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FORTY-NINTH SESSION

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President: Mr. MARAMIS (Indonesia)

AGENDA ITEM 23

**Feasibility of an international university
(E/4878, E/4897, E/L.1351)**

1. Mr. ČABRIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the feasibility of establishing an international university, which was dealt with in the Secretary-General's report (E/4878), was arousing great interest in Yugoslavia in educational and scientific circles and among students and youth associations. As the Secretary-General's report had been distributed rather late, he could unfortunately make only a few preliminary observations.

2. In the first place, the report mentioned consultations with UNESCO and UNITAR; those consultations should be spread more widely, taking in, for instance, scientific and university institutions and students' associations.

3. Secondly, the main aims of the proposed university, as they emerged from paragraph 26 of the report, seemed to be principally directed towards satisfying the United Nations organizations' needs in trained personnel, whereas the crux was to satisfy the needs of the developing countries. If it was to contribute to the success of the Second Development Decade, the university would have to provide those countries with the economists, engineers, doctors and teachers they lacked — a problem that was further aggravated by the brain drain.

4. Thirdly, the report was not specific enough on the question of financing the university. He did not think that only the main host countries should be appealed to, because the objectivity of the teaching provided by the university might suffer thereby. Compulsory contributions should also be avoided; the best method would be voluntary contributions; and the amounts given would have to be substantial enough to cover expenditure for several years ahead.

5. As the Council could not go into the details of the proposal at its present session, it was advisable to postpone any decision on the subject.

6. Mr. FERNAND-LAURENT (France) regretted that the English text of the report (E/4878) had not been distributed until the beginning of the present session and the French text only that very morning, whereas General Assembly resolution 2573 (XXIV) had asked for the report to be submitted in early 1970: International Education Year. His delegation would also like reports to be distributed simultaneously in all official languages, as was done in other United Nations bodies.

7. The circumstances warranted adjourning the debate. Council members might, however, make a few preliminary comments forthwith. He himself would point out that what was needed was not a monolithic university but a network of institutes spread over the five continents, to teach not only the disciplines required in the training of international civil servants and development planners, but also the vital top disciplines of today, like computer technology. Every contributor country would supply those institutes with the best it had. There would be a small co-ordinating body, situated preferably at or near Geneva.

8. In a note published under symbol E/4897, UNESCO expressed the hope that its views would be taken into account for the establishment of the international university. But, since its views were not yet known, its secretariat, and its General Conference, scheduled for October, should express detailed opinions on the subject. The Economic and Social Council, as a co-ordinating body, should ensure that UNESCO was closely consulted, since the question was obviously very much within its terms of reference.

9. Mr. HILL (Jamaica) considered that a good method of studying the feasibility of establishing an international university would be to arrange a seminar at which UNESCO and other competent bodies, youth associations, and so on, could state their views. The Secretary-General's report had been distributed too recently for his Government to express an opinion on it at that stage. He therefore hoped, with the Yugoslav representative, that the Council would take no decision on the matter at its present session, but would

merely adopt a resolution requesting the UNESCO General Conference to submit to it, at its fifty-first session, a report on the creation and operation of the proposed international university.

10. Mr. KRISHNAN (India) said his delegation, a co-sponsor of General Assembly resolution 2573 (XXIV), agreed that the information available was too new for the Council to be able to take a decision at the present session. Consideration of the question should be resumed by the General Assembly at its next session.

11. He agreed with the Yugoslav representative that the international university's main aim should be to try to meet the developing countries' needs in trained personnel. He also approved the French representative's suggestion of setting up several institutes in different regions, and he hoped those would be mainly developing regions. He also thought that the UNESCO General Conference should be asked to consider the question at its next session and to study its technical aspects. The General Conference would submit a report to the General Assembly, which could then take well-founded decisions. He therefore hoped that the Council would adopt a resolution in which, after approving the idea of setting up an international university, it would make a request to UNESCO on the subject.

12. Mr. ABE (Japan) recalled that in its resolution 2573 (XXIV) the General Assembly, after welcoming the Secretary-General's proposal for the creation of an international university, had asked him to undertake a study of the question in collaboration with the international bodies concerned, among others UNESCO. That study (E/4878) being at present available, Council members should make known their views. His own Government had already expressed its strong support of the idea and its readiness to help the project. He hoped other countries would do the same.

13. However, since the report had been submitted later than expected, the Council could not study it in detail at the present session. He himself would therefore merely observe at the present stage that the document contained precise data on the character, the aims and the financing of the proposed international university, and express his thanks to the Secretary-General and his assistants for the work they had done. The report was obviously preliminary in nature; but it was to be hoped that it would prove a useful basis for future decisions by the General Assembly and the Council.

14. He supported the suggestion that UNESCO be asked to express its views to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session, so that the Assembly could deal with the question to good purpose.

15. The Jamaican representative had suggested that UNESCO should report to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-first session; but he thought it should do so earlier, to enable the General Assembly to take a decision, if only one of principle, in 1970, the International Education Year.

16. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said his delegation, a co-sponsor of General Assembly resolution 2573 (XXIV), considered that any deep study of the Secretary-General's proposal at the present session would be useless, as his study (E/4878) was no adequate basis for a decision. UNESCO must first be asked to submit a report on the question; since ministries of education were represented in that Organization, its report might contain sound technical opinions. For the moment, Council members should hold informal consultations on the wording of a request to UNESCO and the General Assembly to study the question.

17. Mr. POJARSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed that at the present stage Council members could make only preliminary remarks. The Secretary-General had himself stated that the Council had not had time to prepare for a detailed study of his report.

18. The Tunisian representative had thought the Secretary-General's study inadequate. He himself would go so far as to say it was unsatisfactory, as the other Council members must know. It was impossible from the phraseology to gather any clear idea of what the international university might be. It was a utopian document of very dubious substance. It seemed to advocate principles of supranationality or transnationality which presupposed a non-existent international harmony. Nor was any account taken in it of the real conditions in which the United Nations worked. The study failed to prove that the international university, in the form proposed, could succeed, and the practical measures for bringing it into being were left in the air. The comments of the Commission on Education of the World Youth Assembly (E/L.1351) were more realistic, and it should be noted that those comments referred to strong opposition that had been expressed to the creation of such a university. If it was simply a matter of setting up a new United Nations institution for training and research, as might be assumed from the Secretary-General's report, it would be preferable to extend UNITAR's activities and not create any new institutions.

19. He doubted whether the establishment of an international university was the best way of promoting the purposes of the United Nations Charter and increasing the prestige of the Organization. Far from preventing the brain drain, the establishment of an international university based on "transnationality" might rather aggravate the "drain".

20. With regard to the financing of an international university — a matter which should have been treated in more positive terms — his delegation was absolutely opposed to any provision for compulsory financing, and regarded only a system of voluntary contributions as acceptable. It particularly rejected the idea put forward in paragraph 203 of the report of an increase in transoceanic air fares for the benefit of the international university. It also doubted whether external sources of financing could be found.

21. His delegation did, however, approve of some of the ideas in the report, although it could not state its position on the substance. The UNESCO General Conference should

be asked for its views on the project, to enable States Members of the United Nations to reach sound conclusions.

22. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said he was in general agreement with the USSR representative's strictures on the project under discussion.

23. His Government considered that any study on the feasibility of establishing an international university should take account of the report of the World Youth Assembly and of the students' critical attitude to, and desire for basic reform in, the traditional teaching system.

24. A university should not be merely a place of instruction but rather the expression, in an integrated process, of a research, training and service ideal. One of the most serious difficulties confronting the United Nations was that it had been unable from the outset to integrate its various elements properly. The Economic and Social Council, for example, was forced to set up various bodies or committees so as to give the system the cohesion it needed to integrate its research, training and service activities. It was to be hoped that the United Nations organs would achieve more efficient use of their resources, in order to bring all their, at present, diffuse elements together in one global system.

25. Young people's criticisms of the educational system in general were many and varied. They did not like living in a social vacuum, in a sort of ivory tower. Their belated integration into active life gave them the impression of only starting to live once their studies had finished, and the gap between theoretical teaching and practical life gave them the feeling that they did not really know world problems. Again, the young entirely rejected the idea of intellectual exclusivism, the idea of belonging to an *élite*.

26. If an international university was to be set up, account must be taken of that attitude of the young, as also of certain guiding principles. Any project for setting up an international university which did not bring in students as well as teaching staff would be doomed to failure. Moreover, the all-embracing character of such a university must have a practical angle reflecting the real differences in the world of today. The international university would also have to allow for the existing social context and seek solutions to the problems of the contemporary world. Again, it must welcome any new teaching methods introduced at national, regional or international level; one of the most interesting aspects of the international university might indeed be its capacity to fit in with new forms of teaching.

27. His delegation thought the Council might adopt a resolution leaving the question of setting up an international university open, pending more detailed information concerning the views of Governments, UNESCO, UNITAR and other competent organizations.

28. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) said that there was a difference between an international university and a university run by the United Nations. Every university was more or less international, if only because of the different nationalities of its students, professors and lecturers.

29. His delegation supported some of the reservations expressed concerning suggestions in the Secretary-General's report. It doubted, in particular, whether it was really necessary to apply the principle of fair geographical distribution in choosing the sites for the university campuses: the purpose of the university should be to bring students together and not to disperse them. His delegation also had its doubts about the proposed methods of financing.

30. Furthermore, as the French representative had suggested, UNESCO's opinion should be obtained; the fact that an official of that Organization had been seconded to the United Nations Secretariat was no evidence of how far UNESCO was ready to collaborate in the project. He agreed with the Tunisian representative that informal talks should be held to prepare an appropriate formula.

31. It did not seem particularly timely to ask the UNESCO General Conference to make known its views to the General Assembly at its next session, as the document it submitted would probably not be available until a few days before the start of the session – too late, once again, for delegations to consider it. It would therefore be better to ask UNESCO to make known its views at the Council's next session.

32. Mr. HUDA (Pakistan) said that he could not state his position on the project under discussion, because he had received no instructions from his Government. The question should, he thought, be gone into more thoroughly, and it should be taken up again at the Council's or the General Assembly's next session.

33. Mr. DØRUM (Norway) said that, though he welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal, the report had arrived too late for him to obtain instructions from his Government on the subject. As some of the complex questions raised in the study merited careful examination, it would be worth while asking the UNESCO General Conference to make known its views to the General Assembly or to the Economic and Social Council at its next session.

34. His delegation was generally in favour of the project, but reserved its position for the time being.

35. Mr. DOO KINGUE (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the UNESCO secretariat was favourably disposed to the establishment of an international university, believing that such a project, if well planned, might be a great success. It was not forgetting that over the past twenty-four years it had received more than 150 proposals from Member States to the same effect. The present time, however, seemed especially propitious to go ahead with the idea – which explained why the Director-General had seconded a UNESCO official to work with the Secretary-General of the United Nations when the latter had asked for help with his study.

36. To a delegation inquiring how far the study reflected UNESCO's views, he replied that the study had not been carried out by the UNESCO secretariat, which had merely seconded an official, but on the responsibility of a

consultant to the Secretary-General. UNESCO's reactions to the study were therefore not all on the positive side.

37. The UNESCO Executive Board's views on the subject were stated in document E/4897. "UNESCO's views" should be taken to mean, not the views of the secretariat, but rather those of the General Conference and the Executive Board. At its next session in October-November 1970, the General Conference might forthwith, in the light of the UNESCO secretariat's views, express an opinion on the desirability of establishing an international university, which would help the General Assembly to take a decision of principle. But it could not take a fully informed decision on ways and means of carrying out the project until a more detailed technical study had been made, by the secretariat on instructions from the General Conference, and in the light of data collected and of any consultations UNESCO might have held. The secretariat would be able to submit the more detailed study to the Executive Board, and to the Council for its summer session.

38. However, if the Council wished UNESCO to give the General Assembly technical advice on the project and to state its views on its possible participation in carrying out the project, the Director-General would be glad to put the question to the General Conference.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Feasibility of creating an international corps of volunteers for development (E/4790, E/4884, chap. VIII; E/L.1346/Rev.2, E/L.1353) (concluded)

39. Mr. HUDA (Pakistan) said that the three sponsors of the revised draft resolution (E/L.1346/Rev.2), having regard to the comments made during discussion, especially with regard to the use of the word "corps", had decided to amend operative paragraphs 1 and 2 to make a single paragraph reading as follows:

"Welcomes the Secretary-General's proposals in his report and decides to establish within the existing framework of the United Nations system, with effect from 1 January 1971, an international group of volunteers the members of which shall be designated collectively and individually as United Nations Volunteers."

40. The Jamaican representative had proposed (1719th meeting) four amendments, three of which were covered by the proposed new text. As to the fourth (E/L.1353), the sponsors considered that the passage in the draft resolution relating to the functions of the co-ordinator served the same purpose.

41. Mr. HILL (Jamaica), explaining why he had submitted amendment E/L.1353 to draft resolution E/L.1346/Rev.2, said that several delegations had held that the initial projects should be so programmed as to make it possible to gain experience in implementing the provisions of the resolution to be adopted by the Council. It had also been pointed out that the non-governmental organizations could

play a very useful role in promoting the idea of United Nations volunteers. The role of youth in the volunteer group was also very important; but the form it would take was not yet precisely known. The amendment submitted by his delegation should enable the United Nations co-ordinator to benefit from the experience of the voluntary organizations. Some delegations had, at the previous meeting, approved the addition of the new paragraph (d) proposed.

42. Mr. FERNAND-LAURENT (France), welcoming the spirit of compromise shown by the sponsors of the draft resolution, expressed the hope that the Jamaican representative would agree, in the same spirit, to withdraw his amendment.

43. Mr. POJARSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regretted not having the written text of the new draft resolution. He asked the Secretariat to have it distributed as soon as it had been adopted.

44. Mr. HILL (Jamaica) agreed to withdraw his amendment, provided that his point of view was recorded in the Council's report. His delegation would raise the matter again in the General Assembly.

45. The PRESIDENT put to the vote draft resolution E/L.1346/Rev.2, as amended orally.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by 21 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

46. Mr. GUELEV (Bulgaria), explaining his delegation's vote, said that his Government approved the Iranian Government's initiative and the idea of involving youth in development work. It would, however, have been preferable had the Council, before taking a final decision, gone more thoroughly into the practical side of the project, in an endeavour to find the best means of ensuring its success. The main point was not to adopt a resolution, but to ensure that the hopes of men of goodwill and of youth were not dashed. Discussions on that particular agenda item had shown that many delegations had shared his own fears, and that neither the text submitted to the Council nor the explanations given during the debate had sufficed to dispel the doubts expressed. It would have been preferable to clarify certain aspects of the problem, so that the recommendations submitted to the General Assembly might be soundly based. His delegation had certain reservations to table as regards, for instance, recruitment of volunteers, training of national staff by the organizations, financing, and relations between the group of United Nations volunteers and the national volunteer organizations – which points were not adequately covered in the Secretary-General's report (E/4790).

47. His delegation was glad that the suggestions and amendments presented by various delegations had been taken into consideration by the sponsors of the draft resolution. The word "corps", with its unpleasant ring, should be avoided at all costs.

48. Mr. SCOLAMIERO (Italy) said that he was sorry for missing the vote and that, had he been present, he would have voted for the draft resolution.

49. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) was grateful to the sponsors of the draft resolution for having shown a spirit of compromise and taken account of comments made during the debate. His delegation had voted for the draft resolution on the understanding that it laid no obligation on any Government.

50. He thought some criticism might be made of what was said in paragraph 2 of the final text (paragraph 3 of document E/L.1346/Rev.2) about the division of responsibility for the appointment of the co-ordinator between the Secretary-General and the Administrator of UNDP. The point would have to be clarified when the resolution came before the General Assembly.

51. Mr. POJARSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), explaining why his delegation had abstained from voting, said that, while it had the greatest respect for the idea advocated by the Government of Iran and the sponsors of the resolution, it had doubts about, if not objections to, the substance of the question. The idea of creating a group of volunteers was extremely dangerous, for the new body could be used to further certain national plans of which the USSR could not approve. The sponsors had tried to take account of the various delegations' comments by deleting from the text such less acceptable elements as the term "corps", which smacked of the American Peace Corps. The fact remained that the new body could be used to the same end as the American Peace Corps, in other words to achieve aims which had nothing to do with the high ideals behind the proposal under discussion.

AGENDA ITEM 15

Application of computer technology for development

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/4911 AND CORR.1)

52. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the draft resolution contained in paragraph 6 of the Economic Committee's report (E/4911). That draft resolution had been adopted by the Economic Committee without being put to the vote, and he asked whether the Council was prepared to adopt it in the same way.

53. Mr. KRYLOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Russian text of the last paragraph of the preamble to the draft resolution did not correspond to, and

should be brought into line with, the English text. With that reservation, he saw no objection to the adoption of the draft resolution without a vote.

54. The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat would make the correction requested by the USSR representative.

The draft resolution in paragraph 6 of document E/4911 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 20

Development of tourism:

- (a) Co-operation and relationships between the United Nations and the International Union of Official Travel Organizations
- (b) Review of the programmes and activities of the United Nations system of organizations for the development of tourism

REPORT OF THE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE (E/4909)

55. The PRESIDENT pointed out that the Co-ordination Committee had adopted the draft resolution in paragraph 5 of its report (E/4909) by 20 votes to none, with three abstentions. He asked the Council to adopt it without a vote.

56. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) said that, while he would not object to that way of adopting the draft resolution, he had to make it clear that if a vote had been taken his delegation would have abstained.

57. Mr. LENNON (Ireland) stated that his delegation would have done likewise.

The draft resolution in paragraph 5 of document E/4909 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 21

Co-ordination at the national level

REPORT OF THE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE (E/4910)

58. The PRESIDENT called upon the Council to adopt the recommendation of the Co-ordination Committee contained in paragraph 3 of its report (E/4910).

The recommendation was adopted.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.