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President: Mr. Raymond SCHEYVEN (Belgium).

AGENDA ITEM 17

Non-governmental organizations (*continued*) (E/4647, E/4671, E/L.1251):

- (a) Applications and re-applications for consultative status;
- (b) Review of non-governmental organizations in consultative status

1. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) said that in view of the quite special nature of the question of non-governmental organizations, the same problems arose each year and the positions taken by certain representatives could hardly be regarded as reflecting an objective analysis of the facts. For that reason he wished to stress certain aspects of the problem which he felt were especially important. First of all, it must be admitted that consideration of the question took longer than it should. That was so partly because the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had been unable to solve the problems involved and partly because certain outside influences made any objective consideration of the question difficult. The composition of the Council was also a determining factor in that connexion. There were lines of division in the Council, which was split into two or more camps according to the political, economic and social philosophies of the countries represented in it.

2. Any serious consideration of the problem should be based on three criteria. Firstly, it was essential to consider the case of highly specialized non-governmental organizations whose fields of activity were akin to those of the United Nations specialized agencies or similar bodies; it would be logical for organizations concerned with children, for example, to be affiliated with the United Nations Children's Fund or for those dealing with health problems to be affiliated with the World Health Organization. It would also be appropriate to recall, in that connexion, paragraph 4 of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968, which stated that organizations with similar objectives, interests and basic views in a given field should, "for the purposes of consultation with the Council, form a joint committee or other body authorized to carry on such consultation for the group as a whole". Secondly, particular attention should be given to the officers,

statutes and activities of the organizations so that the Council's judgement would not be distorted by reports on the organization's activities which cloaked the real nature of those activities. Thirdly, it was essential to check the proliferation of non-governmental organizations; their present number, if he was not mistaken, was 1,234, and although some of them had not yet been granted consultative status, they might some day seek it. The process of proliferation might well paralyse the work of both the Council and its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

3. His delegation attached special importance to the question of the activities of non-governmental organizations. To what extent did those organizations help the United Nations in its work and promote awareness of United Nations activities in their respective fields of competence? To what extent would it be possible to undertake a periodic analysis of the role played by non-governmental organizations in the pursuit of United Nations objectives? For example, in the field of human rights, one might ask what certain organizations had done, either collectively or individually, to denounce the flagrant violations committed by the régimes in southern Africa. If the activities of non-governmental organizations were to be subjected to impartial analysis, consideration must be given to ways and means of compiling objective information; the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4647) noted the reactions of certain delegations when the name of a given organization came up, but it was difficult to judge from that document which organizations should move from category I to category II, which should remain on the Roster and which should be removed from it.

4. In view of the lack of objective information, it was impossible for the Council to take its decisions in the proper spirit of positive neutrality.

5. Mr. JHA (India) said he wished to associate himself with the delegations which had stressed the importance of the role that non-governmental organizations could and should play in publicizing the principles and activities of the United Nations. Although it was true that most non-governmental organizations were performing that function in a most satisfactory manner, some of those organizations abused the trust which the Council placed in them in granting them consultative status. In that connexion, he observed that the euphoria which had prevailed at the time of the adoption of Council resolution 1225 (XLII) of 6 June 1967 seemed to have given way to a feeling of disillusionment because the organizations in question had by no means abandoned the activities for which they had been reproached. In that resolution, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had merely been requested to review the activities of non-governmental organizations and to recommend reclassification where advisable. It was now up to the Council to act.

6. His delegation had real cause for a feeling of disillusionment, namely the imbalance which existed at the regional level among the non-governmental organizations in consultative status. Thanks to the provisions of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV), however, it would henceforth be easier for organizations in developing countries to obtain consultative status.

7. Referring to the remark made by the representative of Upper Volta with regard to the need for a periodic review of the activities of non-governmental organizations, he said that he fully shared that view, which his delegation had always held. In that connexion, he wished to stress the importance of paragraphs 35 and 36 (a) and (b) of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV), which dealt with the suspension and withdrawal of consultative status. It was high time that the Council directed its attention to those organizations which abused their consultative status by engaging in shameless propaganda against certain Member States. That problem had not yet received the attention it deserved, and his delegation would not fail to bring to the notice of the Council or its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations any organization whose attitude left something to be desired in that regard.

8. He wished to state in conclusion that his delegation was prepared to endorse the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4647).

9. Mr. EL HADI (Sudan) recalled the deep commitment of the Sudanese people to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to the ideals embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In considering the present issue, his delegation was guided by two principles, namely that non-governmental organizations should on no account engage in actions contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and that they should on no account engage in baseless or politically motivated actions against States Members of the United Nations. Although there was every reason for gratification at the activities of certain organizations which sincerely wished to do useful work, the attitude of some others which attempted to intervene in the internal affairs of Member States was most regrettable. He recalled the principle laid down in Article 2 (7) of the Charter, which stated that no provision of the Charter "shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state ...". Obviously, it was all the more true that non-governmental organizations must abide by that principle; those which did not were not worthy of any form of relationship with the United Nations, since it was hardly to be expected that they would honourably play their proper role as defined by General Assembly resolution 1405 (XIV) of 1 December 1959 and Council resolution 1296 (XLIV). Similarly, it would be an immoral act on the part of the United Nations to maintain relations of any kind with organizations some members of which were involved with the apartheid régime in South Africa or were an integral part of that racist régime. In that connexion, he felt that question 14 of the questionnaire that had been sent to non-governmental organizations was not sufficiently comprehensive; it would be useful to know not only the names of the principal officers but their curriculum vitae as well.

10. He also found it regrettable that an imbalance existed in the geographical distribution of non-governmental organizations; only four of the 166 organizations considered by the Committee were African or Asian.

11. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had based its work on Council resolution 1296 (XLIV), which had established more specific criteria concerning the granting of consultative status to non-governmental organizations. Under that resolution the Council had also required that those organizations should be more representative of the different regions of the world and that those which had similar fields of activity and interests should be represented, for purposes of consultation with the Council, by a joint representative body. The resolution further provided for the possibility of withdrawing consultative status from organizations which abused it.

12. It could be seen from the report before the Council (E/4647) that, of the 166 organizations which the Committee had reviewed, only six had their headquarters in Asia and one in Africa. Under the circumstances, it was difficult to speak of equitable geographical representation. The Council should correct that situation by acting under Article 71 of the United Nations Charter to grant consultative status to national organizations, thus ensuring better representation of the developing countries. Furthermore, paragraph 8 of the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (*ibid.*) showed that organizations had been recommended for consultative status which took no interest either in the United Nations or in the work of United Nations bodies. Some of them engaged in propaganda activities and slander against States Members of the Organization or were serving the interests of South Africa or of countries which were committing aggression in the Middle East or Viet-Nam. The Soviet Union could not agree to the granting of consultative status to such organizations.

13. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had recommended that consultative status should be granted to a total of 165 organizations, fifteen of them in category I and 117 in category II. His delegation was prepared to accept, without debate and without a vote, the recommendations concerning 156 organizations, including thirteen in category I and 105 in category II. With regard to the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and the International Organization of Employers, which had been recommended for inclusion in category I, his delegation felt that, in view of their highly specialized activities, those two organizations would be better represented with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization respectively. Five of the organizations proposed for inclusion in category II, i.e., CARE (Co-operative for American Relief to Everywhere, Inc., United States of America), the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations, the Howard League for Penal Reform (United Kingdom) the International Association for the Promotion and Protection of Private Foreign Investments and the International Federation of Senior Police Officers, would be more appropriately included on the Roster. He felt that the other seven organizations on which there had been a debate and a vote in the Committee should have no


consultative status of any kind. Lastly, his delegation was prepared to agree to the inclusion on the Roster of thirty-one of the thirty-three organizations proposed by the Committee.

14. Mr. CUHRUK (Turkey) said that the debates in the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had provided an opportunity for constructive exchanges of views and had permitted the opinions of representatives of non-governmental organizations to be heard. While some differences of opinion had unquestionably emerged, they had certainly not been based on considerations of race, religion or economic or social systems. Turkey's sole concern during the deliberations of the Committee had been to maintain and expand the consultative links which had been established between United Nations bodies and the non-governmental organizations, taking into account primarily the activities and spheres of competence of those organizations and the contribution they could make to the Council's work. It was also essential to ensure that the non-governmental organizations were not systematically pursuing political or other activities directed against Member States and that they were not influenced by any particular Government. Whenever it had been unable to satisfy itself that all those conditions had been met, the Turkish delegation had preferred to abstain rather than oppose those members of the Committee who appeared to be more familiar with the nature and activities of the organizations concerned.

15. In conclusion, he expressed the view that the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had been extremely useful and that it would be advisable to make a periodic review of the position of organizations in consultative status.

16. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) observed that consultative status enabled non-governmental organizations to contribute to the Council's work in solving international problems which arose in the economic, social and human rights fields. It was clear that most of the organizations had indeed contributed substantially to the achievement of United Nations aims and objectives in those fields.

17. In its resolution 1225 (XLII), the Council had very appropriately decided to undertake a review and re-classification of non-governmental organizations on the basis of new criteria which had subsequently been set out in resolution 1296 (XLIV). There had been far-reaching changes in the world since the establishment of the consultation system, and the revision had been necessary. Bulgaria had taken part in the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and had based its position in the discussions and votes solely on the criteria established by the Council and not on political, religious or ideological considerations. His delegation felt that some of the organizations which had been proposed for consultative status did not meet the criteria in question. That applied, for example, to the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and the International Organization of Employers, which had been proposed for category I, as well as to certain organizations proposed for category II which were in fact either purely technical organizations or intergovernmental in character. Moreover, other organizations which did not help to promote international co-operation and

which engaged in propaganda activities or slander against States Members of the United Nations had also been proposed for inclusion in category II. Some others, which had never taken part in the work of the Council or of its subsidiary bodies, were requesting consultative status only for reasons of prestige. 

18. In conclusion, he stressed that those criticisms did not apply to the great majority of non-governmental organizations, whose usefulness and effectiveness were beyond question. He reserved the right to speak on particular items at a later stage, if necessary.

19. Mr. YUNUS (Pakistan) stressed that, during the debate and the voting, all members of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had been guided by the principles of the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council.

20. While regretting that some regions of the world were obviously under-represented, his delegation would support the conclusions in the Committee's report (E/4647), taking account of the Council's debate and the decisions it was to take.

21. Lastly, consultative status was a privilege which the non-governmental organizations must prove they deserved; the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations should therefore review those organizations periodically in order to prompt them to discharge their obligations fully.

22. The PRESIDENT proposed the closure of the list of speakers in the general debate. The adoption of that proposal would not prevent delegations from exercising their right of reply or making more general observations during the discussion of particular questions.

It was so decided.

23. Mr. BABAA (Libya) said that the non-governmental organizations had been making a very valuable contribution to the work of the United Nations during the past two decades. By representing so many diverse elements of the people, united by the most varied interests (religious, social, economic, cultural, occupational and other) and making their voice heard in the Council and by disseminating information on the United Nations throughout the world, they formed a kind of bridge between Governments and peoples on the one hand and the United Nations on the other. In a word, they interpreted the United Nations to the world and the world to the United Nations. During the past twenty years, the non-governmental organizations had identified themselves with the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter and the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In fact, they had played an important role in drafting those instruments and had made a useful contribution to the establishment and development of the Organization itself. They had helped to promote the well-being of all mankind, and a special tribute should be paid to those dedicated members of non-governmental organizations who, quietly, voluntarily and often behind the scenes, had contributed so much to the accomplishment of their noble mission.

24. Libya's election the previous year as a member of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had given his delegation an opportunity to learn more

about the activities of those organizations and it was now in a better position to appreciate the contribution they made to the work of the United Nations. It had been able to verify that the aims of almost all of them were in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter. However, some of them did not yet seem to realize that the world had changed since 1947, when they had been given consultative status, that the number of Member States had more than doubled in the interval, and that they must therefore enlarge their membership and henceforth work for all mankind without regard to sex, language, race or religion. It was unfortunate also that some regions of the world were not yet equitably represented in the Council and that only very few organizations from the developing countries had been given consultative status, even though the majority of mankind lived in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

25. He greatly regretted the fact that, despite the criteria laid down in Economic and Social resolution 1296 (XLIV), some non-governmental organizations were not only not working to defend the interests of the United Nations but were actually using the Organization to defend the interests of one State and of an international expansionist movement. Those organizations were conducting slanderous political campaigns against some Member States and were interfering in their domestic affairs. Instead of promoting peace and understanding among peoples, they preached hatred and war, advocated an expansionist policy and remained silent on the most flagrant violations of human rights, thus undermining the authority of the United Nations, which had repeatedly condemned that expansionist movement and violations of human rights. Activities of that kind were contrary not only to the provisions of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) but also to the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter and constituted a threat to international peace and security. It was therefore the duty of the Council to warn the organizations in question that they would be expelled if they did not put an end to such activities.

26. Lastly, his delegation supported the French delegation's proposal to place the International Council of Women in category I.

27. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to paragraph 8 of the report before it (E/4647), containing the recommendations of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations concerning the categorization of those organizations. He first read out the names of the organizations appearing in category I and reminded members that the French delegation had proposed that the International Council of Women should be included in that category.

28. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that his delegation's reservations concerning the inclusion of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and the International Organization of Employers in category I should be placed on record.

29. The PRESIDENT said that if there were no objections he would take it that the Council approved the inclusion of the organizations recommended by the

Committee in category I, on the understanding that the International Council of Women would be added and that the Soviet delegation's reservation concerning the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and the International Organization of Employers would be recorded in the appropriate documents.

It was so decided.

30. The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should proceed to consider the organizations listed in category II (see E/4647, para. 8) and decide, as he read out the names in the French alphabetical order, whether or not to include them in that category.

The Council approved the inclusion of the All India Women's Conference (India) in category II.

31. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) felt that it would be more logical to place the International Touring Alliance on the Roster together with the International Automobile Federation and the Inter-American Federation of Automobile Clubs, two similar organizations which were already so listed and with which it had very close administrative links.

32. The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objections he would take it that the Council approved the United Kingdom proposal.

It was so decided.

33. Mr. BERRO (Uruguay) recalled that at the previous meeting his delegation had reserved its position with regard to the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations. There had been a wide difference of views on that organization in the Committee, as could be seen from a reading of its report (E/4647), and the Committee had finally decided that it was unable to make a recommendation to the Council concerning that organization.

34. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, observed that the Council had just commenced its consideration of the organizations recommended for classification in category II and that the President had begun to read in the French alphabetical order the names of the organizations listed in that category in the report of the Committee (E/4647). In his view the Council should logically finish category II and then begin to discuss those organizations on which the Committee had been unable to make a recommendation, in particular, the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations.

35. After a procedural discussion in which Mr. WALDRON-RAMSEY (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. GALLARDO MORENO (Mexico), Mr. EL HADI (Sudan), Mr. KHANACHET (Kuwait), Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta), and Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) took part, the PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should begin its consideration of category II with those organizations whose categorization had caused no difficulty in the Committee and then revert to those on which problems had arisen, proceeding in both cases in accordance with the French alphabetical order.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.