the work of the United Nations, in particular that of the Commission on the Status of Women, with regard to women's rights.

28. The praiseworthy work which was being carried out by the Council and the specialized agencies in social matters was arousing a new sense of social responsibility in Governments and authorities directly concerned with social welfare programmes; but it was not sufficiently well known to the general public. She therefore suggested that the Secretariat should make an effort to give the social achievements of the United Nations the greatest possible publicity.

29. Mrs. LORD (United States of America) congratulated the Secretariat on its comprehensive and excellent *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1). The report reflected the progress that was being made in all the countries which had co-operated with the Secretary-General by providing information.

30. The United States Government was working with other Governments, such as those of the United Kingdom, France and Canada, to bring about agreement on measures for the reduction of armaments without any sacrifice of security. She was pleased to see that the initiative taken by the United States on the basis of President Eisenhower's suggestion in 1953 that part of the savings resulting from disarmament should be devoted to the development of the under-developed countries was gaining increasing acceptance.

31. Turning to chapters V and VI of the Council's report (A/2943), she stressed the importance of the principle of self-help in connexion with community development. She herself had seen that principle applied with notable success in India, the Philippines and other Asian countries.

32. Her Government had always taken the greatest interest in the work of UNICEF; she was pleased to note the recent expansion of its activities, and hoped that its anti-malaria campaign in Latin America would meet with success. She had also seen the important work of UNICEF in midwifery, BCG-inoculation, and the combating of trachoma and yaws in Thailand, Pakistan, Burma and other countries.

33. The World Population Conference held in Rome in 1954 had led to a useful exchange of views, and the papers presented had been of a very high quality.

34. With regard to international narcotics control, it was gratifying that further progress had been made on the single convention, which would make enforcement more systematic and the information received more complete. Illicit traffic in narcotic drugs was still an important problem, and continuing co-operation among law-enforcement officers was required for its elimination. The representative of Afghanistan had expressed his Government's wish to be authorized to export opium under the United Nations Opium Protocol of 1953 (E/NT/8); she noted that that question had been placed on the agenda of the eleventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and she hoped the Commission would be able to give it full consideration.

35. She noted with interest that two significant studies on the prevention of discrimination were in progress, and supported the suggestions of the Commission on Human Rights for improving the *Yearbook on Human Rights* (A/2943, para. 662).

36. In the field of freedom of information, she welcomed the fact that the technical assistance programme now included advisory services in the field of freedom of information and that the Council had urged the abolition of all censorship of outgoing news dispatches (Council resolution 574 B (XIX)). The censorship of news and the deliberate setting up of barriers to the free flow of information, such as the jamming of foreign radio broadcasts, were among the main causes of international tension and mistrust. President Eisenhower had raised that problem at Geneva, but unfortunately, it had not yet been solved.

37. She paid a tribute to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, particularly in connexion with political rights and economic equality for women. Women the world over were following the Commission's work with keen interest and looked to it for guidance.

38. In conclusion, she said that the Council deserved thanks for the important part it had played in promoting the economic and social progress of all peoples in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy.

39. Mr. ROY (Haiti) associated himself with the many tributes which had been paid to the Council and to the Secretariat's *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1). He hoped that that study, which would be of great help both to Governments and to non-governmental organizations, would be widely disseminated. He commended the Committee of Experts for its report on

the *International Definition and Measurement of Standards and Levels of Living* (E/CN.3/179-E/CN.5/299).⁴ As the report was not final and research on the subject would be continued, he hoped that more attention would be given to the examination of the levels of living of various groups of the population of specific countries and to the comparison of those levels at different periods.

40. With reference to the two reports by the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/303 and E/CN.5/307), he said he supported the Social Commission's comments and recommendations (see A/2943, paras. 460 to 469).

41. He was pleased to note that the Council had approved (Council resolution 585 D (XX)) the Commission's decision to give high priority to the question of social work training, for the shortage of trained staff was a great obstacle to the execution of social programmes in under-developed countries.

42. Year after year, the United Nations had been doing increasingly important work in social matters, work outstanding for its co-ordination and balance. That was amply shown by the Council's report (A/2943). Indeed, his sole criticism of the Council was that the latter, contrary to the recommendations of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and of the Commission on Human Rights, had requested the Sub-Commission to place certain limitations on its proposed study on discrimination in connexion with emigration, immigration and travel, limitations which, in the Council's own words, "implicitly excluded immigration from the scope of this study" (Economic and Social Council resolution 586 B (XX)). Both in his personal capacity as a member of the Sub-Commission and on behalf of his delegation, he greatly deplored the Council's decision on that point.

43. Miss RADIC (Yugoslavia) remarked that the debate on the world social situation at the Council's twentieth session had shown that discussion at the international level was the best and surest way of solving social problems. Great progress had been made in social policies in recent years; it had come to be generally recognized that individuals enjoyed social rights, which had to be implemented by the State. However, such social problems as housing, community development and labour relations could not be solved by the State alone; they depended also on the co-operation of those whose welfare was involved. The surest guarantee of success was the people's awakening to the awareness of how much depended on their own efforts.

44. The United Nations had played an important part in shaping the new concept of social policy. Its latest study, *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1), was a contribution of great practical as well as scientific value. The resolutions adopted by the Council at its twentieth session showed that in the years to come the United Nations would undertake even broader measures in the social field. Nevertheless, she did not believe it should play a predominant part in the solution of social problems, since that role should be reserved to the various States. Her own country was striving to solve its social problems not merely by legislation but by arousing the interest of the people and enlisting their active co-operation.

45. The United Nations and its specialized agencies had adopted the proper course — that of co-operation and systematic and long-range planning in social matters. In that respect, she welcomed the Council's resolution 585 C (XX) on the principles of community development, which stressed those very points. Resolution 585 G (XX), on advisory social welfare services, of which her delegation had been one of the sponsors, recommended an increased allocation. The nearly unanimous adoption of that resolution was the best proof of its importance, and she hoped that the recommendation contained in it would be approved by the General Assembly at the current session.

46. Studies should be made of the economic, financial and social aspects of such problems as the financing of housing and community improvement programmes, and they should be debated by the Council; only in that way could those complex matters be dealt with comprehensively.

47. Her delegation had been represented on the Commission on the Status of Women, and it felt that the Commission had done much valuable work in studying the various forms of discrimination against women. All the Commission's resolutions had been endorsed by the Council. The groundwork had thus been prepared for the attainment by women of full rights in every field of human endeavour; and it was for the individual countries to implement the measures suggested.

48. The activities of UNICEF offered the finest example of international co-operation in history, and every effort should be made to ensure the financial stability of the Fund. Yugoslavia would always give UNICEF its full support in that respect.

49. Lastly, her delegation warmly supported the request made at the current meeting by the Afghan representative.

50. Mrs. LOPEZ (Colombia) said that her country attached particular importance to the section of the Council's report (A/2943) dealing with UNICEF. The prestige of the Fund was very high in Colombia, where UNICEF had done excellent work on nutrition and communicable diseases. A malaria-eradication campaign was under study, and it was hoped that the approval of UNICEF and the World Health Organization would be obtained by September 1956.

51. The increase in Colombia's contribution to UNICEF was an indication of its support for that organization. In 1951, it had contributed a few sacks of coffee, but in 1954 its contribution had amounted to \$100,000. The contribution earmarked for 1956 was \$250,000 the largest ever made by a Latin American country to the Fund.

52. Remarkable progress had also been made, as the Dominican representative had pointed out, in the field of the status of women.

53. She fully supported the joint draft resolution (A/C.3/L.500).

54. Mrs. KRUTIKOVA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) agreed with the Soviet and Polish representatives' criticisms of the *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1), which, while it represented one of the first attempts to describe social trends in various countries with a view to the exchange of experience, was one-sided and therefore unsatisfactory. The purpose of the *Survey*, as stated in the preface to it, had been to help Governments to become more familiar with the social

⁴ United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 1954.IV.5.

policies of others and thereby to suggest ideas and methods that they might wish to consider for application to their own social problems; however, the *Survey* ignored the experience of the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies, which had been highly successful in dealing with important social problems. The Ukrainian people had amassed a wealth of social and cultural experience which might well be useful in the field of international co-operation.

55. For example, social insurance in the Ukrainian SSR covered a wide variety of forms of social security and cultural and social services. Workers and employees were insured against sickness and disability; they received benefits in the event of the illness of a member of their family and in the event of quarantine; they were granted pensions for old age, disability and retirement; and provision was made for sanatorium treatment, the organization of leisure and other benefits. The maternity and child welfare system was established on a scientific basis, and all pregnant women workers were entitled to special leave under the social security system. All women were given qualified medical assistance in pregnancy and childbirth, and special allowances were paid to mothers of large families and unmarried mothers. Social security was financed entirely from the State budget; workers paid no contributions, and all the benefits they received were supplementary to their earnings.

56. The great achievements of the Ukrainian SSR in public health had also been ignored in the *Survey*. Every citizen of the Republic was entitled to free, easily accessible and qualified medical assistance, and an extensive system of medical establishments had been developed. In 1954 alone, 4,500 million roubles had been spent on public health. In the same year, there had been 2,175 maternity and child welfare clinics, 366 sanatoria with 41,618 beds, kindergartens for 181,500 children between the ages of three and seven years, and permanent children's nurseries for over 120,000. In 1953, 586,000 children and adolescents had spent the summer in children's sanatoria, in pioneer camps and on tours of various kinds.

57. Great strides had been made in the Ukraine in education. Illiteracy had been completely abolished and universal free seven-year schooling had been established. Considerable advances were being made in ten-year schooling. There were now about 30,000 schools, admitting 6,500,000 pupils, in the Republic.

58. Those data, and more detailed information on Ukrainian methods of dealing with various social and cultural problems, would have been of interest to other countries and there seemed to be no grounds for their omission from the *International Survey*.

59. Turning to paragraph 475 of the Council's report (A/2943), she said she agreed with the Polish representative that it was wrong to suspend action on so important a subject as the welfare and protection of the family, and particularly of mothers and children.

60. She drew attention to Economic and Social Council resolution 585 H (XX), on the world social situation, especially to the statement that the reduction of expenditure on armaments would permit an increase in the resources available for the improvement of social conditions and would at the same time establish a climate favourable for the expansion of international co-operation in the social and economic fields. It was well known that the armaments race laid a heavy burden on the workers, and reduced the funds avail-

able for social and cultural needs. The Council should have noted that fact long ago, and should have recommended a reduction of expenditure on armaments. Resolution 585 H (XX) was merely a first step; it was to be hoped that the Council would continue its efforts in the same direction. The Soviet Union, in which the expenditure on social and cultural needs greatly exceeded the expenditure on defence, would actively support any recommendation by the Economic and Social Council along the lines indicated, in accordance with its peace-loving policy of promoting the relaxation of international tension.

61. With regard to the question of international narcotics control, dealt with in chapter V, section V, of the report, the Ukrainian SSR supported the idea of the proposed single convention on narcotic drugs and hoped that that instrument would soon be prepared. With regard to paragraph 605, concerning Afghanistan's request to be authorized as an opium-producing country, the Ukrainian delegation had been impressed by the Afghan representative's statement on the subject, and hoped that the request would be granted.

62. Mr. BIHIN (Belgium) considered that the Council's report (A/2943) showed a greater awareness of the fact that economic questions should not be allowed to overshadow questions of social development; a satisfactory balance seemed to have been established between the two factors, and it had come to be understood that the ultimate purpose of economic action should be to achieve social well-being.

63. The Council was always faced by two dangers, that of undertaking to do too much and that of doing work which to some extent duplicated that of the specialized agencies. It was conscious of those dangers, and seemed to have taken steps to avoid them. Thus, better methods were being sought, co-ordination was being improved, priorities were being studied more carefully and programmes were being planned more practically. For example, the Council had for the first time considered the reports of all the specialized agencies together, with a view to co-ordinating their programmes with those of the United Nations; in that connexion, the assistance of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination had been invaluable. On the level of planning and execution, co-ordination had been extended to the national activities of the countries receiving international assistance.

64. The fact that the world social situation was being dealt with for the first time as a separate item on the Council's agenda was a significant indication of the stress laid on the social aspects of the Council's work. The *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development* (E/CN.5/301/Rev.1), which was complementary to the *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation* (E/CN.5/267/Rev.1)⁵, was a valuable document, providing an improved comparison of the methods used in various countries.

65. Concerning the work of the first United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in September 1955, which the Council had not yet examined, he said that the subject required thorough study but had not been given the high priority necessary. The Belgian delegation hoped that the important work which the United Nations had taken over from the International Penal and

⁵ United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 1952.IV.11.

Penitentiary Commission would be pursued, and that the transfer of activities would not lead to any relaxation of effort.

66. The section on UNICEF showed that the Fund had undertaken more work, was helping more children and had expanded its programmes without a great deal more expenditure. The administrative and operational methods used by UNICEF and its successful co-ordination with the Technical Assistance Administration, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations were exemplary. Its liaison work had been further improved by the establishment of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF, in which fifty-one non-governmental organizations were represented. Another reason for the successful operation of UNICEF was its judicious choice of activities; by realizing its limitations it had been able to achieve most of the objectives it had set itself. It should also be noted that thanks to the appeals made by UNICEF the beneficiary countries were contributing \$1.95 to every dollar of United Nations funds spent on UNICEF projects.

67. The World Population Conference, organized under the auspices of the United Nations in close co-operation with specialized agencies, was a good example of the part that was being played by the United Nations in important but unspectacular work. The Conference had dealt with complex demographic, economic, social and legal problems, but its work could not be regarded as academic since it was guided by practical needs. In the race between the improvement of living conditions and the increase in the world population, the former must win; effective economic planning was impossible unless international organizations and States had accurate population statistics.

68. He had confined his statement to a few items of the Council's work in order to bring out the improvements that had been made in methods and co-ordination. It was to be hoped that those improvements would be continued and extended to other aspects of social activities.

69. He would support the joint draft resolution (A/C.3/L.500) concerning stateless persons.

70. Mrs. SAYERS (United Kingdom) regretted that the Committee's preoccupation with other subjects had left it so little time to consider the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/2943), a report which gave delegations the opportunity to express their views on many spheres of activity falling within the Committee's competence.

71. The work of UNICEF was outstanding among those activities. It was refreshing, after debates on hotly contested issues, to turn to an operation which had earned the unanimous approval of all Member States. The Fund had been one of the best ambassadors of good will for the United Nations, not only in the beneficiary countries but wherever people felt frustration at the Organization's political difficulties. The Fund was giving valuable assistance in over ninety countries and territories, and all Member States could justly take pride in its achievements.

72. The United Kingdom delegation considered that the twentieth session of the Council had been a particularly successful one. An agenda item on the world social situation had been included for the first time for some years, and consideration had thus been given

to the report of the Social Commission⁶ and to the many activities of the Secretariat's Bureau of Social Affairs. The United Kingdom Government was particularly interested in community development, which offered a highly important basis for economic and social development in many parts of the world where rural communities were apt to be neglected in favour of large industrial groupings. The United Kingdom had made considerable progress with regard to community development in the territories under its administration, and would co-operate in 1956 with the United Nations survey mission which was to visit countries in Africa, including territories under British administration, in order to make a survey of community development schemes. The report on that survey should prove useful to countries faced with similar problems.

73. She drew attention to the many activities of the Commission on the Status of Women, stressing the importance of the drafting of the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, and paid a tribute to the efficient and harmonious way in which the Commission carried out its work.

74. The work carried out by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in co-operation with the Drug Supervisory Body and the Permanent Central Opium Board, deserved the highest praise. Since, despite the efforts of national and international authorities, the traffic in narcotic drugs seemed to be on the increase, it was clearly the duty of all Governments to take effective action to abolish the traffic, and to co-operate fully with international bodies to that end. It was therefore important that all Governments should accede to the various narcotics treaties and that they should make every effort to submit prompt and accurate reports on the production and consumption of drugs. In that connexion, she expressed her delegation's sympathy with the special problem described by the Afghan representative.

75. With regard to human rights, the United Kingdom delegation was particularly interested in the question of the suppression of slavery and the slave-trade, a cause which the Government and people of the United Kingdom had for many years had very much at heart. The abolition of slavery had been a concern of the international community since 1814, when measures against the slave-trade had been included in an international treaty for the first time. An important step in the struggle against slavery had been the conclusion of the International Slavery Convention of 1926, which remained the principal foundation of international work on the subject. However, that convention dealt with slavery in the classical sense of the word, that is, chattel slavery, and although that still existed in some parts of the world and must be suppressed, there were other forms of servitude, such as debt bondage, serfdom and child marriage, which in many cases had effects similar to slavery but which were more difficult to define. She urged all Governments which had not yet done so to accede to the 1926 Convention, in order to stamp out the anachronism of chattel slavery, but stressed the need for a supplementary convention to cover other forms of servitude. The Council had considered the problem in the light of the report prepared by Mr. Engen of

⁶ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twentieth Session, Supplement No. 9.*

Norway⁷ and of comments by Governments (E/2679 and Add.1 to 4) on a draft convention submitted by the United Kingdom,⁸ and had set up a committee of ten countries to prepare a final draft (Council resolution 564 (XIX)). It was to be hoped that the Council would approve the supplementary convention in 1956 and would submit it to the eleventh session of the General Assembly.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Nineteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 8, document E/2673 and Add.1 to 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Seventeenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 15, document E/2540/Add.4.

76. With regard to the joint draft resolution (A/C.3/L.500), she pointed out that the United Kingdom delegation had taken an active part in the conference which had drafted and opened for signature the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (E/CONF.17/5). Her Government fully supported the humanitarian aims of the Convention, and hoped to be able to ratify it in the near future. She would therefore support the joint draft resolution, and hoped that the Convention would be acceptable to a large number of States.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.