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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.3-6, A/CONF.32/41, A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1626 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.1633, A/C.3/L.1635, A/C.3/L.1636, A/C.3/L.1637 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.1638-1642):

(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

GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1 (continued)

1. Mrs. ESHEL (Israel), speaking in exercise of her right of reply, said that her delegation was exercising the utmost self-restraint in the face of the unfounded accusations levelled against Israel, but felt compelled to reply immediately to two of them.

2. The representative of Pakistan had called the Israeli nazis - an absurd identification which was the height of moral depravity. It was the Arab countries which had given refuge to hundreds of nazi war criminals, and had incorporated them in their governmental work. Mein Kampf had been translated into Arabic and new editions were constantly being printed and officially distributed not only in the Arab countries but in other countries too. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and other well-known Arabs had collaborated actively with the nazis during the Second World War.

3. The representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic had defended Kichko. However, on 10 February 1953, when memories of war had still been fresh, Literaturnaya Gazeta had cast discredit on Kichko by stating that he had belonged to a group of rascals whose alleged participation in anti-nazi activities had been entirely imaginary. Furthermore, according

to the 4 April 1964 issue of Pravda, the Central Committee of the Communist Party had criticized Kichko's book for erroneous statements which might be interpreted in an anti-Semitic spirit. In addition, the summary record of the 550th meeting of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,^{1/} which had taken place on 18 October 1968, showed that the representative of the Soviet Union had admitted that the Kichko book had been unfavourably received in the Soviet Union. The main source of concern was less Kichko himself and his book than the fact that publications of that type were constantly being distributed by the Soviet mass communication media.

4. Miss TAYLOR (Sierra Leone) said that her delegation had noted with great interest the report of the Secretary-General (A/7195, A/7195/Add.1 and Add.3-6). The Teheran Conference had been the highlight of the International Year for Human Rights, and she regretted that owing to unforeseen circumstances her country had been unable to participate in it.

5. Sierra Leone attached great importance to the dissemination of the human rights principles recognized by the United Nations and as the Minister for External Affairs had said in his statement to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session (1686th plenary meeting), adherence to the rule of law, effective respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and tolerance for all men regardless of race, creed and ideology enshrined in the First Charter of the Government of Sierra Leone of 1787, was now accepted as an almost instinctive part of the way of life of the people.

6. The International Year for Human Rights should be a period for reassessing past achievements and determining why some rights had not been respected and how that situation could be remedied. It was saddening to note the ineffectiveness of the International Covenants and other human rights instruments adopted by the United Nations; there were gross denials of human rights in the modern world, where the right to freedom and self-determination was denied by violence. Policies of racial discrimination and apartheid, such as those practised in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Angola, so-called Portuguese Guinea and Mozambique, and the discriminatory attitude towards Jewish minorities in some Eastern European countries, were all situations which demanded attention from the United Nations and the Third Committee. More effective action was required, particularly through long-term programmes aimed at intensifying international co-operation and encouraging countries to take concrete measures to accelerate

^{1/} See E/CN.4/Sub.2/SR.546-556 (mimeographed).

the solution of their development problems with maximum participation by all.

7. She believed that much more could be achieved in the field of human rights if a more constructive and logical attitude was adopted. Her delegation fully supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.1637 and Add.1 and would like to become a sponsor.

8. Mr. KALPAGE (Ceylon) said the fact that his country had not informed the Secretary-General of the measures and activities undertaken in Ceylon in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights did not mean that it underestimated the importance of human rights—the International Year had, in fact, been marked by various events, including meetings and seminars of which the public had been informed by the mass information media—but simply that it had been more concerned with economic development, which would soon enable the people of Ceylon, who traditionally enjoyed the civil and political rights enunciated in the Universal Declaration, to enjoy economic and social rights as well. The current economic situation was extremely encouraging, and rice production would cover 75 per cent of needs by 1969, one year earlier than had been expected. That would make it possible to reduce imports and, together with foreign aid and more favourable terms of trade, would contribute to economic progress, without which civil and political rights would be meaningless.

9. The purposes of the International Conference on Human Rights had been stated in General Assembly resolution 2081 (XX), operative paragraph 13. Eight of the resolutions adopted by the Conference had related to problems arising from racial intolerance and discrimination. In his view, those problems could not be ignored and should be given the highest priority in any international programme for the future. At the present crucial juncture in the history of the human race, mankind could not move forward much further to the realization of the other goals enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, unless that was done. The real message of the Teheran Conference was that the world must be freed from the scourge of racial discrimination and apartheid, and the Third Committee must see that that was done.

10. The United Nations had established new norms since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but their implementation had still to be ensured; the first prerequisite for that implementation was acceptance of and respect for the decisions made by the United Nations. An attempt must be made to secure universal acceptance for resolutions adopted and for that an understanding of the points of view of others and a willingness to compromise on details were necessary. There could, however, be no compromise on fundamentals and the elimination of racial intolerance and racial discrimination was a pressing need. It was difficult to combat ingrained habits, which were rooted in the past, but one of the resolutions adopted at Teheran, resolution XX concerning the education of youth in respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, provided grounds for optimism about the future.

11. Mention had been made of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by troops of the USSR and other countries which were members of the Warsaw Pact. His country disapproved of that invasion, but he would respect the wishes of the representative of Czechoslovakia, who had requested that the situation in his country should not be used to restart the cold war.

12. With regard to the situation of the Middle East refugees, of which the Syrian delegation had given a moving account a few days previously on the Special Political Committee, he deplored the current antagonisms, which resulted from historical rivalries and bitter experiences from the past, and he observed that such antagonisms could not be removed by re-creation, anger, hatred and unbridled vituperation. No peace or even reconciliation was possible if the protagonists to a dispute refused to recognize each other socially and to acknowledge their opponents' existence even as members of the human family. He regretted that United Nations resolutions had not been respected, for whatever reason, and he noted that using the General Assembly for purposes of vituperation and propaganda could only damage its prestige. The United Nations should not be the place where the situation in the Middle East was aggravated; on the contrary, it should be used to settle the problem, which had remained unresolved for too long. He recalled the words of the President of the General Assembly, who, at the 1674th plenary meeting, on 24 September 1968, paraphrasing President Kennedy, had urged every Member State to ask not what the United Nations could do for it, but what together all Member States could do to make the United Nations more effective throughout the world.

13. Mr. ABDULGANI (Indonesia) noted with satisfaction the successes achieved in celebrating the International Year for Human Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights had exercised a considerable influence throughout the world, both internationally and nationally, as evidenced by numerous decisions of the General Assembly and other United Nations organs, by various international conventions, and by constitutions, laws and court decisions in many countries. The striking achievements included the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, representing a milestone in the struggle for the recognition of self-determination as a basic human right the violation of which was contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and was an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which provided that State Parties undertook not only not to engage in any act or practice of racial discrimination, but also to bring to an end by all appropriate means racial discrimination in all its forms; the position taken by the United Nations with regard to South Africa's policy of apartheid was also of importance, as was the proclamation of the United Nations Development Decade, which demonstrated agreement among Member States that economic and social development was essential if respect for the dignity of the human person was to be assured, and if human rights were truly to be exercised owing to the elimination of hunger, disease, ignorance and war.

14. Those achievements also reflected a change in the attitude of the developing countries towards human rights; since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, more countries had freed themselves of the colonial yoke and their aspirations had radically changed; there had been an increasing awareness of the dignity of the human person, and tremendous technological progress had been achieved. However, approximately 30 million people were still living under alien domination, deprived of their basic rights, and segregation and apartheid were being enforced with increasing brutality; two thirds of the world population was living in misery, ignorance and disease; technological progress had created problems which affected the self-respect of the individual; although the basic attitude of the world community towards those problems seemed to be changing, the conditions under which recognition of human rights must be ensured remained more or less the same.

15. The principles enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were contained in the basic laws of Indonesia; the Constitution prescribed respect for and promotion of human rights, and Indonesia recognized freedom of religion, freedom of opinion, and the equality of men and women in society; a law on the freedom of the Press had recently been enacted, and a Marriage Bill was before Parliament. In the economic and social field, the Constitution envisaged the advancement of general welfare and social justice, and the Government was at present striving to carry out an economic rehabilitation and stabilization programme that would lay the foundation for a just and prosperous society in which human rights would certainly be ensured. The Indonesian Constitution and the Five Principles of *Pantasila*, which had been proclaimed before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, still constituted the basis for the implementation of human rights in Indonesia; in addition, a Charter on Human Rights and Duties of Citizens was being formulated and would, it was hoped, be adopted in the near future.

16. Draft resolution A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1, of which Indonesia was a sponsor, was an attempt to ensure that the Proclamation of Teheran, which reaffirmed the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration, would be acted upon. His delegation hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously.

17. The Teheran Conference had adopted resolution I on respect for and implementation of human rights in occupied territories. As his delegation had said earlier in the Special Political Committee, the Indonesian people were particularly concerned with the human aspect of the problems faced by the Arabs of Palestine, whether Moslem or Christian, and by Arabs in other occupied territories in the Middle East. The Moslem community in Indonesia had recently forwarded to the United Nations a resolution of sympathy for the Palestine refugees in the Middle East, and resolutions of sympathy had also been adopted in the Indonesian Parliament and forwarded to the Secretary-General. Indonesia felt deep concern over the problem of the refugees, firstly, because Indonesians were only too familiar with the plight of refugees, since hundreds of thousands of them had been refugees in their own land during the years

1945-1950, and, secondly, because the people of Indonesia had had a sense of solidarity with the people of Palestine for many years. In 1927, a number of Indonesian leaders had participated in a conference held in the Middle East to discuss the renewed threat of political Zionism, which had been stirred up by the Balfour Declaration. Apart from its religious ties with the people of Palestine, and a common search for independence, Indonesia deplored the situation in the Middle East, as it saw that the Middle East continued to be a meeting place of conflicting large-Power interests, and that the refugees were the victims of that political confrontation. The United Nations should attempt to achieve a political settlement and to find a long-term solution to the problem of the displaced persons, but in the meanwhile, as winter approached, the suffering of the refugees should be alleviated forthwith. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East was working to that end, and the humanitarian mission of the Secretary-General in 1967 had been at least a partial success; however, Israel had refused to accept the terms of reference of a second humanitarian mission, as set forth in Security Council resolution 237 (1967) and General Assembly resolution 2252 (ES-V). In his note to the Security Council on the question, 2/, the Secretary-General had expressed regret that Israel had raised obstacles to the new mission by requesting that it should also cover the Jewish communities in Iraq and Lebanon.

18. For those reasons, Indonesia was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1626 and Add.1, which attempted to deal with the matter in a humane manner and in conformity with the spirit of the International Year for Human Rights. He urged the Committee to adopt that draft resolution, and expressed the hope that Israel would agree to receive the proposed three-member special committee.

19. His delegation hoped that the political and humanitarian aspects of the refugee problem would be resolved before another generation of refugees grew to maturity in the same misery as the present one. It was glad that the International Conference on Human Rights had served to focus more attention on that and other problems relating to human rights.

20. Mr. JOHNSON (Jamaica) thanked the Director of the Division of Human Rights for the encouragement and assistance he had given to the Jamaican Government and delegation at all stages in the planning for the International Year for Human Rights. The item under discussion was one of the most important on the Committee's agenda, not only because the International Year was drawing to a close, but because the issue of human rights underlay everything the United Nations was trying to do, whether in seeking to maintain peace, to achieve more equitable terms of trade and broader programmes of international assistance, to bring dependent Territories to independence or to elaborate international law.

21. The International Year for Human Rights served, in the first place, to focus public attention on certain

2/ Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-third Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1968, document S/8699.

issues and to enlighten the public as to the methods being used and the measures being taken to achieve certain goals; it should also give the bodies involved an opportunity to assess activities undertaken in the field of human rights, at both the national and the international level, and to draw up new programmes if necessary. The International Year seemed to have succeeded better in the first area than in the second, as many delegations had noted with some disappointment. There was no question that the United Nations had succeeded in publicizing the concept of human rights and fundamental freedoms contained in the Universal Declaration, as was clear from the reports submitted by Member States, the specialized agencies, and national and international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. Nor was there any doubt that the success achieved had laid an increased responsibility on States by focusing public opinion on the promise of a better life contained in the Universal Declaration. However, it was on the question what had been done to keep that promise that opinions differed. His delegation took a more optimistic view than most on that point; for, in its view, where examination of domestic law and institutions had been sincerely undertaken, where economic and social rights had been strengthened, and where schools and community centres had been established, it could not be said that the International Year had been of no value, even if less had been done than the Secretary-General's report (A/7195, A/7195/Add.1 and Add.3-6) indicated. His delegation also believed that long-term results were to be expected in areas where tangible effects had not yet been reported.

22. The Jamaican Government's programme for the celebration of the International Year had been mainly educative and had been largely dependent on voluntary assistance. Its goal had been to relate the principles of the Universal Declaration to the living experience of the people and to encourage in them an awareness not only of the importance of human rights, but of the delicate balance which must be preserved between the rights and the responsibilities of the individual. At the national level the Government had worked to strengthen the protection of human rights by, *inter alia*, extending legal aid services. At the international level, it had continued its study of United Nations human rights conventions, and had already taken decisions on a number of them; for example, on 23 September 1968, Jamaica had become a party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Finally, the Jamaican Government had decided to award a prize on the occasion of the International Year—the Marcus Garvey Prize—which had been awarded posthumously to the Reverend Martin Luther King.

23. With regard to activities at the international level, the International Year had proved a disappointment, in the sense that respect for human rights had deteriorated in many parts of the world. In those tragic circumstances, it was inevitable that the Teheran Conference should concentrate more on the violation of human rights than on methods of alleviating or preventing them. Under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2081 (XX), the International Conference on Human Rights had been entrusted with a threefold task: to review the progress made in the

field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods used by the United Nations in the field of human rights; and to formulate a programme of further measures to be taken in that field. Owing to the fact that the methods used had been insufficiently examined and evaluated the Conference had failed to answer the question whether the human rights machinery should be expanded at the present stage or whether a more rational use should be made of the machinery now available. The Conference had also failed to agree to detailed future programmes, except perhaps in the case of the status of women.

24. Nevertheless, the Conference had to its credit a number of substantial achievements, first among which was the Proclamation of Teheran, adopted by eighty-four States. The Proclamation did not merely restate the principles of the Universal Declaration but noted the problems confronting the world today and introduced a number of new principles: it asked all nations to help in closing the gap between rich and poor; stressed the importance of youth in the shaping of mankind's future; recognized as legitimate the struggle against *apartheid*; took a positive stand on the question of population growth; called attention to the human rights problems inherent in the development of technology; requested that the resources released by disarmament should henceforth be used not only for economic development but for the promotion of human rights; and affirmed that the eradication of racial discrimination was one of the most urgent tasks of mankind. The United Nations should ensure that those principles were implemented, as it was requested to do in several resolutions adopted at the Conference. The purpose of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1, of which his country was a sponsor, was to ensure that the important work begun in Teheran would be carried forward. The draft resolution dealt with the Conference as a whole, but his delegation shared the conviction of other delegations that the Committee should deal separately with certain individual questions arising from the Conference's work, and it reserved its right to speak on them at the appropriate time.

25. In conclusion, he wished to state that the commitments assumed by those who had taken part in the Conference, as representatives of Governments and as Members of the United Nations, would not be discharged at the end of the year. Countries would have to pursue their efforts in the interests of all mankind.

26. Lady GAITSKELL (United Kingdom) considered the item before the Committee the most important one on its agenda. She wished to pay tribute to the Government of Jamaica, which had proposed that the year 1968 should be designated as International Human Rights Year. The year had been marked by the adoption of many measures and by many activities on the part of Governments and the United Nations itself. The Secretary-General's report contained much useful information on the steps taken by Member States, specialized agencies and regional intergovernmental organizations to make the public aware of the importance of human rights. She wished to mention in particular the part played by non-governmental organizations, which had held many conferences during the

year 1968, including the Assembly for Human Rights held in Montreal in March 1968 and the International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations on Human Rights held in Paris in September 1968.

27. The United Kingdom Government had been active in many ways in celebrating the International Year. It had signed the International Covenants on Human Rights on 16 September and had acceded to the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees on 4 September. It had introduced a Bill to enable the United Kingdom to accede to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and it was reviewing other United Nations instruments to which the United Kingdom was not a party. In June, it had also been host to the Seminar on Freedom of Association held in London. It had made a contribution of £10,000 pounds to the United Kingdom Committee for Human Rights Year, which had carried out a large programme of measures designed to give as many people as possible a greater knowledge of human rights.

28. While progress had been made in various countries in the field of human rights, the international Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations on Human Rights in Paris had stated that there were repeated and flagrant violations of human rights in all countries and in all fields during the anniversary year, and that gave much cause for concern. That situation was due partly to policies and practices that had existed before 1968 and partly to events that had occurred during the year. Among the worst examples of violation of human rights were the policy of apartheid of the Government of South Africa and the situation in the Middle East. Mention should also be made of the occupation of a State Member of the United Nations by other Member States who, only three months earlier, had endorsed the Proclamation of Teheran, in which they had reaffirmed the rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That act of occupation was a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of the country concerned, and more particularly of the rights to self-determination, freedom of information, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom of movement. In that connexion, she recalled that certain delegations had expressed scepticism about freedom of speech to which other delegations attached fundamental importance. Those delegations that criticized the United Kingdom should remember that it was the freedom of speech which existed in the United Kingdom that provided them with ammunition to do so. Among other violations of human rights was religious persecution which was still practised in the Soviet Union at the instigation of its Government. Such persecution affected not only the Jews. Christians and the large Moslem minority were also subjected to a continuous campaign designed to undermine their customs and beliefs. She wished to condemn also the resurgence of anti-Semitism in Poland, which, in accordance with a formula already used by the Nazis, was hidden behind attacks on international Zionism. In the field of racial relations, the United Kingdom, for its part, had adopted a Race Relations Act, making discrimination on grounds of race, colour or ethnic or national origins unlawful in the field of housing, employment and public services.

29. While it was true that the situation in South Africa deserved special attention, she thought the United Nations should wage the struggle against the violations of human rights wherever such violations occurred and not merely in South Africa. The notion of human rights should not be restricted so as to fit a particular situation. It was regrettable that at its last session the Human Rights Commission had failed to take any action on the two cases of suspected violations of human rights that had been referred to it. If the United Nations were to apply a double standard in dealing with human rights matters, its reputation would inevitably be impaired and the whole purpose of United Nations human rights activities would be put in question.

30. The purpose of the Teheran Conference had been to review the progress made in the field of human rights, to evaluate the effectiveness of methods used by the United Nations in that field, and to formulate and prepare a programme for future measures. Though the results obtained in the case of the second of those aims had been disappointing, the Conference had unanimously adopted the Proclamation of Teheran, which had been signed by eighty-four countries. It had reaffirmed the principles of the Universal Declaration and had declared that the primary aim of the United Nations in the sphere of human rights was the achievement by each individual of the maximum freedom and dignity. In addition, the Economic and Social Council had also adopted a number of useful resolutions, two of them initiated by the United Kingdom. There had also been a number of interesting ideas in the draft resolutions which the Conference had not had time to examine, among them the Netherlands proposal for a committee of experts on unratified conventions and the Nigerian proposal for reforming the international machinery for dealing with human rights questions (see A/CONF.32/41, annex V).

31. She supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1, and wished, in conclusion, to express her confidence that man would continue to advance towards larger freedom.

32. Mr. SOMASUNDRAM (Malaysia) said that the International Year for Human Rights had made a great impact on the world. Malaysia, like many other countries, had observed the Year with a radio and television publicity campaign, and the issue of commemorative postage stamps and of publications relating to human rights.

33. He noted that since the adoption of the Universal Declaration twenty years earlier, the world had made great advances in human rights despite the continued existence of inequalities and injustice such as racism and apartheid. At the same time, progress in human rights was related to economic progress, literacy and peace within each country and between different countries. The pre-independence years in some of the developing countries had created economic imbalances which must be rectified before those countries could enjoy their freedom in the field of human rights. Malaysia, which had had a smooth transition to independence and now had a stable Government, was beginning to achieve the goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

34. The role of the United Nations in the human rights field had been highlighted by the Teheran Conference in its Final Act, one of the most important documents of the present time. While problems relating to human rights could not be considered in isolation from the political, economic and racial problems with which they were inseparably bound up, the Third Committee should nevertheless discuss them from a purely humanitarian point of view and concern itself more with universal than with national aspirations. It was in that spirit that his delegation had co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1, which reaffirmed the results achieved by the Teheran Conference, and he hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously.

35. Miss GROZA (Romania) said that all the important problems of today were related to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, such respect having been regarded by the framers of the Charter as a requisite for international peace and security. The twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a fitting occasion to review what had been accomplished by the United Nations in the field of human rights and what steps had been taken in that field by Governments.

36. Romania had created conditions favourable to the achievement of independence, freedom and social justice; under its socialist régime, every citizen was able to enjoy democratic rights and freedoms. The Romanian Constitution recognized and guaranteed equal rights for all citizens irrespective of nationality, race, sex, language or religion, and the State took care that the guaranteed rights and freedoms were respected and made a reality. Thus the Romanian Government was pursuing a policy based on recognition of and respect for human worth and dignity in order to create a society in which men could enjoy the fruits of their labour without interference. Its main domestic goal was to establish a multilateral economy by utilizing the advances made in science and technology. Economic progress, far from being an end in itself, was intended to raise the level of civilization and culture of society and facilitate the full flowering of the human personality. It required conscious and active participation by the people in the conduct of public affairs and in the preparation and implementation of the country's development programmes. In that connexion her Government had taken steps to strengthen the social role of each citizen in a national community desirous of enjoying the benefits of freedom and independence.

37. Socialist Romania, now carrying out a broad social and economic development programme of great human value, was naturally among the countries working for the maintenance of international peace and security. It was obvious that war, the oppression and exploitation of peoples, and the denial of their inalienable right to decide their own destiny were always accompanied by the most flagrant violations of the rights and freedoms of the individual and constituted an obstacle to progress. If countries were to be free to devote themselves to their own development, there must be an atmosphere of trust and co-operation between all States, regardless of their social and political systems, and there must be respect for the

sovereignty and independence of countries. In the light of those facts, Romania favoured general and complete disarmament and recommended the most rigorous respect for the principles of international law.

38. Complying with United Nations recommendations, Romania had taken steps, as a part of the International Year for Human Rights, to draw public attention to international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and had held various observances throughout the country. In 1968 Romania had signed the International Covenants on Human Rights, and their ratification was now being considered.

39. One of the most important activities undertaken at the international level had been the International Conference on Human Rights held at Teheran. Her delegation wished to thank the Iranian Government and people for their generous hospitality and the Director of the Division of Human Rights for his efforts to ensure smooth functioning of the Conference. The Proclamation of Teheran and the resolutions adopted at the Conference reflected the essential problems which arose in the field of human rights. She noted that Romania had been a sponsor of the draft resolution on the education of youth in respect for human rights, which had been adopted unanimously as resolution XX. It was regrettable that, notwithstanding the principle of universality, the People's Republic of China, the German Democratic Republic, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, representing one fourth of the world's population, had not been invited to the Conference.

40. The balance-sheet of United Nations activities in the field of human rights during the past twenty years had been highly favourable. The United Nations had defined the rights and freedoms enunciated in the Universal Declaration more adequately in order to adapt them better to the needs of a developing world, and a growing number of States had recognized those rights in their legislation. Moreover, the two International Covenants on Human Rights developed the ideas in the Universal Declaration by giving them the status of juridical norms of international law. In her delegation's view, it was important to consider the problems of human rights in a concrete fashion, paying due regard to the realities of the present-day world, including, in particular, the need for all peoples to determine their own destiny. It was, therefore, deplorable that some peoples were still being subjected to colonial oppression and that the policies of apartheid persisted despite the many condemnations of the United Nations. Romania was giving material and moral assistance to peoples striving to free themselves from colonial rule and believed that everything possible must be done to eliminate racial discrimination and apartheid.

41. Fully two thirds of the world's population must be brought out of their present state of economic and social under-development, which made the concept of civil and political rights meaningless.

42. The activity of the United Nations must not stop here. The Organization must in its future programmes

continue to lay stress on the complete elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, the abolition of all forms of racial discrimination and the policies of apartheid, and the right of peoples to self-determination.

43. Neither the observance of the International Year for Human Rights nor the Teheran Conference could, of course, mark the end of all violations of human rights. They had nevertheless made it possible to draw international public opinion to an essentially humanitarian field of activity and to encourage the aspirations of all countries for freedom and social justice. In her delegation's view, the success of the action taken during the International Year would depend on how each State intended to contribute to the achievement of international peace and respect for human dignity as the highest ideals of mankind.

44. Mr. AMPAW (Ghana) said that it was important, in commemorating the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to review not only the progress achieved in the past twenty years, but the gaps and shortcomings as well, in the hope of finding ways to better the lot of mankind. In that connexion, it was appropriate to recall the statement of the Secretary-General (see A/CONF.32/41, annex II), at the Teheran Conference, in which he had pointed out that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had often served as a criterion for evaluating the degree of respect for human rights as well as a basis for action both by United Nations bodies themselves and by Governments and international conferences. Moreover, as the Secretary-General had also noted in his statement, it was recalled in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples adopted in 1960 that all States must strictly observe the provisions of the Charter and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As the Ghanaian representative had stressed on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that Declaration had had a real influence on constitutional, legislative and judicial decisions in many countries and on relations between countries. There was an increasing awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and there was now a concern not only for civil and political rights, but for economic, social and cultural rights as well.

45. Thus it could not be denied that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had made it possible to better the human condition and had promoted greater understanding among men. Unfortunately, grave violations of human rights, sometimes involving recourse to violence and terror, were also being committed and must be deplored. The enjoyment of economic and social rights was hampered by discriminatory practices and economic imbalances. The policies of apartheid and racial discrimination still flourished in Africa, where millions of people were denied basic human rights, and in particular the right to self-determination. The gap between the developed and the developing countries also continued to widen, thus hindering the full realization of human rights.

46. In order to promote universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, his Government,

in early 1968, had organized activities to celebrate the International Year for Human Rights with public discussions, films, and radio and television broadcasts on violations of human rights, particularly legal, political, social and cultural rights. Many governmental, non-governmental and charitable organizations had participated in those activities; the Ghana United Nations Association had organized a series of public lectures on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Ghana United Nations Students' Association had organized regional discussions on human rights. Ghana had also participated in the Teheran Conference and in the Seminar on Freedom of Association held in London. It had been host to the Seminar on the Civic and Political Education of Women, which had just been held at Accra. Ghana was preparing a solemn celebration of International Human Rights Day on 10 December 1968.

47. His delegation wished to associate itself with those representatives who had thanked the Government and people of Iran for the welcome which they had accorded to the Teheran Conference. It was to be hoped that the work of the Conference would advance the high ideals of the United Nations and reaffirm the confidence of peace-loving peoples in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was in that spirit that his delegation would vote for draft resolution A/C.3/L.1623/Rev.1.

48. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syria), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, vehemently protested against the attempt by the representative of Israel to draw an analogy between certain Syrian citizens and the Nazis in order to divert attention from the daily violations of human rights for which Israel was responsible. In order to refute those false allegations, he quoted a paragraph from a letter which the Permanent Representative of Syria had addressed to the Secretary-General on 6 November 1968^{3/} and which proved that it was the Zionist leaders both in Palestine and outside who had collaborated with the Nazis.

49. The representative of Israel had protested against the fact that Mein Kampf had been translated into Arabic; it seemed he had forgotten that there were also Arabic translations of Jewish books, such as The Jewish State. Moreover, Hitler's book had now been outdone by documents authored by General Dayan and Mr. Eshkol.

50. Mr. ABOUL-NASR (United Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Zionism was similar to nazism in that it advocated territorial expansion, resorted to violence and encouraged racism — all of which were facts reported daily in the Press. He asked the representative of Israel whether the annexation of Jerusalem had been carried out by self-determination, whether Israel's so-called reprisal measures were not acts of violence and whether the fact of refusing a Christian or a Moslem Arab the right to return to his home was not proof of racism. In his own view, the only difference between nazism and Zionism, intellectually speaking, was that the crimes of the former had been committed before the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had

^{3/} Ibid., Supplement for October, November and December 1968, document S/8892.

entered into force, while the crimes of the latter had been committed afterwards. The Palestinian Arabs would never yield; they sought to win back their rights and freedoms.

51. Mrs. ESHEL (Israel) reminded the representative of the United Arab Republic that all States Members of the United Nations were obliged to respect the Charter, to live in peace and to recognize the existence of other States, as her country ardently desired. There would have been no refugee problem if the Arab States had not attacked Israel in 1948 and if they had agreed to negotiate with Israel in order to arrive at a peaceful settlement. Owing to the lateness of the hour, she would reply in detail on a later occasion to the other points raised by the representative of the United Arab Republic.

52. Mr. ABOUL-NASR (United Arab Republic) said he wished to refute the false allegations made by the representative of Israel; he emphasized that, in the history of relations between Israel and the Arab States, Israel had always been the one guilty of aggression, as had again been the case in June 1967 when Israel had launched a carefully planned attack against its Arab neighbours, and that all armed encounters had always taken place on Arab soil. Moreover, the long

list of condemnations of Israel by the Security Council was eloquent enough not to require further emphasis.

53. Mr. SAYEGH (Kuwait), in order to refute the Israel representative's assertion that if the war had not taken place, there would be no refugees, quoted a passage from the diary of Theodore Herzl, who, as early as 1895, had foretold the occupation of Palestine, which, he wrote, would one day become as Jewish as England was English.

54. Mrs. ESHEL (Israel) asked that note should be taken of the fact that the Arab delegations had continually accused her delegation of lying and distorting the facts, while they had given only a partial picture of the situation by citing passages from books out of context. In addition, she emphasized that she had protested not against the fact that Mein Kampf had been translated into Arabic, but that it had been distributed officially to young people.

55. Mr. ABOUL-NASR (United Arab Republic) said he wished it to be noted that, during the debate, the Arab delegations had limited themselves to exercising their right of reply in order to defend themselves against accusations made against them.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.