

Council agreed to allocate items at its organizational session, it ought also to be possible for the plenary or one of the sessional committees to advance or postpone the consideration of an item.

38. Part II of the report (E/5604 and Corr.1) concerned the basic programme of work of the Council for 1975. It should be stressed that all the questions included in the basic programme had been taken fully into account in preparing the integrated agenda, and that the Secretariat would continue to provide the usual very complete annotations. Two proposed changes in the timing for the consideration by the Council of the questions on the agenda, upon which the Council should decide, appeared in paragraph 2 of the explanatory notes (part II, sect. C, of the report). An omission should be corrected later in that section; the list of work pro-

gramme questions integrated into item 7 for the fifty-ninth session (Trade and Development) should include question 90 (Report of the Trade and Development Board).

39. The report of the World Food Conference had not been included in item 15, because a new United Nations body had been established on the food problem and it had been assumed that the report would be considered by that body in the first instance, but the Council would have before it the two reports at its fifty-ninth session. The question of agrarian reform had been integrated into item 6 for the fifty-eighth session, but the Council might wish to consider it in the context of another item.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*

## 1936th meeting

Monday, 13 January 1975, at 3.30 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Iqbal AKHUND (Pakistan).

E/SR.1936

### AGENDA ITEM 3

**Rationalization of the work of the Council and basic programme of work for 1975 (*continued*)**  
(E/5604 and Corr.1)

### AGENDA ITEM 4

**Actions arising out of decisions of the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session (*continued*)**  
(E/L.1618)

1. Mr. ARVESEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of his delegation, the delegation of Denmark and the observers for Finland, Iceland and Sweden, said that the question of rationalization of the work of the Economic and Social Council had become most urgent. Accordingly, at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Finnish and Norwegian delegations in the Second Committee had submitted a draft resolution designed to enable the Council to discharge its functions as efficiently and responsibly as possible, particularly with regard to the many new tasks and major problems with which it would be faced in the immediate future. That initiative had led to the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 3341 (XXIX). In response to that resolution and to Economic and Social Council resolution 1907 (LVII), the report of the Secretariat on rationalization of the work of the Council and the basic programme of work for 1975 (E/5604 and Corr.1) had been submitted to the Council. It contained a number of valuable proposals and suggestions which should form a good basis for concrete decisions with regard to rationalization measures to be adopted by the Council at the current organizational session. In its report, the Secretariat suggested that there were three interrelated elements of the process of rationalization: the agenda, documentation and the pattern of meetings.

2. With regard to the streamlining of the agenda, the Nordic delegations on whose behalf he was speaking

supported the idea of a substantive integration of agenda items, which, if properly done, would tend to reduce the number of general debates and, what was more important, would contribute to a better understanding and grasp of the various issues by the members of the Council, thus facilitating the Council's work in the field of co-ordination.

3. On the subject of documentation, the Nordic delegations agreed that sustained efforts should be made to reduce the number of requests for new studies and reports, and that restraint should be exercised in order to keep documentation within manageable proportions. They would welcome a decision by the Council requesting its subsidiary bodies to exercise restraint and carefully work out priorities when considering requests for new studies and reports. However, the most important proposal made in part I, section B, of the report related to the provision of summary records for some of the subsidiary bodies. In view of the fact that the production and translation of summary records continued to account for a large proportion of the output of the translation services, and bearing in mind that the work of a number of major conferences had not suffered as a result of dispensing with summary records, the Nordic delegations favoured the discontinuation of summary records for all the subsidiary bodies. That would lead to substantial savings, an improvement in the general level of efficiency and effectiveness of the Secretariat and a reduction in the already excessive number of documents which representatives had to read.

4. With reference to the pattern of meetings, the Nordic delegations agreed with the suggestions in paragraphs 26 and 27 of the report, namely, that the number of daily meetings at the regular sessions of the Council should be increased from four to six and that serious consideration should be given to the possibility of scheduling more meetings of subsidiary bodies during the second half of the year. They attached particular importance to the concept of "continuous" or intermittent sessions of the Council referred to in

paragraphs 28 to 33. They were pleased to note the Secretariat's positive approach and encouraging conclusions in that connexion, but would like to stress, for the sake of clarity, that the concept of "continuous" sessions could be somewhat misleading. For that reason, the concept as such had been left out of the text of resolution 3341 (XXIX), since the aim of the sponsors had not been a Council in continuous session throughout the year, but rather intersessional meetings or special sessions convened "as necessary" in addition to the two regular sessions. In that connexion, the Nordic delegations would like to know which items the Secretariat had in mind when it stated, in paragraph 32 of the report, that "The agenda for 1975 suggests that there are a number of items which would lend themselves to the application of the procedure outlined above". However, if a system of intermittent sessions could be introduced in 1975, so much the better. In any event, a general consensus should be worked out at the current session with a view to reiterating the provisions of rule 5 of the rules of procedure in cases of natural disaster and other emergency situations.

5. Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) pointed out the importance of ensuring that the Council was properly equipped to perform its functions efficiently in order—in the words of Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations—to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character. His delegation hoped that the initiation in 1974 of a dialogue on a new international economic order would give the Council new significance and potential. However, it believed that the work of the Council would acquire its proper significance, not from structural changes, but from a workmanlike discussion of the main policy issues leading to useful and realistic decisions and recommendations.

6. With reference to document E/5604 and Corr.1, his delegation agreed completely with the point made in paragraphs 8 and 9, namely, that drastic changes in the method of formulating the agenda were required and that a purely mechanical integration of items must be abandoned. Accordingly, it welcomed the way in which the draft agenda for 1975 had been formulated in part II, section B, of that document. The formulation was not perfect, but it offered a chance for the adoption of important decisions during the current year.

7. His delegation also welcomed part I, section B, on documentation, and hoped that the Secretariat's new documentary procedures would be adhered to and would conform to the wishes and needs of the Council. It fully agreed that the Council must stop calling for ever more paper, and felt that better research by delegations, with the assistance of the Secretariat, as suggested in paragraph 15, would be useful in that connexion. With reference to the provision of summary records, in many of the cases mentioned they could be dispensed with and were in fact seldom referred to. As paragraph 16 made clear, to dispense with them was by no means to decry the importance of the work of the body in question. His delegation also welcomed the statement in paragraph 24 that the Secretariat would examine and submit suggestions to the Council on the precise format and contents of the reports of subsidiary bodies. Much streamlining was possible in both the form of those reports and the method of handling them.

8. With reference to the proposals concerning the pattern of meetings in part I, section C, his delegation had

certain reservations. It wished, however, to endorse the important distinction made between the nature of the work of the Security Council and that of the work of the Economic and Social Council, as clearly spelt out in paragraphs 29 and 30. It also strongly supported the abolition of the pre-arranged resumed sessions, as proposed in paragraph 34. However, without wishing to limit the discretion of the President under rule 5 of the rules of procedure, his delegation had serious doubts about the proposal for arranging meetings away from Headquarters, which was inefficient and expensive. The long-term answer was to abolish some bodies altogether and to reduce and reschedule the meetings of others, while in the short term the weight of documentation must be reduced. His delegation was also sceptical about the suggested increase in the number of regular daily meetings during the Council's sessions. Small delegations had difficulty servicing three simultaneous meetings, as had been shown during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Moreover, the current trend was towards informal negotiation, which his delegation welcomed. It would therefore seem that the number of formal meetings should be reduced, and not increased. His delegation was strengthened in that view by the fact that the necessary additional translation staff simply did not exist. Furthermore, it found the case for the scheduling of extra Council sessions unconvincing. Despite the efforts to streamline the agenda, despite the statement in paragraph 22 of the report that any extra session would involve overlapping, and despite the recommendation by the Secretariat—with which his delegation disagreed—for expensive new services to speed up the work of the Council, extra sessions were still proposed. His delegation believed that the two regular sessions ought normally to be sufficient to cover previously scheduled business. There already existed a mechanism for calling special sessions when required, but such sessions should be reserved for genuine emergencies, in which category his delegation would not necessarily include natural disasters, since the United Nations had a mechanism for dealing with disasters which was important but did not require triggering by the Council. It also had doubts about the suggestions in paragraph 33 that the Council should itself assume some of the functions currently delegated to the subsidiary machinery. That would certainly run counter to the stated need for the Council to concentrate its attention on a limited number of carefully selected major policy issues. It would therefore be best to postpone a decision on extra sessions until some streamlining of the subsidiary bodies had been achieved.

9. In conclusion, he reiterated a suggestion previously made by his delegation, namely, that some way should be found for those delegations which wished the views of their Governments to be on record to have them circulated in much the same way as was the practice in various national legislatures, rather than by stating them at length in meetings—a procedure which could save the Council a great deal of valuable time on such occasions as explanations of vote.

10. Mr. STURKEY (Australia) noted that the report of the Secretariat brought a fresh approach to possible solutions to the difficulties confronting the Council in devising rational procedures for tackling its work. The World Food Conference, when recommending the creation of a council with an over-all co-ordinating responsibility for food matters, had suggested a formula which might help to solve some of the problems facing

the Economic and Social Council. That formula would appear to have been adopted in some measure by the Secretariat, for the proposed substantive integration of agenda items was not too dissimilar to the sectoral responsibilities of the new World Food Council. His delegation favoured such a sectoral approach to the matters under consideration by the Economic and Social Council. That approach did not necessarily mean the creation of new machinery, its most useful feature being the grouping of like subjects into single agenda items.

11. It had perhaps been feasible, when the United Nations system was smaller, for the Council to tackle much of its work on an agency-by-agency basis, but the system was now rather too large to operate on that basis. Moreover, various agencies had overlapping interests. It would assist the Council in discharging its co-ordinating role, no less than in its over-all examination of economic and social matters, if such matters were considered on a sectoral basis, and the report of the Secretariat was a useful first step in that direction. At a later stage—perhaps in a year or so—the work programmes of the United Nations Development Programme and other organs engaged in operational development activities might also be integrated into the sectoral approach. That would not, of course, derogate from the more traditional agency-by-agency consideration, which should concentrate on the structures of the agencies, lay down policy guidelines and ensure that the agencies were properly equipped to handle the work expected of them. The two approaches would therefore complement one another.

12. With reference to the pattern of meetings, his delegation supported a more flexible application of rules 4 and 5 of the rules of procedure. The experience of the Special Intersessional Committee on transnational corporations was an example of the detailed consideration which could be given to a subject when the agenda was limited. While discontinuing the resumed sessions would undoubtedly make things easier, his delegation had misgivings about the practical value of declaring that there should be no meetings of the Council between September and December. For instance, during the resumed fifty-seventh session, the meetings on transnational corporations and those on the International Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation had dealt with specific questions needing examination, and for which time had had to be found, even during a General Assembly session.

13. In conclusion, he recalled that at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly it had been suggested that draft resolutions should be introduced at an early stage in the consideration of agenda items so that the debate could focus on them. His delegation's view was that, while informal consultations on draft resolutions were important, they were a poor substitute for formal debate in the Council and its committees.

14. Mr. BRITO (Brazil) noted that the Secretariat report dealt with three main issues: the agenda, documentation and the pattern of meetings. With reference to the agenda, his delegation felt that, while a substantive instead of a merely mechanical integration of items would be a clear improvement, the report did not offer any real concentration of the agenda. Instead of an agenda with clearly defined items and subitems, the Council had before it a series of vague general abstractions. There was consequently a need to reformulate the items to ensure that the discussions would concentrate on vital substantive issues.

15. Referring to the problem of documentation, and in particular the provision of summary records, he pointed out that the latter were prepared for information purposes, and expressed the view that their discontinuation should be approached with caution. Whether one considered that summary records would have been useful at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the World Population Conference depended on the criteria applied; his delegation found it regrettable that, owing to the lack of summary records, direct access to important statements made at those Conferences could be obtained only by the lengthy and cumbersome process of listening to tape recordings. It might therefore be preferable to leave it to the discretion of the subsidiary bodies to decide on the items for which they considered summary record coverage necessary. It should be borne in mind that the preparation of reports would become more difficult if summary records were abolished.

16. With regard to the pattern of meetings, and in particular the increase from four to six of the number of daily meetings at the regular sessions of the Council, his delegation felt that caution should be exercised so as not to tax the resources of the smaller delegations. With reference to a more flexible application of rules 4 and 5 of the rules of procedure, his delegation considered that it should be possible to convene the Council to deal with specific cases of particular importance. However, intermittent sessions could impair the work of the Council, and should therefore be called only in compelling circumstances.

17. On the subject of the resumed sessions of the Council, he said that a situation such as that which had arisen in 1974 when there had been parallel sessions, could be avoided if the meetings of the Trade and Development Board, the International Monetary Fund and the Council were not held at the same time. Moreover, account should be taken of the impact of the work of the Council on that of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The proposal to discontinue the resumed sessions should therefore be carefully considered, but in any event, if such sessions continued, there should be a limitation of the items dealt with.

18. Mr. ROUGÉ (France) commended the Secretariat for its report, which he hoped would prove helpful in rationalizing the work of the Council. On the question of the agenda, his delegation subscribed in general to the proposals in part I of the report, and felt that the grouping of items would allow the Council to concentrate on their more important aspects. His delegation was not flatly opposed to the idea of dispensing with summary records for a number of the Council's subsidiary bodies, but felt that the question would require more thorough examination. The representative of Brazil had pointed out that it was useful for delegations to be able to refer to the summary records for the positions taken by Governments on specific issues. However, if reports were to indicate which delegations had stated a certain position, the need for summary records would be largely obviated. His delegation had noted the explanations given by the Secretary at the preceding meeting on questions relating to the pattern of meetings and felt that, if the necessary conference services were available, there was no reason why an increased number of meetings should not be held during the regular sessions of the Council. His delegation could accept a more flexible application of rules 4 and 5 of the rules of procedure, on the understanding that the rules in



question would be invoked only when absolutely necessary. It agreed that the Trade and Development Board should be invited to hold its sessions before the second regular annual session of the Council and that the executive heads of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund should be invited to participate at an appropriate session of the Council during the first half of the year.

19. With regard to item 2 of the agenda suggested for the fifty-eighth session, he noted that, on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, the General Assembly, at its twenty-ninth session, had established a Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery to deal with questions of programme formulation, establishment of priorities and the programme budget, and that the Council, by its decision 42 (LVII), had set up an informal group to consider similar questions. There appeared to be no clear demarcation between the powers of the Council and those of the Fifth Committee in that regard, and it might therefore be useful to envisage joint meetings between the informal group and the Working Group. Such an arrangement would have the additional advantage of enabling a greater number of delegations to participate in the discussions. He also wondered why Council decision 41 (LVII) had been omitted from the legislative authorities quoted under the suggested item 3. With regard to item 6, he noted with approval that the Secretariat suggested transferring to the fifty-ninth session the questions of agrarian reform and of the contribution made by the co-operative movement to the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade. He was also pleased to see that the question of the mobilization of public opinion in favour of the purposes, objectives and measures set out in the International Development Strategy had been incorporated into the suggested item 9.

20. In conclusion, his delegation felt that it was important to establish a better balance between the two sessions of the Council. In 1975, the summer session would have 19 very important items on its agenda and the spring session would be less heavy. He asked whether the Secretariat had considered the possibility of transferring some items to the spring session.

21. Mr. YAMADA (Japan) said that his delegation had taken an active part in the consideration of the question of rationalizing the work of the Council and had been among the sponsors of Council resolution 1907 (LVII) and General Assembly resolution 3341 (XXIX). He commended the Secretariat for the excellent report contained in document E/5604 and Corr.1. His delegation was prepared to support in principle the various suggestions made in that report.

22. On the question of the agenda, his delegation believed that the adoption of a system of substantive integration of items would enhance the Council's role in formulating over-all and co-ordinated policies. It agreed that it would be useful to modify the existing pattern of interagency co-operation and to give the sessional bodies greater flexibility when considering their approach to each subject by allocating items to them at the beginning of the year. With regard to documentation, his delegation favoured dispensing entirely with summary records for the subsidiary bodies of the Council. If that was not yet feasible, a procedure entitling a given body to have summary records on certain important items only might be considered.

23. As far as the pattern of meetings was concerned, he noted that the Secretariat would explore the possibilities of scheduling more meetings of subsidiary bodies during the second half of the year. His delegation believed that care should be taken to ensure that those meetings were, as far as possible, of a technical nature, so that they would not require the presence of regular representatives attending the General Assembly. His delegation also supported the suggestion to discontinue the resumed sessions of the Council during sessions of the General Assembly, but felt that it was very desirable for the Council to arrange for the attendance of the executive heads of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund at one of its regular sessions.

24. His delegation would like the Secretariat to indicate when the informal group set up under Council decision 42 (LVII) to examine the machinery for programme and co-ordination was scheduled to meet. It would be appropriate to discuss the report on regional structures of the United Nations system at the fifty-ninth session, and he hoped that the report would be transmitted to the appropriate bodies in the regional economic commissions in sufficient time to enable their comments to be made available to the Council. The report of the Committee on Science and Technology for Development, prepared in accordance with Council resolution 1898 (LVII), on the application of science and technology to solve the special problems of the arid areas would be closely related to the question of combating desertification, and his delegation believed that the latter question should be taken up at the same time as the report.

25. Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands) said that his delegation wished to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for its report, and welcomed its imaginative and substantive approach. His delegation supported the proposals in paragraphs 7 to 13 regarding substantive integration of agenda items. It felt that such a system of integration would enable the Council to concentrate increasingly on fundamental economic and social problems, spending less time on debating specific items and more on informal consultations. With regard to documentation, it believed that the Secretariat should follow the six-weeks rule as well as the 32-page rule, and that serious consideration should be given to the possibility of discontinuing summary records for a number of subsidiary organs of the Council. In that context, the decision of the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session to explore the possibilities of discontinuing the summary record system for a number of subsidiary organs at the thirtieth session was relevant. Summary records had already been discontinued for a number of functional commissions and standing committees of the Council. The objections raised by certain delegations could be met by clearer and more balanced reporting on the part of committees.

26. His delegation could generally accept the proposals concerning the pattern of meetings. An increase in the number of daily meetings during the regular sessions and the convening of intersessional meetings of sessional bodies could be envisaged, but the number of special sessions should be limited as far as possible. His delegation supported the discontinuation of resumed sessions, particularly during General Assembly sessions, since they tended to assume the character of elaborate regular sessions.

27. His delegation was interested in the concept of continuous or intermittent sessions, and particularly in the suggestion made by the representative of Norway on that question, but wondered whether it would be possible to take a decision at the current stage, especially as many meetings of an economic nature had already been scheduled for 1975.

28. Mr. MAKEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the adoption, as the result of co-operation between the socialist and the developing countries, of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX)) had marked positive progress towards the reorganization of international economic relations on a more equitable basis. Among the principles underlying those relations were those of peaceful coexistence, the need to strengthen peace as a prerequisite for development, efforts by all States to promote general and complete disarmament, and the need for effective international armaments control and the use of the resources thus released for economic and social progress. The Charter also confirmed the relationship between the need to strengthen international peace, disarmament, and social and economic progress. In the view of his delegation, the useless waste of resources on a frenzied arms race against the background of an increasing deterioration in the world economic situation could only diminish the possibilities for trade and economic co-operation. For that reason, it believed that the Council should give due importance to the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and other important decisions taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth sessions and at its sixth special session. The Soviet Union would continue to co-operate with the developing countries in order to promote social and economic progress, and in so doing it would be guided by the fundamental principles inherent in the new international order. His delegation believed that, in considering the comprehensive list of items before it, the Council should give the highest priority to those the consideration of which would best promote the implementation of the progressive principles contained in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties. His delegation would fully support any efforts to ensure that those principles did not remain a dead letter.

29. His delegation could support those proposals by the Secretariat that were aimed at rationalizing the work of the Council and hoped that their implementation would enable the Council to concentrate on fundamental questions in a way that would enhance the effectiveness of its work.

30. Mr. SANDERS (United States of America) said his delegation was surprised and disappointed that so little had been heard from the developing countries on the question of organizing the work of the Council. Although his delegation hesitated to become involved in a dialogue of the deaf, it wishes to express its satisfaction with the report prepared by the Secretariat, a report which his Government could in general support. The Council had traditionally been a generator of ideas, and his delegation felt that it would be useful for the Council to focus its attention in 1975 on the role it could play in that respect.

31. His delegation could agree to the rearrangement of the agenda along substantive lines. Further consideration should be given to the suggestion concerning the abolition of summary records for certain subsidiary

organs of the Council. When conferences were held away from Headquarters, summary records of their proceedings were most useful. For example, consideration by the Council and the General Assembly of the proceedings of the World Food Conference had been hampered by the lack of summary records.

32. Referring to the question of the pattern of meetings, he said that most delegations, including his own, would have difficulties in covering three simultaneous meetings. He expressed the hope that, when meetings were scheduled, account would be taken of the resources of delegations and the pressures to which they were subjected, particularly towards the end of a session.

33. His delegation strongly favoured the abolition of resumed sessions of the Council. Foreseeable issues of the kind generally taken up at the resumed sessions could be considered at regular sessions of the Council and, with a more flexible application of rules 4 and 5 of the rules of procedure, special sessions could be convened to deal with unforeseen issues.

34. Mr. CAVAGLIERI (Italy) welcomed the suggestions and proposals made in document E/5604 and Corr.1. He supported the proposal concerning substantive integration of items on the Council's agenda. Such a measure would enable delegations to speak on all questions covered by a comprehensive item, and any delegation wishing to do so could submit additional matters for consideration by the Council without having to request the inclusion of a separate item in the agenda.

35. As far as documentation was concerned, he felt that the use of summary records should not be abolished, but should simply be restricted to the most important subsidiary organs of the Council. The rapporteurs of subsidiary bodies without summary record coverage would then have to ensure that any views which delegations might wish to be placed on record were reflected in the report and were clearly ascribed to the delegation concerned.

36. His delegation could support the suggestion of holding six meetings daily during regular sessions, on the understanding that that number would include informal meetings. He agreed that a review should be conducted so as to avoid overlapping of meetings of the Council with those of its subsidiary organs. The concept of intermittent sessions of the Council was also acceptable, provided that such sessions were convened for a reasonable period to deal with questions of real importance, where any delay would adversely affect the work of the Council. He welcomed the proposal to discontinue the resumed sessions of the Council, on the understanding that special sessions could be held, if necessary, during a session of the General Assembly.

37. Mr. KASEMSRI (Thailand), referring to the observation made by the representative of the United States, said that his delegation, which represented a developing country, wished to emphasize its right to speak only when it had something worth-while to offer.

38. He supported the proposal for the substantive integration of items to be dealt with by the Council. Such a step would increase the efficiency and quality of the Council's work during 1975.

39. As far as documentation was concerned, some subsidiary bodies of the Council had a greater need of summary records than others. For example, a distinction should be drawn between regional bodies such as

the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and other functional committees and commissions of the Council. Records of the proceedings of such a body could be of great interest to members of the Council and other States Members of the United Nations belonging to other geographical regions.

40. Although the Council's rules of procedure provided for intermittent sessions, great care must be taken to ensure that progress beneficial to all could be achieved at such sessions. The resumed sessions of the Council could be discontinued, since they added to the problems of the smaller delegations.

41. He agreed with the Secretariat's suggestion in paragraph 2 (a) of the explanatory notes in the report of the Secretariat (part II, sect. C), and would have no strong objection to the suggestion in paragraph 2 (b) if it was acceptable to the other members of the Council.

42. The PRESIDENT reminded delegations that they were assembled as members of the Council to deal impartially with the questions presented for their consideration, and not as representatives of developed or developing countries.

43. Mr. HOSNY (Egypt) said that his delegation supported the views expressed by the representative of Brazil, particularly with regard to the abolition of summary records for certain subsidiary organs. The objective was to rationalize the work of the Council in order to make it more efficient and productive. Efficiency must not be subordinated to considerations of economy. It was essential to adopt a flexible approach to the question of summary records, rather than attempt to apply rigid rules. Accordingly, the subsidiary bodies of the Council should be allowed to decide which aspects of their deliberations required summary record coverage, as was currently the practice in the case of the Commission for Social Development. The Council could first provide the necessary guidelines with regard to economy and brevity.

44. He agreed that there was a need to streamline the pattern of meetings in order to avoid overlapping.

45. Mr. BARCELO (Mexico) noted that the report of the Secretariat contained no reference to article 34 of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Perhaps the Secretariat could explain how it interpreted that article and how it intended to put it into effect.

46. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) said that his delegation was very satisfied with the suggestions contained in the report of the Secretariat.

47. Referring to the observation made by the representative of the United States, he said that his delegation would speak when it had something worth-while to say. Obviously, it was the United States representative who was deaf, since he had apparently not heard the statement of the representative of Brazil, a developing country.

48. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) noted that, in the discussion on document E/5604 and Corr.1, a number of delegations had referred to "proposals" made by the Secretariat. He pointed out that, in preparing the document, the Secretariat had simply tried to interpret the wishes of the Council and the General Assembly.

49. The main reason for increasing the number of daily meetings at the regular sessions of the Council would be precisely to allow informal meetings to take

place, thereby reflecting a clear trend in the United Nations as a whole and in the Council in particular. He recalled that, at the fifty-fifth session, held in Geneva in 1973, serious difficulties had been encountered in servicing the extra meetings scheduled. In 1974, on the other hand, there had been no difficulty in providing such services because the Council had reached a decision in advance. As 1975 was a review year, it was foreseeable that the Council would decide to set up a working party. If it was not possible to service meetings of such a working party, the situation would become difficult. Furthermore, the Council had a very diversified agenda and it was difficult to see how it could operate with less than three sessional bodies. While the proposal would allow three formal meetings to be held simultaneously, its main purpose was to enable the Council to have services for informal meetings if it so desired.

50. As far as the question of resumed sessions was concerned, the suggestion made in paragraph 34 of the report was simply that the Trade and Development Board should be invited to hold its sessions before the second regular session of the Council. If the Board agreed to do so, delegations to that session could subsequently participate in the regular session of the Council at which the report was to be considered. As far as the question of holding a resumed session during the General Assembly was concerned, he felt that, if the Council met only on an exceptional basis to consider specific questions, prior consultations could be held between the President of the Council and the Chairman of the Second Committee to avoid overlapping. The Council might consider holding a brief special session in 1975 to consider the report of the Trade and Development Board.

51. Where the agenda was concerned, it should be clearly understood that the different approach suggested in the report of the Secretariat was merely one of many possibilities. It was for the Council to decide how such a substantive integration was to be put into effect.

52. The main consideration in suggesting a review of the situation with regard to summary records had not been one of economy. The services of the Secretariat were under great pressure and the provision of summary records accounted for an increasingly large proportion of their workload. As the United Nations moved further towards a system of informal meetings, summary records would no doubt in many cases become unnecessary. In some cases, however, it was necessary to preserve a record of statements. He believed that the Council should reserve the right to authorize summary record coverage of the proceedings of its subsidiary organs.

53. Referring to the point raised by the representative of the United Kingdom, he said that the system suggested in paragraph 33 of the report was intended to avoid the establishment of new subsidiary machinery and not to replace existing subsidiary organs.

54. In reply to the question put by the representative of France, he said that the decision in question was referred to under item 6 of its programme of work. Secondly, with regard to the question of joint meetings between the Working Group set up by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session to consider policy and co-ordination and the informal group established by the Council at its fifty-seventh session, as soon as the President and other officers of the Council had decided on the distribution of offices, the Chairman of the



Policy and Programme Co-ordination Committee would decide when those meetings were to take place.

55. Replying to the question put by the representative of Japan, he said that no reference was made in the report of the Secretariat to Council resolution 1898 (LVII) because the report concerned would not be submitted to the Committee on Science and Technology for Development until 1976.

56. The absence of a reference to General Assembly resolution 3282 (XXIX) had been due to an omission on the part of the Secretariat, for which he apologized. Resolution 3281 (XXIX), concerning the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, had not been mentioned because it had not been referred specifically to the Economic and Social Council.

*The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.*

## 1937th meeting

Wednesday, 15 January 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

*President: Iqbal AKHUND (Pakistan).*

E/SR.1937

### AGENDA ITEM 3

**Rationalization of the work of the Council and basic programme of work for 1975 (*continued*)**  
(E/5604 and Corr.1, E/L.1619 and 1621)

### AGENDA ITEM 4

**Actions arising out of decisions of the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session (*concluded*)**  
(E/L.1618)

### AGENDA ITEM 7

**Provisional agenda for the fifty-eighth session**  
(E/L.1620)

1. The PRESIDENT said that, as a result of the formal and informal meetings held in the past two days, the Council had before it two draft decisions contained in documents E/L.1619 and E/L.1621.

2. It appeared to be the consensus of the Council that the report of the Secretariat (E/5604 and Corr.1) had greatly assisted it in considering the question of the pattern of meetings and in clarifying the various issues involved. It was quite clear that rules 4 and 5 of the rules of procedure provided the procedural basis which would give the Council the necessary flexibility to enable it to hold special sessions to consider specific matters at the most opportune time. The Council had further agreed that changes in its pattern of meetings were closely related to the structure of its subsidiary machinery, which would be reviewed at its fifty-eighth session. While 1975 was an exceptional year, the Council had agreed to bear in mind the suggestions concerning changes in its pattern of meetings, particularly in relation to the holding of special sessions, contained in the Secretariat report, with a view to further rationalizing its work.

3. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decisions contained in document E/L.1619 and E/L.1621 without a vote.

*The draft decisions were adopted [decisions 64 (ORG-75) and 65 (ORG-75)].*

4. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that he wished to place on record certain additional decisions concerning the programme of work which had

been reached in informal discussions. Work programme question 23 (Agrarian reform) would be integrated into item 9, instead of item 6 of the agenda for the fifty-eighth session. The report of the World Food Conference would be submitted to the Council at its fifty-ninth session, together with the report of the World Food Council on its first session. General Assembly resolution 3282 (XXIX) on the strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States would be drawn to the attention of the Council at its fifty-eighth session, in the context of the item on rationalization of the work of the Council (item 3), as requested in paragraph 4 of that resolution.

5. The Council had before it document E/L.1620 concerning documentation for the fifty-eighth session. At its fifty-seventh session, the Council had decided not to consider reports of more than 32 pages unless special authorization to exceed that length had been given by the Council. He therefore wished to request the Council to waive the 32-page rule in respect of the following three documents: for the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-eighth session, under item 9, the report called for in Council resolution 1896 (LVII), section I, and 1911 (LVII), section I; under item 7 for the same session, the report of the Secretary-General called for in General Assembly resolution 3057 (XXVIII); for the Committee on Natural Resources at its fourth session, the report of the Secretary-General on a comprehensive plan of action for the development of natural resources called for in Council resolution 1761 A (LIV).

6. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to waive the 32-page rule in respect of the documents mentioned by the Secretary.

*It was so decided [decision 66 (ORG-75)].*

7. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that two questions concerning documentation remained to be settled.

8. First, the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit had asked that the attention of the Council should be drawn to the report by Mr. Bertrand on medium-