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Chairman: Mr. Erik NETTEL (Austria).

AGENDA ITEM 62

International Year for Human Rights (continued)
(A/7194, A/7195, A/7195/Add.1 and Add.3-8, A/CONF.32/41, A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.1 and 2, A/C.3/L.1637/Rev.2, A/C.3/L.1638/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/C.3/L.1639, A/C.3/L.1640/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1641/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1642/Rev.2, A/C.3/L.1651):

(a) Measures and activities undertaken in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights: report of the Secretary-General;

(b) International Conference on Human Rights

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/L.1635/REV.2 (continued)

1. Miss CAO-PINNA (Italy) drew attention to changes in her delegation's draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2).

2. Mr. ABDULGANI (Indonesia) welcomed the proposal made in the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) to encourage instruction in schools concerning the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since the Universal Declaration had been adopted, however, the United Nations had drawn up many other declarations, including the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, the Declaration on Territorial Asylum and the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which were concrete steps towards implementing all the provisions of the Universal Declaration. Accordingly, teaching of the ideals of the United Nations, with particular reference to the Universal Declaration, should also embrace all subsequent declarations, and especially the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, because the world was today witnessing a collective violation of collective human rights.

3. He agreed with the view that knowledge of the United Nations and its efforts in the field of human rights was absolutely necessary in order to achieve the kind of world that was desirable, but it should not be thought that mere familiarity with the basic structure and documents would be enough to attain that goal. The inculcation into the minds of the young of the ideals of human brotherhood could not be left to the school alone; the example set by both parents and teachers was vital if children were to have experience of those values. But even more vital was the example set by countries and Governments, whose reactionary policies sometimes endangered peace, justice, brotherhood and human rights.

4. Due regard should also be paid to adult education and efforts should be made to bring about a more constructive approach by the mass media and to encourage religious institutions to take a universal rather than parochial approach to brotherhood.

5. Another point that must be stressed was what the United Nations could and could not be expected to do, because one of the most common fallacies in the popular conception of the Organization was that its efforts to secure peace and prosperity were a failure because it had not succeeded in achieving perfection.

6. In conclusion, he said that he fully supported the draft resolution submitted by the Italian delegation.

7. Mr. GRADZIUK (Poland) said that in general draft resolution A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2 contained sound provisions which were acceptable to his delegation. It would be preferable, however, not to make too rigid recommendations about the academic level at which such education was to be given, because needs differed in that respect from one country to another. On that point he agreed with the comments made by the representative of the United Arab Republic. In addition, he considered that the request made in the draft resolution should not be restricted to States Members of the United Nations, but should be addressed to States of all kinds and would therefore suggest that the Italian representative should revise her proposal accordingly.

8. Mrs. ESHEL (Israel) said that the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) was a most appropriate follow-up to the activities undertaken in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights. The need to inculcate the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter at an early stage in

education was obvious from all standpoints, and she therefore considered it advisable that such education should be given at the primary level. The draft resolution, however, did not ask Member States to report on the measures they took and she would therefore appeal to the Italian representative to revise her proposal along those lines, so that each country could benefit from the experience of others. Finally, she asked about the meaning of the term "international organization", which appeared in both the preamble and operative part of the draft resolution.

9. Mrs. AFNAN (Iraq) said that her delegation had difficulty with the fourth preambular paragraph of the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2), because the first stage of education differed from one country to another. She therefore considered it preferable to refer instead to the earliest stage of education. She fully supported the idea stated in the fifth preambular paragraph, but considered the meaning of the words "international organization" vague, because it appeared from operative paragraph 1 (a) that they referred to an entity other than the United Nations. With regard to the addition to the curricula of primary and secondary schools proposed in paragraph 1 (b), she considered that the question was a highly technical one and would more appropriately be considered by UNESCO. On the other hand, she thought the invitation made to teachers in that sub-paragraph an excellent idea and if the sub-paragraph was put to a vote as a whole she would ask for a separate vote on the first phrase.

10. As regards operative paragraph 2, she considered that the request made in it should be addressed solely to States. They could then transmit it to the competent authorities of private scholastic institutions.

11. Operative paragraph 3 was unnecessary in her opinion, because UNESCO already knew quite well how to deal with the matter.

12. As for operative paragraph 4, she did not see what assistance UNDP or UNIDO could provide in achieving the objectives of the draft resolution.

13. The draft resolution was acceptable in principle, but it should be remembered that education in human rights would be all in vain if the country in which the pupils lived launched aggressive wars against neighbouring countries, occupied parts of their territory and violated the human rights of their people.

14. Mr. NASINOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he was not too enthusiastic about the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) and did not see how it had been brought into agenda item 62, when item 90 (Need to impart to the teaching staff of primary and secondary schools a knowledge of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, with particular reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) already dealt with the subject. He would not, however, raise a procedural issue.

15. As regards the substance of the proposal, the idea of spreading the ideals of the United Nations among youth was certainly worth considering, and such instruction was already given in educational institutions in his country. But he considered it wholly inadvisable for any kind of political subject to be studied at the primary stage. It would be quite

wrong to overburden the studies of children who were learning the rudiments of literacy with such complex matters as human rights. He therefore thought that the reference to primary schools should be deleted from the draft resolution.

16. With regard to the third preambular paragraph, he again wished to stress that there was no justification from the educational standpoint for teaching such subjects in primary school and wondered whether there were in fact any States where such instruction was given at the primary stage. The same objection applied to the next preambular paragraph, for it would be absurd to try and make children of five or six understand the principles of international organization.

17. His delegation agreed with the many comments made on the text by the representative of the United Arab Republic. In particular, operative paragraph 1 expressly placed an obligation on States Members of the United Nations and thus discriminated against States which were not. In addition, the effect of sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) would be to increase the number of subjects studied in schools, with the result that each subject would get less attention. Asking what "regular study" meant in sub-paragraph (a), he noted that the sub-paragraph only mentioned the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and paid no attention to other documents that were no less important, such as General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenants on Human Rights, which were the foundation for the United Nations' work in the field. As for sub-paragraph (b), the expression "progressive instruction" was too vague and it was not clear whether the subject in question was to be taught separately or together with other items in the curriculum.

18. He agreed with the representative of Iraq that it was unnecessary to refer expressly to private scholastic institutions in operative paragraph 2 and that in operative paragraph 3 it was not proper to give instructions to UNESCO in its own special field. He also thought it inappropriate to refer to UNDP and UNIDO in operative paragraph 4.

19. His delegation would thus find it impossible to support the draft resolution unless considerable improvements were made in it.

20. Mr. KALANGALI (Uganda) felt that the general principles underlying the text submitted by Italy (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) had already been embodied, in a more appropriate form, in resolution XX of the International Conference on Human Rights, and particularly in operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 of that resolution. Operative paragraph 1 of the Italian draft resolution requested States to perform a very broad task without fixing any order of priority. The text appeared to suggest that teachers were unaware of United Nations questions and its documentation and that it was necessary to establish special institutes for training them in such matters. Furthermore, it was not clear at what age children should begin to study them. Nor did the sponsor appear to be aware that, before complex international subjects were added to the curriculum, children should be instructed in their own national values.

21. The present formulation of operative paragraph 1 (b), which was vague, would require States to revise their curricula and perhaps to withdraw teachers from schools in order to train them in United Nations subjects. That would involve particularly serious difficulties for the developing countries which were already faced with a shortage of teachers.

22. Finally, it seemed undesirable to adopt a draft resolution which would be almost impossible to carry out and whose implementation would be difficult to verify.

23. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syria) said that, although important changes would have to be made in the proposed text, he was in complete agreement with the final aim of the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2), namely, to disseminate throughout the world understanding and respect for the high ideals of the United Nations Charter and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. His delegation, which came from an area where a large-scale violation of human rights was being perpetrated felt it essential to inculcate in young people, particularly in that area, the conviction that they possessed inalienable rights, including self-determination and freedom of teaching, in accordance with the Charter and the Universal Declaration. At the same time, they should be told why the United Nations was unable to take more effective action in cases of violations of human rights or failure to implement its resolutions, as in the Middle East and in southern Africa. They should also be told which States were defying the Organization and its principles and what international bodies had been condemned for their anti-social conduct.

24. Mr. ABOUL-NASR (United Arab Republic) welcomed the changes which had been incorporated in the revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) as the result of his comments, but noted that the text still caused certain difficulties for his delegation. For example, he was opposed to the inclusion in the third preambular paragraph of the words "in particular in primary and secondary schools" and would request a separate vote if they were maintained. He suggested that in the fourth preambular paragraph the words "at the first stage" should be replaced by the words "at an early stage. In his opinion, operative paragraph 1 gave too rigid instructions to States and he therefore proposed that the word "Invites" should be substituted for the word "Requests" and that the words "take appropriate steps" should be replaced by the words "take steps, as appropriate". With regard to operative paragraph 1 (a), he was in favour of deleting the term "regular" and felt that the reference to "international organization" was vague. He was also opposed to the use of the word "progressive" in sub-paragraph (b), the formulation of which was not clear. Similarly, he did not think it appropriate to address requests, as in operative paragraph 4, to UNDP and UNIDO to deal with such matters, because they had other responsibilities.

25. Mr. HELDAL (Norway) whole-heartedly supported the initiative taken by the Italian delegation in submitting its draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2). It did so because of the importance it attributed to any effort made to improve and amplify

knowledge of the United Nations and international co-operation, and to bring those subjects to the attention of young people. With regard to the objections made to the explicit mention of primary schools, he pointed out that in many countries children attended such establishments until they were 12 or 13 years old and that a large part of the population of the world did not go beyond the primary stage. For those reasons, it was essential that United Nations subjects should be taught in schools at that level. It was not necessary to include such subjects as a separate discipline in curricula, since they could be taught in relation to other subjects. In Norway, the teaching of the purposes and principles of the United Nations was initiated in the primary school. Obviously, at that stage teachers did not try to explain complex international problems but they did bring out the unity of the human race and the need for all men to work together to attain common aims.

26. While he was prepared to accept changes which would make the text acceptable for a larger number of delegations, he stressed that the draft resolution must refer explicitly to primary education, so that its provisions affected the largest number of people.

27. Mr. KACHURENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) maintained that the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) covered only one of the various aspects of juvenile education with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms. Similarly, the draft resolution treated the question of children's education in too rigid a fashion and did not make allowance for the fact that each country dealt with those subjects in a different way, in accordance with its own traditions and folklore. For example, in the Ukrainian SSR children were taught songs, which, although they did not correspond exactly with the provisions of the draft resolution, nevertheless expressed the spirit of world solidarity, which was the basic aim.

28. Furthermore, resolution XX of the Teheran Conference dealt with the same question.

29. Mr. PAOLINI (France) said that during the International Year for Human Rights the dissemination of the principles of the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other documents should constitute one of the main tasks of the Organization. Although the Italian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2) required the inclusion of new subjects in curricula which perhaps were already overloaded, the provisions of the revised text gave great latitude to Governments in that respect. In France United Nations activities were taught as part of history studies in the secondary cycle of the school system and consideration was being given to the possibility of including those subjects in the earlier stages of education. Moreover, France was seeking to attain the aims of the draft resolution through the distribution of United Nations documents and the organization of seminars for teachers on those subjects. His delegation felt it was essential to ensure that the teaching of United Nations subjects was started in the primary school, so that it reached the whole child population of all countries. Although he felt it was not absolutely necessary to mention UNIDO in operative paragraph 4, it was appropriate to refer to UNDP because it was a

question of providing technical assistance to States needing it.

30. Although he supported the amendment proposed by Upper Volta, he did not share the reservations expressed by other delegations and felt that, once the necessary adjustments had been made to the text, the draft resolution should be approved unanimously, since there could be no doubts as to its usefulness.

31. Mrs. OULD DADDAH (Mauritania) shared the concern which had prompted the Italian delegation to submit its draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2). Education influenced not only the present situation of mankind but also future events. It was therefore essential to acquire a better knowledge of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The teaching referred to in the draft resolution was given in her country as civic education. With reference to the wording of the draft, she pointed out that the use of the word "higher" in operative paragraph 1 (b) might be misleading and suggest that mankind already enjoyed a high standard of welfare. She therefore proposed, in order to correct that impression, that the final words of the sub-paragraph should read: "to promote social justice and well-being among all men".

32. Mr. NAÑAGAS (Philippines) thanked the Italian delegation for having submitted the draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1635/Rev.2), which stressed the vital need to promote a better understanding of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. It also reflected the indisputable fact that not only the progress of humanity but also its survival would depend on the establishment of a just social order. The principles of fraternity and international peace had received their greatest expression in the United Nations Charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both historic documents which inspired the greatest respect in all countries. His delegation therefore believed that there could be no reasonable objections to the dissemination of such ideas.

33. Undeniably, the creation of a better world in which the aspirations of all humanity could be achieved depended on young people. That was the reason why their education was of such vital importance. Consequently, his delegation warmly supported the draft resolution in principle and would vote in its favour after suitable amendments had been inserted.

34. Mr. ZORRILLA (Mexico) said that he agreed with the Italian draft resolution, and most of all with its underlying intention. His delegation understood that the words "regular study" in operative paragraph 1 (a) meant study which was not sporadic and which covered administrative and political action not limited to strictly bilateral relations. It also understood that the words "progressive instruction" in paragraph 1 (b) referred to the process that began at the primary level and culminated in a specialized course at the higher educational level.

35. In his view, paragraph 2 should not refer only to private scholastic institutions, because in some countries, as a number of delegations had pointed out, either such institutions did not exist or, as was the case in his own country, the curricula of private schools were identical with those of the State institutions. The reference to UNDP and, in particular, to UNIDO in paragraph 4 was infelicitous and unnecessary, since the activities envisaged in the draft resolution had no connexion with the specific functions of those bodies.

36. Mr. ABDULGANI (Indonesia) urged the representative of Italy to agree to his suggestion that mention should be made in operative paragraph 1 (a), after the reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples and the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, since all those instruments also represented a further step towards the application of the principles of the Universal Declaration. Similarly, he urged that a passage should be inserted in the second preambular paragraph drawing attention to all the Declarations he had mentioned.

37. Miss CAO-PINNA (Italy) stated that, as it would take too long to produce a further revision of its text, her delegation would be prepared to accept the following suggestions and amendments: in the fourth preambular paragraph, the words "the first stage" would be replaced by "an early stage"; in the introductory sentence of paragraph 1, the words "take appropriate steps" would be replaced by "take steps, as appropriate". With regard to paragraph 1 (a), the first sentence should read: "The regular study of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and of ...". Her delegation also agreed to the Indonesian suggestion that other United Nations instruments should be mentioned, but using a general form of words, such as the following: "and in other declarations on human rights". In paragraph 1 (b), as suggested by the representative of Mauritania, her delegation would replace the words "to promote a higher level of well-being" by "to promote social justice and well-being among all men" or, if the representative of Mauritania had no objection, by "to promote social justice and economic and social progress in the world". In paragraph 4, the words "and UNIDO" would be deleted, and the comma between the words "concerned" and "UNDP" would be replaced by the conjunction "and".

38. Her delegation hoped that, with the changes which had been made, the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously, or at least by a large majority.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.