



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
OFFICIAL RECORDS  
TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 3

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Report to the Economic and Social Council on the eleventh session of the Commission,  
held at United Nations Headquarters, from 18 March to 5 April 1957

CHAPTER I

Organization of the eleventh session of the Commission

1. The eleventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women opened at the United Nations Headquarters on Monday, 18 March 1957. The Commission held twenty-seven plenary meetings and terminated its work on 5 April 1957.

2. The following representatives of States members of the Commission attended:

*Argentina*: Mrs. C. Cristina Correa Morales de Aparicio, representative;

*Australia*: Miss Ruth Gibson, representative;

*Belgium*: Mrs. Georgette Ciselet, representative;

*Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic*: Mrs. Faina Novikova, representative;

*China*: Miss Pao Swen Tseng, representative; Miss Chunying Wang, alternate;

*Cuba*: Miss Uldarica Mañas, representative; Miss Silvia Shelton, alternate;

*Dominican Republic*: Miss Minerva Bernardino, representative;

*France*: Mrs. Marie-Hélène Lefauchaux, representative;

*Indonesia*: Mrs. Rusiah Sardjono, representative; Mr. R. Sutanto, alternate;

*Israel*: Mrs. Mina Ben-Zvi, alternate;

*Mexico*: Miss Maria Lavallo Urbina, representative; Mr. Enrique Bravo Caro, alternate;

*Pakistan*: Begum Anwar Ahmed, representative; Mrs. Budrunnessa Ahmad, alternate;

*Poland*: Mrs. Zofia Dembinska, representative;

*Sweden*: Mrs. Agda Rössel, representative; Mrs. B. Skottsberg-Ahman, alternate;

*Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*: Mrs. N. S. Spiridonova, representative; Mrs. K. K. Mukhildinova, alternate;

*United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*: Dame Lucile Sayers, representative; Mr. P. W. J. Buxton, alternate;

*United States of America*: Mrs. Lorena Hahn, representative;

*Venezuela*: Mrs. Isabel Sánchez de Urdaneta, representative; Mrs. Carlotta Benítez de Socorro, alternate.

3. At the 231st meeting, the representative of the USSR protested against the absence of any representative of the People's Republic of China, whose place, she contended, was illegally occupied by a person who had no right to represent China. This view was supported by the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR and Poland. The representative of China stated that she represented the only legal Government of China, and pointed out that the Commission was not competent to take any action in the matter. This view was supported by the representative of the United States of America. It was agreed that the views expressed would be included in the records of the session.

4. The Commission, at its 231st meeting, unanimously elected the following officers:

*Chairman*: Mrs. Agda Rössel (Sweden);

*First Vice-Chairman*: Miss Uldarica Mañas (Cuba);

*Second Vice-Chairman*: Mrs. Zofia Dembinska (Poland);

*Rapporteur*: Miss Ruth Gibson (Australia).

5. The following representatives of specialized agencies were also present at the session:

*International Labour Organisation*: Mrs. Ana Figueroa, representative; Mr. P. R. Payró, alternate;

*United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*: Mrs. A. Gegalova, representative;

*World Health Organization*: Dr. R. L. Coigney, representative; Mrs. Silvia Meagher, alternate.

6. *The Inter-American Commission of Women*, an inter-governmental organization, was represented by Miss Ana María Perera and Mrs. Esther N. de Calvo, in accordance with resolution 48 B (IV), paragraph 7, of the Economic and Social Council.

7. The following authorized representatives from non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were also present:

#### CATEGORY A

*International Confederation of Free Trade Unions:* Mr. William Kemsley, Mrs. Caroline Davis, Mrs. Bessie Hillman, Miss Mary Hanscom, Mrs. Angela Bambace, Miss Rose Pesotta;  
*International Co-operative Alliance:* Mr. Leslie Woodcock, Mrs. Cedric Long;  
*International Federation of Christian Trade Unions:* Mr. Gerard Thormann;  
*World Federation of Trade Unions:* Miss Elinor Kahn;  
*World Federation of United Nations Associations:* Mrs. Oliver Weerasinghe, Mrs. C. Beresford Fox.

#### CATEGORY B

*Catholic International Union for Social Service:* Mrs. A. D. Vergara, Mrs. Carmen Giroux;  
*Commission of the Churches on International Affairs:* Mr. Dominique Micheli, Mrs. Esther Hymer;  
*Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations:* Mr. Saul E. Jofte;  
*International Alliance of Women:* Miss Frieda Miller, Mrs. Ana Lord Strauss;  
*International Association of Penal Law:* Mrs. Sabin Manuila;  
*International Catholic Child Bureau:* Miss Margaret M. Bedard;  
*International Co-operative Women's Guild:* Mrs. Cedric Long;  
*International Conference of Catholic Charities:* Mr. Louis C. Longarzo;  
*International Council of Women:* Mrs. Frances M. Freeman, Mrs. Eunice H. Carter, Mrs. Craig Schuller;  
*International Federation "Amies de la Jeune Fille":* Miss Anne E. Lagemann;  
*International Federation of Business and Professional Women:* Judge Sarah T. Hughes, Mrs. Susanne Shallna, Mrs. Louise Arnold, Miss Helen Yeo, Mrs. Esther Hymer;  
*International Federation of University Women:* Mrs. Barbara D. Evans, Mrs. F. B. Weston;  
*International Federation of Women Lawyers:* Mrs. Luisa Amelia Pérez Perozo, Miss A. Viola Smith, Mrs. Devine Diblan-Carlson, Miss Josefina R. Phodaca;  
*International League for the Rights of Man:* Mrs. H. Wolle-Egenolf, Mrs. Dora Roitburd;  
*International Movement for Fraternal Union among Races and Peoples:* Miss Marjory Krynen;  
*Liaison Committee of International Women's Organizations:* Miss Frieda Miller;  
*Nouvelles équipes internationales:* Mr. J. Sleszynski;

*Pan Pacific South-east Asia Women's Association:* Mrs. Henry G. Fowler;  
*Society of Comparative Legislation:* Miss Jacqueline S. Jolly;  
*Women's International League for Peace and Freedom:* Mrs. Adelaide N. Baker, Mrs. Caroline Malin, Mrs. Margareta Leclerc;  
*World Assembly of Youth:* Mrs. Evelyn Jones Rich, Mr. Robert S. Perlzweig;  
*World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts:* Miss Mary Weeks, Mrs. Edward F. Johnson, Mrs. Charles Ridder, Miss E. M. Centoz;  
*World Federation of Catholic Young Women and Girls:* Mrs. Rosemary H. Cass, Mrs. Frank Berberich;  
*World Jewish Congress:* Mrs. Thelma Richman;  
*World Movement of Mothers:* Miss Saloméja M. Nar-kėliūnaitė;  
*World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations:* Miss Catherine Schaefer;  
*World Young Women's Christian Associations:* Mrs. Constance Anderson, Miss Margaret Forsyth, Miss Alice Arnold;  
*Young Christian Workers:* Miss Caroline Pezzullo.

#### REGISTER

*International Council of Nurses:* Mrs. Frances C. Smith;  
*St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance:* Mrs. W. Grabinska, Mrs. Magda De Spur.

8. The following observers of States Members of the United Nations attended meetings of the session:

*Bulgaria:* Mr. Bogomil Todorov, Mrs. Margarita Voutov, Mrs. Blaga Georgiev;  
*Canada:* Mr. Derek C. Arnould;  
*Japan:* Mrs. Setsu Taninon;  
*Philippines:* Miss Josefina R. Phodaca;  
*Romania:* Mrs. Alexandra Bucan.

9. An observer of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mrs. Hanna Kiep, also attended the meetings.

10. Mr. Martin Hill, Deputy Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. John P. Humphrey, Director of the Division of Human Rights, and Mrs. Mary Tenison-Woods, Chief of the Section on the Status of Women, represented the Secretary-General; Mrs. Sophie Grinberg-Vinaver acted as Secretary to the Commission.

11. The expression of the views of the members of the Commission is embodied in the summary records of the plenary meetings (E/CN.6/SR.231 to 257).

12. In order to expedite its work, the Commission, at its 232nd meeting, established two *ad hoc* committees as follows:

*Committee on Resolutions:* the representatives of France (Chairman), the Dominican Republic, Pakistan,

the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United States of America.

*Committee on Communications:* the representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Chairman), the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Indonesia, Israel and Venezuela.

## CHAPTER II

### Agenda

13. The Commission considered its agenda at its 231st meeting, and had before it the provisional agenda (E/CN.6/290) drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission.

14. The Commission accepted unanimously the proposal of the representative of the Dominican Republic that an item entitled "Participation of women in the work of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies" should be added to the agenda.

15. At its 231st meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted its agenda as amended.

16. The agenda in its final form (E/CN.6/290/Rev.1) was as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Political rights of women:
  - (a) Annual memorandum on political rights of women;
  - (b) Report on the status of women in Trust Territories;
  - (c) Report on the status of women in Non-Self-Governing Territories.
4. Report of the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women to the ninth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.
5. Access of women to education:
  - (a) Report containing analytical summary of information on discrimination against women in education;
  - (b) Report on access of women to education;
  - (c) Preliminary report on employment of women as teachers.
6. Equal pay for equal work:
  - (a) Progress report on the implementation by Governments of the principle of equal pay for equal work;
  - (b) Report on methods found useful in various countries for the implementation of the principle of equal pay with particular reference to collective bargaining agreements.
7. Economic opportunities for women:
  - (a) List of questions concerning principal professional and technical fields of training and opportunities, whether or not available to women;
  - (b) Report on part-time work for women and on employment conditions of older women workers;
  - (c) Report on cottage industries and handicrafts, including social services available to women working in this field;
  - (d) Joint report on vocational and technical training for girls and women;
  - (e) Note relating to the question of working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities, and means for the improvement of their position.
8. Nationality of married women:
  - (a) Report containing information on recent changes in legislation affecting the nationality of married women;
  - (b) Note on action taken by the General Assembly on the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women.
9. Status of women in private law: report on the practice of polygamy, bride-price, child marriage and the right of mothers respecting their children.
10. Tax legislation affecting married women workers: preliminary study on tax legislation applicable to married women who work.
11. Technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women and advisory services in the field of human rights:
  - (a) Supplementary report containing summary of selected technical assistance projects directly or indirectly affecting the status of women;
  - (b) Progress report on advisory services in the field of human rights in relation to the status of women.
12. Participation of women in the work of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.
13. Report of the Inter-American Commission of Women.
14. Communications concerning the status of women.
15. Review of the programme of work and establishment of priorities:
  - (a) Report on the action taken by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies and specialized agencies on the decisions reached by the Commission on the Status of Women at its tenth session;
  - (b) Note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and the establishment of priorities.
16. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council.

## CHAPTER III

### Political rights of women

17. The Commission considered item 3 of its agenda at its 232nd to 237th, and 244th and 245th meetings. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General on constitutions, electoral laws and other legal instruments relating to the political rights of women (A/3145 and Add.1) and reports by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Trust Territories (E/CN.6/288) and in Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/CN.6/293).

18. In its general debate the Commission reviewed the progress made during the past year towards wider recognition of political rights for women. Several members said that it was important for the Commission to continue to consider each year new developments in that field and to receive annual reports by the Secretary-General on political rights of women both in sovereign States and in dependent territories. It was noted that the number of countries where women had no political rights was now reduced to twelve, but there remained many other areas where those rights were not fully recognized. Particular interest in the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories was expressed by certain members, some of whom were of the opinion that the situation with regard to political rights of women in those territories was unsatisfactory. Others pointed out that the dependent territories compared favourably in that respect with many sovereign States; and these members considered also that there was no reason for reports on political rights of women containing information on Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories to be presented to the Commission separately from the report on sovereign States.

19. Widespread acceptance of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (General Assembly resolution 640 (VII), annex) was, in the opinion of several members, of great importance; and, in this connexion, mention was made of the indispensable assistance from non-governmental organizations in supplying public information on the Convention and campaigning for its acceptance. Some representatives had spoken of obstacles to their respective countries' adherence to the Convention, referring to constitutional problems and to the fact that the Convention lacked a territorial application clause.

20. It was suggested that the forthcoming fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention by the General Assembly should perhaps be made an occasion for activities focusing public attention on the subject of political rights of women and on the Convention itself. Co-operation between the Commission and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in consultative status, was mentioned as a possibility to be explored, since women members of parliament and members of that association might well make a useful contribution to the work of the Commission.

21. There was general agreement that as the political rights of women had recently been given legal recogni-

tion in many countries, increased efforts should be made to bring about the full and effective exercise of those rights; emphasis was placed on the need for political education and on the necessity of encouraging women to undertake civic responsibilities and to participate actively in public life. The role of the non-governmental organizations was stressed in connexion with the political education of women; it was suggested that such organizations should endeavour to direct attention to women qualified for appointed posts or for nomination as candidates for elective posts.

22. Several members said that the experience of women's organizations in countries where equal political rights were of long standing could be of great assistance to women who had only recently acquired political rights and who were consequently striving, in the course of one generation, to achieve what women of more highly developed countries had accomplished over a longer period of time. It was also felt that the United Nations could serve as a clearing-house for information on effective methods of encouraging women to use their political rights and of educating them to fulfil their civic responsibilities. Several members expressed satisfaction that the United Nations programme of advisory services in the field of human rights was being utilized for that purpose.

23. The Commission heard a statement by the representative of the Inter-American Commission of Women. Statements on the item were also made by representatives of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, and the International Federation of Women Lawyers.

24. The discussion centred on draft resolutions dealing, first, with the recognition by Governments of the political rights of women and adherence to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women; secondly, with the study of those rights in Trust and in Non-Self-Governing Territories; and thirdly, with the possibility of holding an international conference or seminar.

#### RECOGNITION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

25. The representatives of Cuba, Pakistan, and Sweden submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.206), the first two operative paragraphs of which read as follows:

"1. *Invites* non-governmental organizations in consultative status to apply their efforts towards increasing public support in the various countries for such signatures, ratifications or accessions and to inform the Commission on the Status of Women of obstacles which in their opinion prevent Governments from becoming parties to the Convention;

"2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to obtain this information from non-governmental organizations and to submit to the Commission at its twelfth session a report based on the replies received."

26. The draft resolution also contained a draft resolution for the Economic and Social Council by which

the Council would urge States which had not already done so to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention.

27. The representatives of Australia and the United States of America submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.207) requesting the Council to adopt a draft resolution containing the following two operative paragraphs:

“ 1. *Recommends* that all States Members of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, which have not yet done so, accord political rights to women;

“ 2. *Invites* international non-governmental organizations in consultative relationship with the United Nations to continue their activities supporting increased political rights for women.”

28. Many members, supporting the three-Power draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.206), stressed the importance of securing universal acceptance of the Convention and felt that a resolution to that effect should be adopted by the Commission for action by the Council. Certain members, however, were of the opinion that it was the recognition of political rights of women, rather than adherence to the Convention, which should receive emphasis; and that view was reflected in the draft resolution submitted by Australia and the United States (E/CN.6/L.207).

29. With respect to the paragraphs of the three-Power draft resolution referring to the request to non-governmental organizations, certain members were of the opinion that such a request was inappropriate because only the Governments themselves could properly be asked for their reasons for withholding signature and ratification. Other members felt that such information from non-governmental organizations would be of great interest particularly since the views of Governments were already known.

30. The two drafts were sent to the Committee on Resolutions, which presented to the Commission a single text. In discussing this text, certain members noted the omission of the first two operative paragraphs of the three-Power draft (E/CN.6/L.206) and felt that the invitation to non-governmental organizations, particularly with respect to informing the Commission of obstacles to adherence by Governments, should have been retained. The issue was not, however, pressed. It was pointed out that non-governmental organizations interested in the subject followed the work of the Commission very closely and would therefore be aware of the interest which some representatives had expressed in receiving the information called for in the deleted paragraphs. Those representatives thought that such non-governmental organizations would therefore be most likely to provide the Commission with the desired material in their statements and papers at the next session.

31. After certain drafting amendments had been made, the draft resolution was put to the vote paragraph by paragraph.

32. The first three paragraphs of the preamble and the operative paragraph of the draft resolution were adopted unanimously.

33. The first paragraph of the preamble to the draft resolution to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council was adopted unanimously.

34. The second paragraph of the preamble was adopted unanimously. A motion to reconsider the vote was made by the representative of the Dominican Republic and adopted unanimously. The representative of France proposed that the paragraph should be redrafted to read: “ Considering it important to increase participation by women in public life ”. The second paragraph of the preamble thus redrafted was unanimously adopted.

35. The third paragraph of the preamble was also adopted unanimously.

36. The fourth paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

37. Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution to be submitted to the Council was adopted unanimously.

38. The first part of operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, reading “ Invites non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations to continue their activities supporting political rights for women ” was put to a separate vote and adopted unanimously.

39. The second part of that operative paragraph reading “ and to apply their efforts towards increasing public support in the various countries for the signature and ratification of or accession to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women ”, was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

40. Operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

41. The following resolution as a whole was adopted at the 237th meeting of the Commission by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions:

#### *Resolution 1 (XI)*

“ *The Commission on the Status of Women,*

“ *Recognizing* the importance of achieving full political rights for women,

“ *Recalling* that the Convention on the Political Rights of Women was adopted by the General Assembly by its resolution 640 (VII) of 20 December 1952 and that it has been open for signature and ratification or accession by States since 31 March 1953,

“ *Noting* that as of March 1957 the Convention has been signed by forty States and ratified or acceded to by twenty-six,

“ *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . . ”

[*For the text of the draft resolution, see annex, draft resolution B.*]

#### POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN TRUST AND IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

42. A draft resolution was submitted by the representative of Poland (E/CN.6/L.209/Rev.1) by which the

Commission would request the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution:

*"The Economic and Social Council,*

*"I. With regard to Non-Self-Governing Territories:*

*"Noting resolution 1053 (XI) adopted by the General Assembly on 20 February 1957 calling for a report on the progress made in Non-Self-Governing Territories in those fields on which information has been transmitted, in accordance with the objectives set forth in Chapter XI of the Charter, since the establishment of the United Nations,*

*"1. Invites the Secretary-General to include among the questions dealt with in the above-mentioned report a special study of the status of women in the Non-Self-Governing Territories;*

*"2. Invites the Administering Members to include in the information they transmit regularly in accordance with Article 73 e of the Charter any information which may be useful in the preparation of such a study;*

*"II. With regard to Trust Territories:*

*"Invites the Secretary-General to prepare a special study of the status of women in Trust Territories."*

43. In support of this text it was said that the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories indicated that the information on the subject received from the Administering Powers was inadequate and far too general. Since the General Assembly had, at its eleventh session, requested a report on progress made in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, it was the intention of the sponsor that a special chapter on the status of women should be included in that report.

44. Several members expressed doubt that any purpose would be served by the draft resolution since, with respect to the status of women in Trust Territories, the Commission received all the information communicated to the Secretary-General by the Administering Authorities; and since, with respect to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the status of women was already a question on which information was transmitted to the Secretary-General by the Administering Powers and would therefore be included in the report called for by General Assembly resolution 1053 (XI).

45. The representative of the United States submitted amendments (E/CN.6/L.213/Rev.1) to the Polish draft resolution. Point 1 of the amendments consisted in deleting the words "Recommends to the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: The Economic and Social Council", and the words "With regard to Non-Self-Governing Territories". Point 2 of the amendments called for the replacement of the three operative paragraphs of the draft resolution by the following two operative paragraphs:

*"1. Notes with satisfaction that there is to be a section on the status of women in the report of the Secretary-General requested pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1053 (XI) on progress made in Non-Self-Governing Territories;*

*"2. Notes further with satisfaction that the annual reports of Administering Authorities on the administration of Trust Territories contain information regarding the status of women and that this information is being communicated by the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at each session."*

46. The representative of Poland indicated her willingness to accept point 1 of the United States amendments. She also agreed to the deletion of the last operative paragraph of the Polish draft resolution, so that all reference to Trust Territories would be omitted. The representative of the United States accordingly withdrew operative paragraph 2 of the text proposed in her amendments, concerning annual reports by Administering Authorities of Trust Territories.

47. The remaining issue involved the operative paragraph in the Polish draft resolution concerning the report on Non-Self-Governing Territories. The representative of Poland did not accept the replacement of operative paragraph 1 of the Polish draft resolution by operative paragraph 1 of the text proposed by the United States, although she stated that she would accept it as an addition. The draft resolution was then withdrawn by the sponsor.

#### CONVENING OF A CONFERENCE OR SEMINAR

48. The representative of Poland submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.208) by which the Commission would request the Economic and Social Council to adopt a draft resolution with the following operative paragraph :

*"Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene in 1958 an international conference of women members of parliaments in order to discuss the problem of granting political, economic, social, civil and cultural rights to women on the same footing with men as well as to consider the results of the activities of the United Nations bodies in this field."*

49. Belgium and the United States of America submitted amendments (E/CN.6/L.210) to the Polish draft resolution. Point 1 of the amendments called for the deletion of the words "Recommends that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following draft resolution: the Economic and Social Council". Point 2 called for the replacement of the operative paragraph of the draft resolution by the following text:

*"Recommends that the Secretary-General of the United Nations consider with the Governments of Member States the possibility of convening, under the United Nations human rights advisory services programme, in 1958 or 1959, an international seminar of women who have served or are now serving in parliaments or other major legislative bodies in order to discuss the problem of granting political, economic, social, civil and cultural rights to women on the same*

footing with men as well as to consider the results of the activities of the United Nations bodies in this field."

50. The main point of difference between these two texts was that one called for a non-governmental conference and the other for a seminar under the advisory services programme. There was also considerable discussion of the question whether the participants in a conference should be restricted to women members of parliaments, and on the subjects to be discussed at the conference or seminar, as the case might be.

51. The supporters of the Polish draft resolution were of the opinion that a conference was more appropriate than a seminar since the purpose to be served was not the preparation of women for participation in public life, as was the case in the seminars under the advisory services programme, but rather the gathering together of women leaders, all having political experience. A seminar would not have the same value in arousing public interest, nor could a seminar take decisions or express concerted opinions.

52. Certain members, however, stressed the importance of the Commission's following through on the projected programme of advisory services in the field of human rights with respect to the status of women. It was recalled that the Commission had, at its tenth session, requested the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of holding regional seminars to assist women who had recently acquired political rights or did not yet fully exercise them in developing their understanding of civic responsibilities and increasing their participation in the public life of their countries. The Commission's attention was drawn to the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.6/294), in which it was stated that a *note verbale* had been sent to Governments on the organization of seminars, suggesting as a topic, "Civic responsibility and increased participation of women in public life in countries where they have recently acquired political rights"; and that an expert working group had already met in connexion with an Asian seminar, on that topic, to be held in 1957. It would, it was urged, be inappropriate for the Commission at the current time to request the Council to convene a conference outside the scope of the programme already under way.

53. Several members questioned the limitation, mentioned both in the Polish draft resolution and in the joint amendments, to participation by women members of parliament. It was said that such women would, of necessity, come only from countries where women's political rights were well advanced; and it was also stated that not all countries which had recognized women's political rights had women members of parliament and that therefore such countries would be at a disadvantage. It was stated further that women members of parliament were often not particularly concerned with women's rights, although several members stated their own experience to the contrary. The supporters of both texts expressed themselves amenable to the suggestion that the participation in the conference or seminar should be broadened to include women in high government posts.

54. In the opinion of certain members there was a danger that the projected conference or seminar might duplicate the work of the Commission, in view of the broad topics proposed for discussion. Some feared that, with a conference particularly, such an agenda might well threaten the prestige of the Commission, which would appear, after many years of existence, to be delegating its functions to another international body. On the other hand, several members felt that there need be no conflict between the Commission and the conference; on the contrary, a conference would focus attention on the Commission's work and engender support for its aims.

55. It was suggested by certain members that it would be of greater interest if the conference, in which women prominent in political life would participate, were to be concerned with current problems of general interest rather than with rights of women. Such a conference might then result in the expression of the views of prominent women on world affairs. Another suggestion was that the conference should restrict itself to the consideration of political problems.

56. At its 235th meeting, the Commission heard a statement on the financial implications of the Polish draft resolution in which it was assumed that all participants would bear their own travelling and subsistence expenses and the secretariat expenditures would be limited to those necessary for the preparation of documents and servicing of the conference if held at the United Nations Headquarters.

57. Towards the end of the discussion, the representative of Poland orally indicated her acceptance of point 1 of the Belgian and United States amendments, calling for the deletion of reference to the Economic and Social Council; she also suggested that the operative paragraph be amended in accordance with various views expressed, to provide for a request to the Secretary-General to consult with the Governments of Member States on the possibility of convening a conference in 1959.

58. The representative of the Dominican Republic submitted an amendment (E/CN.6/L.221) whereby the operative paragraph of the Polish draft resolution was to be replaced by the following text:

"*Recommends* that the Secretary-General of the United Nations consult with the Governments of Member States concerning the possibility of convening an international seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life, under the United Nations advisory services programme in the field of human rights, with the participation of women leaders in this field and of interested non-governmental organizations in consultative status in such a seminar so far as practicable."

59. The Polish draft resolution and the two amendments to it were referred to the Committee on Resolutions. The Committee recommended to the Commission the adoption of a text (E/CN.6/L.222) consisting of the preamble of the Polish draft resolution, with its sponsor's amendments, and the operative paragraph of the text proposed in the amendment by the Dominican

Republic (E/CN.6/L.221), with the addition of a request to the Secretary-General "to present to the Commission at its twelfth session a report on the results of his consultations with Governments".

60. There was general support for this combined text. Some members expressed themselves in favour of the seminar but reiterated their contention that a conference of women holding high government posts would serve a completely different and valuable purpose; they stated their hope that the Commission would consider taking action on such a conference at its next session. A few members expressed their opinion that a seminar such as was contemplated in the draft resolution would be of little value; it was suggested that it would be more useful to hold a seminar on some topic other than political rights, such as the status of women in private law.

61. After some further amendments, including the insertion of the words "as representatives of Member States" after the words "with the participation of women leaders in this field" in the operative paragraph and the deletion of the phrase "so far as practicable", the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.222) was put to the vote.

62. At its 245th meeting, the Commission adopted the following draft resolution by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions:

#### *Resolution 2 (XI)*

##### *"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Recalling that, in the United Nations Charter, the peoples of the United Nations stated their determination 'to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women',*

*"Noting that, though progress has been made during the last ten years in achieving the equality of women with men in the field of political rights and a positive contribution has been made thereto by the activities of United Nations bodies, including the Commission on the Status of Women, in a number of countries women are still deprived of the possibility of enjoying political rights,*

*"Taking into consideration the successful work, in a number of countries, of non-governmental organizations and individuals who succeed in forming a public opinion favourable for the achievement of full equality of women with men in the field of political rights,*

*"Considering that one of the useful forms of promoting the speediest achievement of the equality of women is the mutual exchange of the experience of individuals and organizations working in this field,*

*"Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to consult with the Governments of Member States concerning the possibility of convening an international seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life, under the United Nations programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, with the participation*

of women leaders in this field as representatives of Member States and of interested non-governmental organizations in consultative status, and to present to the Commission at its twelfth session a report on the results of his consultations with Governments.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Report of the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women to the ninth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities**

*and*

#### **Access of women to education**

63. The Commission decided to consider item 4 of its agenda (Report of the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women to the ninth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities) together with item 5 (Access of women to education). These items were discussed by the Commission at its 233rd, 234th, and 237th to 240th meetings. The Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General on access of women to education (E/CN.6/287) and two reports by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): a preliminary report on access of women to the teaching profession (E/CN.6/301) and a report on the activities of UNESCO regarding access of women to education (E/CN.6/291).

64. The Commission heard the oral report of Miss Uldarica Mañas (Cuba), who represented the Commission at the ninth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. She reported on her intervention in the discussion of that Sub-Commission on the chapter of the Special Rapporteur's report dealing with discrimination in education based on sex; and she drew the Commission's attention to the paragraph of resolution A of the Sub-Commission in which it expressed its gratitude to the Commission on the Status of Women for its co-operation in the study and looked forward to the specific recommendations to be made by the Commission on the subject of discrimination against women in education (E/CN.4/740, para. 160). She also spoke of the Sub-Commission's discussion on discrimination in employment. Appreciation was expressed by various members for the able representation by Miss Mañas and to the work of Mr. Charles D. Ammoun, the Special Rapporteur for the Sub-Commission. Several members expressed interest in the recommendations of the Sub-Commission, particularly respecting the possibility of a draft convention. It was assumed that the Commission would in future be represented at the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

65. The Commission heard a statement by the representative of UNESCO, who reviewed the aspects of the work of that organization which were of particular interest to the Commission. In speaking of future work, she stated that, pursuant to the wishes expressed at the

ninth General Conference of UNESCO held at New Delhi, the Director-General intended to plan, with the help of a consultant, an intensified programme of work relating specifically to women's education. She reported on the preliminary ideas of the Departments of Education, of Social Sciences and of Cultural Activities in that connexion. Since, before finalizing its work programme, UNESCO was consulting Member States and non-governmental organizations, as well as the United Nations and other specialized agencies, she stated that comments offered by members of the Commission would receive most careful consideration and would be particularly valuable. With regard to the UNESCO report on access of women to the teaching profession (E/CN.6/301), the preliminary character of the study was stressed and the Commission's attention was drawn to section III of the report outlining the main points requiring further comparative and international study.

66. In the course of the general debate, the members of the Commission discussed the various reports before it as well as the action taken by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The problem of education for girls in under-developed areas was, in the opinion of several members, substantially different from that existing in countries with highly developed educational systems where the existence and enforcement of free and compulsory education ensured equal attendance by girls, at least at the primary school level. Several members commented on the decline in girls' attendance, starting at the secondary level and becoming progressively more marked at the university level. That phenomenon could not be explained only in terms of discrimination against women, since in many instances secondary and higher education was available to girls on equal terms with boys. Some members felt that the comparatively low number of girls in universities or at least taking training for certain professions, such as engineering, reflected the view that men and women had different social roles. Some members expressed the opinion that the comparatively low attendance by older girls was attributable to marriage and it was suggested that it would be well to encourage girls not to abandon their studies because of marriage. The principle endorsed by many members was that all educational opportunities should be open to women, should they wish to take advantage of them. Secondary and higher education was, many members felt, important for women whether they chose to follow a profession or to concentrate on activities in the home. It was particularly emphasized that education did not aim solely at preparation for professions or vocations. The goal was also the development of a cultural and educated personality. Not only women themselves, but the family and society as a whole derived benefit from their receiving secondary and higher education. Non-governmental organizations, it was stressed, had an important function in influencing public opinion in favour of general and professional education for women.

67. Several members noted that, while there appeared to be little discrimination against women with respect to access to universities, the situation was not so clear

in connexion with fellowships and grants. It was deplored that, as indicated in the UNESCO report (E/CN.6/291), only 22 awards of fellowships, out of 244, had been made to women. One member felt that it might be desirable for UNESCO to consider ways of increasing the proportion of fellowships for women, perhaps by setting aside a given percentage for women candidates. The representative of UNESCO stated that all nominations for the awards were made by Governments or organizations and that the selection from those nominations was made by UNESCO solely on the basis of merit. She assured the Commission that she would communicate its views and suggestions on the subject to the Director-General.

68. With respect to under-developed countries where the goal of free and compulsory education was not yet achieved, it was noted that the disparity in attendance by girls as compared with that by boys was marked, even at the lowest level, and that only a negligible number of girls attended schools at the secondary and higher levels. The financial problem of providing schools for children of school age, both boys and girls, was recognized. It was stressed that, in building schools, facilities for girls should not be provided more slowly than for boys, since it was most important not only in the interest of girls themselves but of the general educational level that schooling for women should keep pace with that of men. Several members emphasized that such measures as temporary school buildings, triple sessions and the like, were preferable to depriving children of education because of lack of facilities. It was also suggested that, in view of the shortage of teachers, a pressing problem in many areas, their qualifications should not be unduly high; however, provision should be made for courses to raise teachers' qualifications while their services were being utilized. Several members had spoken of prejudice on the part of parents and their reluctance to send their daughters to school. This situation was further aggravated in some cases where family finances did not permit all the children to go to school, so that only boys were sent.

69. One member felt that it was discriminatory for primary schooling for girls to be in the vernacular language or local dialect and not in the "vehicular" language used in secondary schools, universities and in most schools for boys. That was particularly true where the mother tongue was used only in a small geographical area. It also narrowed educational opportunities for girls, in many cases restricting them to instruction in home-making, thus placing girls at a great disadvantage with regard to more advanced education. It was noted that Africans themselves in some territories favoured using the "vehicular" language as the language of instruction as early as possible.

70. On the other hand, some members expressed doubt that the indigenous population considered education in the vernacular language to be discrimination; they believed that, although other languages should also be taught, the language of instruction should in all cases be the mother tongue. Members taking that view stated that native languages could be enriched so as to be usable in institutions of higher learning and in

scientific and literary work. It was, in their opinion, of prime importance that respect for the indigenous culture should be inculcated and that the development of that culture, including its language, should be encouraged.

71. Fundamental education for adult women was, in the view of several members, worthy of particular attention since, in many areas with a high rate of illiteracy, that rate was even higher for women than for men.

72. Most members of the Commission favoured identical curricula for boys and girls. They deplored over-emphasis on so-called "women's subjects" and domestic sciences in girls' schools. Several members stated that, while it might be expected that more girls than boys would choose domestic sciences as elective subjects, the same courses should be equally available to boys and girls. Distinctions in schooling at the lower grades might well have the effect of discouraging girls against pursuing higher studies. Moreover, they would be placed at a disadvantage in secondary schools and universities if their preparation in academic subjects was less adequate than that of boys.

73. With respect to women teachers, it was noted that in many countries there was a very high proportion of women teachers at the primary school level but comparatively few at the upper levels. The comparatively low pay of primary school teachers and unequal pay scales for men and women teachers in some countries were commented on. Some members stated that, while it was generally recognized that women were particularly successful teachers of very young children, it should also be recognized that boys' schools should have some women teachers since both male and female influence was important. It was also suggested that more women should be appointed as school inspectors, not only because they would be well qualified for the job, but also as an encouragement to girls to enter that career.

74. Several members expressed their satisfaction and great interest in the projected programmes of UNESCO, described by its representative, concerning education for girls and women.

75. In the course of its discussion, the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the Inter-American Commission of Women, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the World Federation of Trade Unions, the International Alliance of Women, the International Federation of University Women, and the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

76. The Commission considered a draft resolution submitted by Australia, Belgium, Cuba and the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.212), by which the Economic and Social Council would be requested to adopt a draft resolution containing the following operative paragraphs:

"1. *Recommends* that States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies should in their programme of educational advancement:

"(a) Make special provisions for the development of programmes of adult or fundamental education of women who have not received primary education and for an intensified campaign against illiteracy among the female population of areas where the general development of education is not advanced;

"(b) Make the necessary provision for an increased attendance by girls at primary schools by:

"(i) Instituting or extending universal, free and compulsory primary education for all;

"(ii) Providing a sufficient number of schools for girls as well as for boys;

"2. *Requests* UNESCO to continue its studies concerning the access of women to education and, in particular:

"(a) To prepare, if possible for the twelfth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, a report on the access of women to higher education;

"(b) To bring up to date for the same session its report on the access of women to secondary education (E/CN.6/266) which was prepared for the Commission at its ninth session."

77. Amendments were proposed, both to the preamble and to the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, by Argentina and Venezuela (E/CN.6/L.215) and by France (E/CN.6/L.216).

78. Point 1 of the amendments submitted by Argentina and Venezuela (E/CN.6/L.215) provided for the insertion in the preamble to the draft resolution of the following paragraph:

"*Considering* that many States are prepared to proceed over a ten-year period, under the direction of UNESCO, with a programme directly benefiting women, facilitating their access to education and to all ranks of the teaching profession without distinction."

79. After drafting changes, including the replacement of the words "under the direction of UNESCO" by the words "with the co-operation of UNESCO" and the deletion of the words "over a ten-year period", this point of the joint amendments was accepted by the sponsors of the original draft resolution.

80. The second point of the joint amendments called for the addition of a sub-paragraph to paragraph 2 of the operative part of the draft resolution by which the Council would request UNESCO "to supplement the foregoing with a report reviewing the progress achieved in its various programmes to eliminate all discrimination in education". The sponsors of the amendments made particular reference to the major UNESCO project relating to compulsory and free primary education in which nineteen Latin American States had already agreed to participate and on which they thought the Commission should be informed the following year. They therefore wished to have a brief report by UNESCO on programmes, particularly those

benefiting women, other than those on higher and secondary education mentioned in the original draft resolution. The representative of UNESCO stated that, in her opinion, no specific request was necessary since UNESCO would ordinarily include such information in its annual progress report to the Commission. With that understanding the sponsors withdrew the second part of their amendments (E/CN.6/L.215).

81. The amendments submitted by France (E/CN.6/L.216) set forth six proposed changes. The sponsors of the original draft resolution accepted all of the amendments except the one in point 2, which was, after discussion, withdrawn by its sponsor.

82. Points 1 and 3 of the French amendments called for the inclusion in the first paragraph of the preamble to the Commission's draft resolution and in the first paragraph of the preamble to the draft resolution to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council, of the words "and the documentation prepared by UNESCO for the eleventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women".

83. Point 4 of the French amendments called for the replacement of the words "make special provision for the development of programmes of adult or fundamental education of women", in operative paragraph 1 (a), by the words "make provisions to ensure the equal participation, in fundamental education programmes, of women and men who have not received primary education. On the explanation of the representative of France that it was desirable that adults of both sexes should participate together in the same fundamental education programmes, the sponsors of the original draft resolution accepted the proposed change, with the replacement of the words "both men and women" by the word "all".

84. Point 5 of the French amendments called for the insertion of the words "containing a chapter on the distribution of scholarships and other material aids to higher education", in operative paragraph 2 (a) of the draft resolution to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council concerning the forthcoming UNESCO report on the access of women to higher education.

85. Point 6 of the French amendments called for the addition of the following sub-paragraph to operative paragraph 2, dealing with requests to UNESCO: "to supplement the documentation relating to the access of women to the teaching profession".

86. Point 2 of the French amendments provided for the insertion into the preamble of the Commission's draft resolution of the following paragraph:

*"Noting the value of an international instrument which would promote the application of the principles set forth in articles 2 and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights"*.

It was noted that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had, in resolution A contained in its report to the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/740, para. 160), expressed

its belief in the need for an international instrument which would embrace the principles of articles 2 and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles enunciated in paragraph 4 of resolution C contained in the same report (E/CN.4/740, para. 162). It was also noted that in resolution B (E/CN.4/740, para. 161), the Sub-Commission had requested the Commission on Human Rights to study the possibility, *inter alia*, "that it might be useful and desirable" for the Economic and Social Council to prepare such an international instrument. Several members expressed their interest in this recommendation by the Sub-Commission. Some favoured the inclusion, in a resolution by the Commission on the Status of Women, of an expression of opinion or of interest on the subject of the convention. Other members felt that an expression of opinion by the Commission would be premature and that no position should be taken, at least until the Commission on Human Rights considered the report of the Sub-Commission. It was pointed out that the Commission on the Status of Women would be represented at the forthcoming session of the Commission on Human Rights. The representative of France withdrew point 2 of her amendments, explaining that on further study of the report of the Sub-Commission, it was her view that no comment by the Commission on that particular subject was specifically called for at that time. Some members pointed out that the Commission could not be said to have taken any definite position on the subject of a convention dealing with discrimination in education, since some members had spoken in favour of such a convention, and some against, while several had not expressed themselves on the matter and no vote had been taken.

87. After further drafting changes, which were suggested by members of the Commission and by the representative of UNESCO, and accepted by the sponsors, the draft resolution as amended was put to a vote.

88. At its 240th meeting the Commission unanimously adopted the following draft resolution:

#### *Resolution 3 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Having considered the analytical summary of information prepared by the Secretary-General and the documentation prepared by UNESCO for the eleventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Noting the resolution adopted by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities at its ninth session in which the Sub-Commission referred to specific recommendations to be made by the Commission on the Status of Women on discrimination in education based on sex,*

*"Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . ."*

*[For the text of the draft resolution, see annex, draft resolution C.]*

## CHAPTER V

### Equal pay for equal work

89. The Commission considered item 6 of its agenda at its 241st, 242nd and 247th meetings. The Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General on practical methods for the implementation of equal pay for equal work (E/CN.6/296), as well as a report prepared by the International Labour Office on equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value (E/CN.6/300).

90. The Commission heard the representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), who reported on the action taken by various States members of the ILO with regard to ILO Convention No. 100 and Recommendation No. 90. She drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that ILO Convention No. 100 had so far been ratified by nineteen States, and that nine States had ratified the Convention during 1956 and the first three months of 1957. The representative of the ILO recalled the procedure, under the Constitution of the ILO, whereby States members of the ILO reported on the progress made in their respective countries towards the achievement of equal remuneration for work of equal value as set forth in the ILO Convention and Recommendation whether or not they had ratified the Convention. She noted that the International Labour Conference at its 39th session in June 1956 had adopted a resolution concerning the abolition of discrimination based on sex in the field of remuneration, and that in that resolution the Director-General of the International Labour Office had been invited to instruct the Office to prepare a report on the differentials actually existing in the wages of men and women workers in countries which have recognized the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value, as compared with countries which have not yet recognized that principle. The representative of the ILO stated that her organization would undertake the study in the near future, and that the ILO, in compliance with the pertinent resolution of the Economic and Social Council, would continue to submit reports to the Commission on the Status of Women on the progress being made in the field of equal remuneration for work of equal value.

91. The representative of the ILO noted that considerable progress had been made during the preceding year towards the achievement of equal remuneration, and that there had been a tendency to achieve that end through the reduction of existing differentials between the wages of men and women. She emphasized the importance of the efforts of trade-union organizations, and drew the attention of the Commission to meetings held by trade-union organizations at the international and regional levels to discuss the problems involved in the implementation of the principle of equal pay.

92. Members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed their appreciation of the documentation on the item prepared by the Secretary-General and by the International Labour Office and noted that

the reports complemented each other in that one dealt with the factual situation as it existed in various countries and that the other analysed practical methods for the implementation of equal pay for equal work as described by non-governmental organizations.

93. The importance of achieving full application of the principle of equal pay was repeatedly stressed during the debate, since it was considered to be a fundamental social problem which affected the human dignity of women as well as their economic status. Several members noted that increased industrialization tended to result in the employment of a greater number of women workers, and that the transition to industrialization presented particular problems in that respect to those countries whose economies were at present predominantly agricultural. One member felt that the experience of industrialized countries in dealing with the problem of equal pay would be extremely helpful as a guide to those countries whose economies were relatively less advanced.

94. Among the specific problems posed by the implementation of the principle of equal pay, several members of the Commission noted that certain areas of employment were almost exclusively reserved to women, a situation which made it difficult to compare their work with that of men; the difficulty was felt to be particularly serious for women engaged in agricultural work and in domestic service. One member felt that the working conditions of women in Trust and in Non-Self-Governing Territories required particular attention, especially with respect to the equality of their salaries with those of men.

95. In addition, other members stated that although in their countries the principle of equal pay was applied to women employed in the civil service and in areas of employment under direct governmental supervision, the principle was not as yet fully implemented in private industry; in spite of prolonged efforts over a period of more than forty years, because in some countries Governments did not have jurisdiction over the relative wage rates paid to men and women employed in private enterprises. Two members noted that some employers tended to regard compulsory social benefits for women as part of women's remuneration, and that in consequence employers were unwilling to pay their women employees the same wage rates as men workers. Other members stressed the importance of vocational guidance and training, to enable women to enter fields which were still traditionally reserved to men; they also emphasized the necessity for opportunities for advancement to enable women to hold positions comparable to those held by men.

96. One member also pointed out that in some cases the belief that absenteeism was more prevalent among women workers than among men militated against the application of the principle of equal pay in private industry, and noted that to justify lower wage rates for women, employers contended that women workers were less permanently a part of the labour force than men, and that women were less willing than men to work overtime.

97. Some members of the Commission noted with satisfaction that slow but steady progress was being made in a number of countries towards the implementation of the principle of equal pay, and that ILO Convention No. 100 had, to date, been ratified by nineteen States. It was also noted that several other States would soon be in a position to ratify the Convention, and that the procedure of ratification helped to focus national attention on the importance of applying the principle of equal pay. Some members of the Commission also paid a tribute to the efforts of non-governmental organizations to impress on their Governments the need to ratify the Convention.

98. One member expressed the view that although the ILO Convention had certain shortcomings in its scope and wording, it was nevertheless the only international instrument concerning the question of equal pay. She felt that the number of ratifications was still far from being satisfactory, and noted that several ratifying States had made reservations to the Convention. Several members pointed out the difficulties involved in ratifying ILO Convention No. 100 in their respective countries; attention was called, in particular, to the undesirability of Government intervention in collective bargaining procedures in the field of private employment, and the reluctance of Governments to undertake international commitments which they were not in a position to carry out at the present time.

99. The consensus in the Commission was that legislation in favour of the principle of equal pay and collective bargaining agreements should be fully utilized to further the implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work. With respect to legislative measures, members stressed the importance of careful wording of legislation regarding equal pay and of amending inadequate definitions included in such legislation. They also emphasized that due attention should be paid to methods of enforcing such legislation once it was adopted. It was also pointed out that women workers themselves should be fully informed of their rights under existing laws concerning equal pay. One member noted that while minimum wage legislation served a useful purpose in the implementation of the principle of equal pay by eliminating sub-standard wages, such legislation did not necessarily ensure the same rate of pay for men and women workers.

100. With respect to collective bargaining, members of the Commission repeatedly stressed the importance of the activities of trade-union organizations in furthering the application of the principle of equal pay by their support of it and by the inclusion of equal-pay clauses in collective bargaining agreements. Attention was drawn to conferences sponsored by trade-union organizations which included discussions of the question of equal pay or which were wholly devoted to the consideration of problems involved in the application of the principle of equal pay.

101. Members noted with satisfaction that women were evincing greater interest in trade-union activities by joining unions and by participating in trade-union activities. One member felt that family duties tended

in some cases to deter women from achieving responsible posts in trade unions, and other members stressed the need for more women to participate in trade unions and particularly in collective bargaining negotiations. Another member emphasized the importance of trade unions for women.

102. The Commission felt that a wide public understanding of the principle of equal pay was of the utmost importance in its work towards the elimination of differentials between the wages of men and women. Some members of the Commission recalled the resolution adopted by the Commission at its tenth session in which the Secretary-General had been invited to prepare, in consultation with the International Labour Office, a draft pamphlet concerning the various methods used for the implementation of the principle of equal pay.<sup>1</sup> The Commission expressed the hope that the draft pamphlet would be ready for consideration at its twelfth session. Several members of the Commission also noted that studies on equal pay and radio and television programmes were extremely useful in promoting wide public support of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

103. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the Inter-American Commission of Women, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the World Federation of Trade Unions, the International Alliance of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women and the International Federation of Women Lawyers.

104. The Commission had before it a draft resolution submitted by the Byelorussian SSR (E/CN.6/L.217). Amendments to the draft resolution were proposed by Belgium (E/CN.6/L.218) and the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.219); oral amendments were also proposed by the representatives of Cuba and Sweden. The amendments were consolidated by their respective sponsors, and were proposed as joint amendments by Belgium, Cuba and the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.223).

105. At its 247th meeting, the representative of the Byelorussian SSR accepted the joint amendments (E/CN.6/L.223), subject to certain changes, most of which were accepted by the sponsors of the joint amendments.

106. The representative of the ILO pointed out that that organization was not in a position to supply information concerning the activities of non-governmental organizations other than trade-union organizations with regard to the furtherance of the principle of equal pay. The sponsors of the joint amendments agreed to delete the words "and by non-governmental organizations" from operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council.

107. The Commission adopted point 1 of the joint amendments (E/CN.6/L.223) unanimously. It adopted point 2 of the amendments by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 4*, para. 69.

108. At the request of the Byelorussian representative, the Commission voted separately on parts of operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of the text contained in point 3 of the amendments (E/CN.6/L.223).

109. The Commission adopted the first part of operative paragraph 1, up to and including the words "No. 100", by 13 votes to none, with 5 abstentions. The Commission then decided, by 8 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions, to retain the words "or otherwise". The remainder of the paragraph was adopted by 8 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.

110. With regard to operative paragraph 2, the Commission adopted the first part, up to and including the words "by collective bargaining", by 14 votes to none, with 4 abstentions. The remainder of the paragraph was adopted by 11 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.

111. Operative paragraph 3 was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

112. The Commission then adopted the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.217), as amended, by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

113. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

#### *Resolution 4 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Having taken note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on practical methods for the implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work (E/CN.6/296) and of the report of the International Labour Office on equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value (E/CN.6/300),*

*"Noting the progress achieved in several countries towards a more general application of that principle,*

*"Realizing however that there are many difficulties still to be overcome before the achievement of full equality of remuneration for workers of both sexes and that the study of the question should consequently be further pursued,*

*"1. Awaits with the greatest interest the draft pamphlet on various methods used for the implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work;*

*"2. Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . ."*

*[For the text of the draft resolution, see annex, draft resolution D.]*

## CHAPTER VI

### **Economic opportunities for women**

114. The Commission discussed item 7 of its agenda at its 243rd to 247th, 249th, 250th, and 254th to 256th meetings. The Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General concerning the occupational outlook for women (E/CN.6/302), containing a draft list

of questions concerning principal professional and technical fields of training and opportunities, whether or not available to women, as well as a memorandum by the International Labour Office on the same subject (E/CN.6/308). The Commission also had before it reports prepared by the International Labour Office on part-time employment (E/CN.6/299 and Add. 1 and 2), on the employment of older women workers (E/CN.6/298 and Add.1), and on opportunities for women in handicrafts and cottage industries (E/CN.6/303 and Add.1). With regard to the access of girls and women to vocational and technical training, the Commission had before it a report (E/CN.6/280 and Corr.1) prepared jointly by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The Commission also had before it a note prepared by the Secretary-General on working women, including working mothers with family responsibilities, and means for the improvement of their position (E/CN.6/292).

115. During the general debate on this item, the importance of women's participation in the national economy of their countries was repeatedly emphasized, and it was noted that in economically under-developed countries the problems of providing economic opportunities for women included particular sociological difficulties; problems concerning legislative measures, vocational guidance and educational provisions were met with by both advanced and less-advanced economies. The value of community development programmes in improving the economic situation of women in economically less developed countries was emphasized by one of the members participating in the debate. In the opinion of some members the economic situation of women who were the sole support of family units required special attention, and the necessity for social benefits was stressed.

### OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK FOR WOMEN

116. The question of the occupational outlook for women was discussed by the Commission at its 243rd, 246th, 247th, and 253rd to 256th meetings.

117. The representative of the ILO stated that, in the opinion of her organization, promotion of full employment contributed substantially to the advancement of women in fields of employment where they had not been represented before or at least not significantly so. Full employment led to the best utilization of potential resources in groups of workers such as women, who in other circumstances did not have equal access to vocational and professional training and were relegated to undesired fields of employment, regardless of their real aptitudes. The ILO representative stressed the necessity of taking steps to overcome prejudice and to enlighten public opinion in order more rapidly to achieve equality for women with respect to access to technical and professional training and employment opportunities. The study envisaged by the Commission could be placed in the second type of action.

118. The representative of the ILO thought that the questionnaire prepared by the Secretary-General (E/

CN.6/302) established a distinction between professional and technical occupations and she requested information on the criteria that had been followed in establishing the distinction. She stated that her organization had noted the omission of several occupations in both fields which provided occupational opportunities for women. She emphasized the importance of securing comparable data from Governments, and of being able to identify the various occupations. The use of internationally recognized terminology and definitions of occupations such as that included in the Standard Classifications of Occupations of the ILO would facilitate comparability and would prevent confusion resulting from the difference of terminology used from country to country. Moreover, the ILO representative thought that as it was drafted the questionnaire would impose a heavy burden on Governments, and that it would be advantageous to space requests for information over a period of years so as to obtain reliable and comprehensive replies from Governments.

119. She suggested that in view of the technical difficulties involved in the task, the sending out of a questionnaire should be withheld until a way of carrying out the project had been agreed upon. If the Commission thought that would be the advisable course of action, the ILO would be glad to co-operate.

120. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stated that the comments made by the secretariat of that organization had been taken into account in the Secretary-General's report, but that it was regrettable that more time had not been provided for detailed examination of the draft questionnaire.

121. In her statement, the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) noted that six categories of medical and para-medical occupations had been included in the draft questionnaire prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/302), and that her organization had already published or was preparing information on the training and qualifications required for most of the categories concerned. She further stated that WHO would gradually extend the collection and analysis of data to cover all other para-medical specialties including those listed in the sixth category of part B of the draft questionnaire. The WHO representative noted that the experience of her organization had shown that it was necessary to evaluate the information received in governmental replies to questionnaires on medical training and such subjects with the aid of expert committees, consultants and non-governmental professional organizations. She suggested that the Commission might wish to avoid duplication of the work undertaken by WHO in that respect by omitting from the draft questionnaire requests for information on training and qualifications under the six categories of medical and para-medical professions.

122. Members participating in the general debate repeatedly stressed the importance of the project as part of the general project of providing economic opportunities for women, and they emphasized that the studies envisaged under the resolution adopted by the Commission

at its tenth session<sup>2</sup> constituted a most important part of the Commission's programme of work.

123. Several members felt that while full employment was a most desirable goal, it was nevertheless essential to ensure employment opportunities to women under all conditions of the labour market. These members noted that full employment would, for example, obtain in an economy during war time, and they felt that the question of women's employment should not necessarily be linked to full employment policies.

124. One member noted that in many countries women tended to concentrate in only a few professional groups, such as teaching and nursing, but that women constituted a relatively low percentage of the persons engaged in some other fields of endeavour, such as engineering.

125. In discussing the draft list of questions prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/302), several members stressed the importance of examining the whole field of professional and technical occupations to ascertain the full range of women's professional interests and opportunities for earning a livelihood. It was however noted by several members that the information obtained would be more reliable and complete if the circulation to Governments of various parts of the questionnaire could be spread out over a period of years, and it was suggested that, as a first step, the Commission should limit itself to requesting information concerning certain specified occupations. One member felt that such a procedure would have the added advantage of focusing the attention of Governments on situations in their own countries which could be improved. Several members felt that too much emphasis should not be placed on the comparability of the data received. Another member noted that a previous questionnaire sent to Governments on behalf of the Commission on the Status of Women had also been spaced over a period of years. The view was expressed that Governments might find it difficult to reply to a voluminous and very detailed questionnaire. One member also thought that the questionnaire as drafted by the Secretary-General laid proportionately too much emphasis on the intellectual aspects of the question, and she felt that insufficient stress had been placed on opportunities in industry and particularly in the fields of agriculture and transport; this member also thought that the questionnaire should include a request for information concerning the effects of women's employment on the status of the family.

126. Several members were of the opinion that, while it would be undesirable to postpone the drafting and circulation of the questionnaire until after the publication by the ILO of the revised Standard Classification of Occupations, the Commission could use as a basis the Classification issued in 1952.

127. In an effort to meet the views expressed by members participating in the debate, the representatives of Belgium, France, Pakistan and Sweden withdrew the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.224) which they had submitted and they joined with the representative of Argen-

<sup>2</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 4*, para. 83.

tina, Mexico and the United States of America in submitting a revised joint draft resolution with attached questionnaire and list of occupations (E/CN.6/L.230). Under this draft resolution, the Secretary-General was requested *inter alia* to circulate the revised questionnaire to States members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies and to non-governmental organizations in consultative status, with a request for information on the opportunities for women as jurists, teachers, architects and engineers and in medical and health sciences and related occupations as described in the International Classification of Occupations for Migration and Employment Placement (volume I) published by the International Labour Office in June 1952.

128. The revised draft resolution was considered by the Commission at its 253rd to 256th meetings, and gave rise to an extensive debate. Some members considered that the questionnaire and the list of occupations included in the annex to the draft resolution were excessively complex and required both simplification and clarification, while others considered that some parts of the annex were insufficiently detailed as compared with other parts. Still other members felt that while the draft resolution and the annex were not perfect, the Commission could use them as a first step in the very important task it wished to undertake.

129. During the course of the debate, the Secretary of the Commission and the representatives of the ILO and WHO replied to a number of questions put by various members of the Commission. The representatives of France, the United States and Sweden proposed various oral amendments to the draft resolution. The representatives of France and the United States proposed the deletion from the draft resolution of the part of the annex containing a list of occupations, and proposed instead the use of the sub-headings and definitions of the various occupations mentioned as they were set forth in the above-mentioned International Classification of Occupations. The representative of Sweden proposed that Governments which had already transmitted relevant information to the United Nations or to the specialized agencies should, in order to avoid duplication of effort, be asked to indicate this fact in their replies to the Secretary-General. These amendments were accepted by the other co-sponsors of the seven-power revised draft resolution.

130. In discussing the draft resolution, as amended, several members expressed the view that it opened up possibilities for unlimited study and that further clarification was necessary. The representative of the USSR stated that the questionnaire should also include the study of the possibility of the access of working women to professions and occupations and their advancement in the first place in one or several branches of industry. She requested that the questionnaire be corrected accordingly. The representative of the Byelorussian SSR formally proposed that the Commission request the Secretary-General to circulate the draft questionnaire to Governments for their comments and to submit a report based on those comments to the Commission for consideration at its twelfth session; the proposal was later withdrawn by its sponsor.

131. At the 256th meeting, the representative of the USSR revised her oral amendment; as re-drafted, the USSR amendment consisted in the addition of the words "as well as in the textile industry" to the list of professions and occupations enumerated in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution. Several members felt that this oral amendment would have the effect of unduly complicating the request to Governments, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. While supporting the principle involved, these members felt that the inclusion of this amendment would also entail the alteration of the questionnaire attached to the draft resolution, and they preferred to defer the consideration of the inclusion of the textile industry until a later session of the Commission.

132. At the 256th meeting, the Commission rejected the USSR amendment by 3 votes to 12, with 1 abstention. The Commission then adopted the revised seven-Power draft resolution by 13 votes to none, with 3 abstentions. The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### *Resolution 5 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Considering that it has undertaken and carried out various studies concerning access of women to education on the one hand and economic opportunities for women on the other hand and that it has made recommendations dealing with particular problems in these fields,*

*"Considering that it is essential that the Commission should now undertake the first step in a global study of the access of women to the principal professional and technical fields of training and of the availability of opportunities for women, this study to be based on information which should be obtained from Member States, specialized agencies, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status,*

*"Having considered the draft list of questions prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/302) and having taken into account comments of the specialized agencies concerned and the debate at the eleventh session of the Commission,*

*"1. Approves the questionnaire, annexed to the present resolution;*

*"2. Recommends that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following draft resolution: . . ."*

*[For the text of the draft resolution and of the questionnaire, see annex, draft resolution E.]*

#### **PART-TIME WORK FOR WOMEN AND OLDER WOMEN WORKERS**

133. The question of part-time work for women and older women workers was considered by the Commission at its 243rd to 247th meetings.

134. The representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that those two aspects of the question

of economic opportunities for women had been on the agenda of the Meeting of Experts on Women's Employment, which had been convened by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and had met in Geneva in November 1956. The recommendations of that meeting had been submitted to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, which had instructed the Director-General to take action on the basis of those recommendations. The ILO representative noted that in the opinion of her organization it would be advisable to delay further international action for a few years, and then to evaluate such progress as had been achieved by Governments in carrying out the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts.

135. The representative of the ILO noted the value of part-time work in providing employment opportunities for women with family responsibilities. Opportunities for part-time employment arose most frequently in the diversified economies of industrially advanced countries and existed mostly in non-industrial employment, in professions suffering from a shortage of trained personnel such as teaching and nursing, and in industries which engaged part-time workers in times of labour shortage.

136. In the opinion of the ILO, part-time employment involved certain risks to employees as well as drawbacks to employers. The ILO representative emphasized the widespread preference for the regulation of conditions of part-time work by means of collective bargaining agreements rather than by legislation. She also stressed the necessity of easing the double burden of employed women with family responsibilities by taking measures to facilitate the tasks of housekeeping. She pointed out that a long-range solution to the problems of working women with family responsibilities would be the reduction of working hours for all workers.

137. In a later intervention, the representative of the ILO outlined a proposal made by international trade-union organizations in consultative status with the ILO concerning the establishment by the ILO of a tripartite Permanent Committee to consider the full range of the problems affecting women workers.

138. During the general debate, members of the Commission expressed their appreciation of the documentation prepared by the ILO on those two aspects of economic opportunities for women, and noted that both subjects had been discussed at the ILO Meeting of Experts on Women's Employment held in November 1956. Several members felt that the problems faced by women workers in both of those categories were similar in many ways, and that the steps taken to relieve the problems were likely to be much of the same nature. The importance of adequate vocational guidance and training of women doing part-time work and for older workers was emphasized; it was felt that those women workers should enjoy conditions of work not less favourable than those prevailing in the labour field as a whole. Several members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed the view that both the question of part-time work for women and the problems of older women workers should be studied in the context of general labour conditions in the various national eco-

nomies; the importance of those problems varied considerably as between industrialized and relatively less-developed countries.

139. With respect to part-time work for women, members of the Commission participating in the debate noted the advantages of such employment to women with family responsibilities, to older women, and to women who were anxious to maintain their skills pending their return to full-time employment. It was also noted that part-time employment gave women the opportunity to participate to some extent in the development of the national economy, but that employment opportunities for part-time workers varied considerably from country to country. Several members also pointed out that part-time work could under some circumstances and particularly with the increase of automation have the effect of lowering working conditions and wage levels for women workers and of debasing production standards. They noted with appreciation the efforts of non-governmental organizations to increase satisfactory employment opportunities for part-time work. Several members of the Commission felt that it would be undesirable for Governments to adopt legislation which might tend to restrict employment opportunities for women to part-time work. Several members of the Commission pointed out that when a reduction of working hours was accompanied by a decrease in salaries and deprivation of the social benefits enjoyed by women working full time, it led to a deterioration of their economic condition and was, in effect, concealed unemployment.

140. In discussing the problems confronting older women workers, one member noted that in some countries the average age of women in the labour force was constantly rising; a recent study in her country had shown that, contrary to popular belief, in a number of occupational fields men experienced difficulty in finding employment at an earlier age than did women. Another member expressed the view that in certain occupations and professions employers preferred to hire more mature women, who had been found to have a higher sense of responsibility and also a lower rate of absenteeism. Several members outlined the activities of their Governments with respect to increasing employment opportunities for older women workers.

141. The discussion of the problems of older women workers was focused largely on a consideration of the desirability of a lower pensionable age for women workers as compared with that of men. Members of the Commission who were opposed to any differentiation as between men and women in fixing pensionable age felt that the advantages to women of a lower pensionable age were more apparent than real, and that employers would hesitate to hire older women who were approaching pensionable age. They felt that employers would also tend to dismiss older women in preference to men since women would be in a position to qualify for pension benefits at an earlier age. It was also noted that retirement at the earlier pensionable age resulted in lower retirement benefits for women. One member felt that it was not possible to find a logical basis for favouring a lower pensionable age for women than for men; she was convinced of the necessity for maternity leave and

related benefits, but she did not think it justifiable to base a lower pensionable age for women on the alleged physical inferiority of women. She was of the opinion that all workers should be enabled to retire at an earlier age, but that the pensionable age should be identical for men and women. Another member felt that the establishment of equal pensionable ages for men and women was an elementary principal of justice; she noted that in the United Nations Secretariat the regulations concerning pensionable age were the same for men and women.

142. One member expressed doubts as to whether lowering the age at which women became eligible for voluntary retirement would have much practical effect, since she noted that in her country many women preferred to go on working as they could usually earn more than they would receive from their retirement benefits.

143. Members who were in favour of a lower pensionable age for women felt that insistence on formal equality with men could harm women, and that if women had put in the necessary years of service and were otherwise qualified for a pension they should be entitled to exercise the option of retiring at an earlier age than men. They emphasized that in their opinion the crux of the matter lay in the source of retirement benefits, which should derive from Governments rather than from private employers. Any problems connected with a lower pensionable age for women could be resolved by adequate Government provision for social security and by guaranteeing the right to work. One member stressed the importance of the work of the Commission and of non-governmental organizations in creating a favourable climate of public opinion for such measures.

144. During the course of the debate, the Commission heard a statement by the representative of the Inter-American Commission of Women. The Commission also heard statements by the representatives of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the World Federation of Trade Unions, the International Alliance of Women, and the International Federation of University Women.

145. The Commission had before it a draft resolution submitted by Australia, Belgium, and the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.220). At the 245th meeting, the representative of France proposed an oral amendment consisting in the addition of a final operative paragraph in which the Commission would have expressed its belief that retirement age and pension rights should be identical for men and women workers. Some members expressed their support of the amendment; several others, while supporting the amendment in principle, felt that it was contrary to the opinion of the majority of women workers in their respective countries. Other members felt that such an amendment would be inappropriate in the circumstances. At the 246th meeting, the representative of Belgium proposed an oral amendment according to which the Commission would invite the Secretary-General to prepare a report for its twelfth session transmitting the opinions of non-governmental organizations in consultative status on the

question of the retirement age and right to pensions for women workers. The Belgian amendment was accepted by the other co-sponsors of the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.220). The representative of France withdrew her oral amendment in favour of the one proposed by the representative of Belgium. Two members expressed the hope that the opinions of the non-governmental organizations would be favourable to the establishment of equal pensionable ages for men and women workers.

146. Several drafting amendments to operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution were accepted by the sponsors and at its 247th meeting the Commission unanimously adopted the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.220), as amended.

147. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

#### *Resolution 6 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Recalling that at previous sessions the Commission has considered the employment of older women workers and the part-time employment of women,*

*"Noting with appreciation the reports of the International Labour Office on the employment of older women workers (E/CN.6/298 and Add.1) and on the part-time employment of women (E/CN.6/299 and Add. 1 and 2),*

*"Noting further the recommendations adopted by the Meeting of Experts on these subjects, convened by the International Labour Organisation and held at Geneva from 5 to 10 November 1956,*

*"Considering that, at its 134th session, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office noted the report of the Meeting of Experts and instructed the Director-General to take its recommendations into consideration, as might be appropriate, for further study and action by the International Labour Organisation,*

*"1. Observes that special difficulties continue to be encountered by older women in obtaining or retaining employment, and by women engaged in part-time work;*

*"2. Expresses the hope that the International Labour Organisation will continue to give attention to the elimination of these difficulties;*

*"3. Considers that vocational training and guidance can play a valuable part in securing appropriate employment for these women workers;*

*"4. Believes that older women workers and women in part-time employment should be accorded conditions of work, including social security benefits, as favourable as those enjoyed by other workers, taking account of their respective situations;*

*"5. Invites the Secretary-General to ask non-governmental organizations in consultative status for their opinion on the question of the age of retirement and right to pension of women workers, and to*

prepare, if possible for the twelfth session of the Commission, a report on the replies received from these organizations."

#### COTTAGE INDUSTRIES AND HANDICRAFTS

148. The discussion of the question of cottage industries and handicrafts took place at the 244th to 247th, and 250th meetings of the Commission.

149. The representative of the International Labour Organisation noted that the ILO Meeting of Experts on Women's Employment held in November 1956 had discussed this aspect of economic opportunities for women and that its recommendations on the question, which were appended to the ILO document (E/CN.6/303 and Add. 1), had been noted by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office.

150. She stressed the importance of handicrafts and cottage industries to the economies of the less industrialized countries, and said that those industries should be encouraged as part of the national plans for economic development so as to avoid conflicts with schemes for increased industrialization. In some countries the production methods used in cottage industries were antiquated and the working conditions were below the standard. She stressed the importance of co-ordinating the methods for developing such industries, and emphasized the value of co-operatives in improving production and marketing methods and in financing future development. She also pointed out the need for vocational training for workers engaged in cottage industries, and warned against the dangers involved when handicrafts and cottage industries turned into industrial home work and middlemen were involved in the provision of credits, raw materials and equipment and in the marketing of the products. The marketability of handicrafts on the domestic as well as the export market should be carefully analysed. A great number of women were engaged in occupations related to handicrafts and cottage industries and played an important role in that field; it was difficult however to establish statistics and determine the exact percentage of women participating in such activities.

151. During the general debate, members of the Commission stressed the importance of the development of cottage industries as a means of easing the transition to industrialization for predominantly agricultural economies. They noted that a number of Governments had paid particular attention to the integration of cottage industries into their national plans for economic development. The value of handicrafts as a means of rehabilitating injured and disabled persons was also stressed, and it was emphasized that the fostering of handicrafts also made possible the continuance of those traditional and artistic skills which formed part of a national cultural heritage. The development of handicraft and cottage industries was particularly significant in improving the economic status of women in relatively less industrialized countries, and such occupations gave women an opportunity to earn money in the home without spending time in journeying to and from an outside place of employment.

152. Members of the Commission participating in the debate paid particular attention to difficulties encountered in the organization of cottage industries, and warned against the dangers of exploitation by middlemen and of the poor working conditions often associated with industrial home-work. These members stressed the need for developing trade associations, collective bargaining procedures, technical guidance and education, adequate credit facilities, organized supplies of raw materials and marketing techniques as means of improving working conditions and production standards in the handicrafts and cottage industries. The ILO was commended for its work in this field. Several members outlined the relevant activities of their Governments and of the technical assistance programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. One member noted that the forthcoming regional conference of the Inter-American Commission of Women, which was being held under the auspices of the Government of Mexico and with the assistance of the ILO and of the Pan American Union, would discuss questions related to this question. She felt that it would be helpful if the conclusions reached by the conference could be made available to the members of the Commission on the Status of Women.

153. During the debate, the Commission heard a statement by the representative of the International Alliance of Women.

#### ACCESS OF GIRLS TO VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

154. The Commission discussed the question of opportunities for girls in vocational and technical education at its 246th, 247th, 249th and 250th meetings.

155. The representatives of the ILO and UNESCO stated that the report on opportunities for girls in vocational and technical education prepared by their respective organizations (E/CN.6/280 and Corr.1) was the first joint report to be presented to the United Nations. The representative of the ILO said that the material contained in the report had been gathered from the sources of information of both agencies and from a questionnaire elaborated jointly by UNESCO and the ILO. Although the questionnaire had been sent to all States Members of the United Nations and to Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, only thirty-nine countries had answered and few of the answers received were complete.

156. The ILO representative recalled that at the ninth session of the Commission the ILO had presented a study on the access of women and girls to apprenticeship (E/CN.6/264). The report had shown the need for a study on vocational and technical education for girls. The report before the Commission therefore constituted a complementary and inseparable aspect of the subject. For the purpose of the study, vocational and technical education was defined as the type of education provided in schools of a secondary level which aimed at the preparation of students directly for a specific trade or occupation.

157. The representative of the ILO noted that women engaged in occupations requiring little or no prior training constituted a high percentage of all working women and even of the labour force as a whole, and that increasing industrialization created a demand for semi-skilled and skilled workers. She drew attention also to certain social factors which tended to limit the training given to women, such as the social dependency of women in some regions, the tendency to give preference to the education of boys rather than girls, and the tendency on the part of girls to get quick returns for short-term unskilled jobs before marriage. The vocational guidance facilities were inadequate in a number of countries, and where such services did exist, there was a tendency to use women in occupations traditionally considered as women's occupations. She also drew attention to certain prejudices in the attitude of employers and trade unions, and to the discouraging effect of salary discrimination.

158. She emphasized that out-of-date protective legislation tended to limit vocational opportunities, for example, by closing so-called "dangerous" occupations to women while technological advances had done away with many of the hazards previously encountered in certain occupations. She noted that some newly developed occupations were inherently dangerous although the hazards had not as yet been recognized in relevant legislation. On the other hand, the financing by employers of maternity benefits and other measures in favour of women often resulted in limiting the recruitment of women in certain occupations. In a later intervention, the ILO representative emphasized that her organization regarded the provision of maternity leave and similar benefits as essential, but said that cash and medical benefits in such cases should be provided by means of compulsory social insurance or by means of public funds. In a large number of countries where the former was the case, contributions were thus payable by employers and by workers, both men and women. Certain members of the Commission pointed out that the only proper method would be for the State or the employers to pay all expenditures for social security or social insurance.

159. The representative of UNESCO introduced those parts of the joint report which had been prepared by her organization. She said that the report was a logical continuation of the previous report concerning secondary education which had been presented by UNESCO to the Commission at its ninth session.

160. She noted that, generally speaking, fewer educational and vocational opportunities were provided for girls than for boys, and that there was a need to study the quality as well as the quantity of such training facilities as were available in the various countries. The vocational training facilities for girls tended to concentrate on the various aspects of domestic science and such concentration considerably diminished the scope of job opportunities for girls.

161. The representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), replying to a question put by the

representative of the United Kingdom, outlined the activities of her organization relevant to the health aspects of vocational and technical training. She described the work of WHO and its collaboration with the ILO in the field of social and occupational health.

162. During the course of the debate, some members took exception to the idea that all protective legislation in favour of women was harmful to their economic status and opportunities; they felt that some types of protective legislation were beneficial as safeguards for the welfare of children of working mothers and for the family unit as a whole. They expressed the view that protective legislation should be evaluated in the context of the existing social conditions, and that protective legislation as applied in State-controlled economies had not given rise to economic discrimination against women. The existence in those States of an extensive system of technical and professional education for girls and its integration within the general educational system ensured the implementation of equality of rights for women as regards access to work and their advancement. The adoption of the principle of full equality necessarily entailed the adoption of a series of protective measures for mothers and other categories of women workers. Another member noted that two opposing views on protective legislation for women had been expressed during the debates held in the Third Committee of the General Assembly on the draft International Covenants on Human Rights; she herself endorsed the view that the principle of the full equality of men and women should be maintained in preference to the idea of protective measures in favour of women. She noted with satisfaction that the principle of complete equality had been incorporated into the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

163. Members participating in the general debate thanked the ILO and UNESCO for their joint report E/CN.6/280 and Corr.1), which was of great value to the Commission. In co-ordinating their efforts to produce a balanced report, those two agencies had established a wise precedent. One member noted that some of the national statistics contained in the report were not truly comparable, and she emphasized the importance of adequate definitions of the terms used in discussing vocational training. Another member pointed out that it would be helpful to have further information on the health aspects of vocational opportunities since physical capacity was an important factor in determining aptitudes and abilities in a number of occupations. One representative thought that the joint report did not include sufficiently detailed information on the positive programmes of vocational and technical training established by some Governments and trade unions. It was also noted that Governments could benefit from the information on educational facilities and from the experience summarized in the joint report when plans for further development in that field were contemplated.

164. The importance of adequate vocational training to the economic status of women and to their possibilities for advancement and promotion was emphasized. One

## Nationality of married women

member noted that the lack of compulsory education systems for girls in some countries was a deterrent to their vocational and technical training. Several members noted the danger inherent in training girls in the domestic sciences alone. The traditional and psychological resistance of some parents to the teaching of trades to girls was also noted as a limiting factor in the registration of girls in vocational schools, and several members noted that such resistance was particularly evident in economically under-developed countries. The extensive promotion of vocational training for girls was considered to be necessary both for the improvement of the status of women and for the benefit of national economies. The experimental work of non-governmental organizations in opening opportunities for vocational training was commended, and the view was expressed that Government and trade-union initiative was also necessary, since private enterprises were wary of experimentation in that field.

165. It was also noted that girls did not constitute a high percentage of the total enrolment in many vocational schools, and that a number of girls dropped out of schools for various reasons instead of completing their training. Among the measures suggested for improving vocational training were the inclusion of pre-vocational training courses in primary school curricula and the adjustment of vocational training courses to individual abilities. Attention was also called to the importance of vocational guidance as a means of encouraging girls to obtain the necessary training for employment and advancement to jobs at higher levels.

166. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women and the World Young Women's Christian Association.

**WORKING WOMEN, INCLUDING WORKING MOTHERS, WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES, AND MEANS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR POSITION**

167. At its 243rd meeting the Commission considered the question of working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities, and means for the improvement of their position. It took note of the fact that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the International Labour Office had not been in a position to submit to the Commission at its eleventh session the reports which had been requested in Economic and Social Council resolution 625 B II (XXII).

168. One member of the Commission expressed regret that it would not be possible to discuss that sub-item at the eleventh session, since she considered it to be a question of major importance.

169. The Commission heard a statement by the representative of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions.

170. At its 243rd meeting, the Commission decided to defer its consideration of this sub-item until its twelfth session.

171. The Commission considered item 8 of its agenda at its 240th meeting. It had before it a report by the Secretary-General on recent changes in legislation affecting the nationality of married women (E/CN.6/254/Add.3), and a note by the Secretary-General on action taken by the General Assembly on the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women (E/CN.6/305).

172. Satisfaction was expressed that the Convention had been adopted and opened for signature at the eleventh session of the General Assembly (General Assembly resolution 1040 (XI)). Many members felt that the Convention was an important step in improving the status of women since it provided for the elimination of serious hardships resulting from discriminatory nationality legislation. It was hoped that many States would become parties to the Convention and would recognize the principle that women should not automatically lose or acquire nationality because of marriage.

173. The inclusion of a territorial application clause in the Convention would, it was stated by certain members, facilitate and speed up the adherence of many States to the Convention. Certain other members, however, stated their opposition to the provision concerning territorial application of the Convention.

174. Certain members noted that the provisions of the Convention did not fully provide for the principle of equality; one member said that husbands of women nationals of States parties to the Convention should enjoy liberalized naturalization procedures or be able to acquire the nationality of their wives on request; such procedures or rights should not be limited to wives of men nationals. The fact that the important question of the nationality of children was not dealt with was also stressed.

175. It was noted that the recent legislation reported on by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/254/Add.3) indicated general progress in the direction of equal rights for men and women with respect to nationality.

176. The following draft resolution, submitted by Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Israel and the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.214), was adopted by the Commission at its 240th meeting, by 15 votes to none, with 2 abstentions:

*Resolution 7 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women"*

"1. Expresses its satisfaction that the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women was adopted by the General Assembly at its eleventh session and is now open for signature and ratification, or accession, to States Members of the United Nations and any other State which is or becomes a member of any specialized agency of the United Nations, or which is or hereafter becomes a Party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, or any other State to

which an invitation is addressed by the General Assembly of the United Nations;

“2. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . .”

[*For the text of the draft resolution, see annex, draft resolution F.*]

## CHAPTER VIII

### Status of women in private law

177. The Commission considered item 9 of its agenda at its 248th and 252nd meetings. It had before it the report by the Secretary-General on bride-price, polygamy, and rights of the mother with respect to her children (E/CN.6/295).

178. The greater part of the Commission's discussion on this item concerned the status of women living in less developed countries and territories, with particular emphasis on the practices of polygamy, bride-price and child marriage.

179. Several representatives pointed out that the marriage customs under discussion involved deeply rooted traditions and basic concepts of marriage and the family and were sanctioned by the religious beliefs of many peoples. Reforms in that field must be undertaken with caution and with understanding of the existing social structure. Prematurely enforced changes in marriage practices presented dangers to the stability of marriage and family life, and time should be allowed for evolutionary processes and educational measures to take effect. On the other hand, there was general agreement that in many areas certain customs had lost their traditional significance, and legal measures would be both timely and desirable.

180. Certain members emphasized the close inter-connexion between the economic, social and cultural status of women and the family customs and practices under discussion, stating that specific legal measures would in themselves be of no practical value until the position of the woman in her society was recognized and until educational and economic opportunities were open to her.

181. With respect to polygamy in Moslem countries, it was stated that Moslem law, which permitted a man to marry four wives provided that all were treated equally, had at one time represented an improvement in the status of women; before the advent of Islamic law, there was no restriction on polygamy and no recognition of any rights on the part of the wife. It was also stated that in many societies recognizing polygamy, monogamous marriages were none the less far more usual than plural marriages; but that there were still men and women who opposed the abolition of polygamy.

182. In the course of the debate, particular attention was given to transitional measures tending to curtail polygamy and to speed up the natural evolution towards

monogamy. Mention was made of existing legislation applicable, in some instances, on a national scale and in others limited to “extra-customary” areas in certain dependent territories, which prohibited polygamy but recognized previously existing polygamous marriages.

183. The requirement of consent by the wife or the intervention of an official body, either judicial or ministerial, prior to a polygamous marriage were also cited as transitional measures for the protection of women and of children from some of the most serious hardships arising from polygamy.

184. The custom “of bride-price”, in so far as it operated against the freedom to choose a spouse, degraded the wife to the position of a chattel or slave and constituted a serious drawback to the recognition of the human dignity of women. It was noted that in some countries bride-price persisted only as a symbolic act; and in other areas high bride-price was a matter of pride for the women themselves. But in many areas the institution of bride-price has become a serious obstacle to free consent to marriage and to marriage by young men and had increased the practice of polygamy by wealthy older men.

185. With respect to child marriage, a subject which the Commission had at its tenth session requested the Secretary-General to include in his report, the attention of the Commission was directed to the introduction to the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/295), where it was noted that the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on a Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave-Trade and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery had recommended that the Economic and Social Council consider initiating a study of the question of marriage with the object of drawing attention to the desirability of free consent of both parties to a marriage and of the establishment of a minimum age for marriage, preferably of not less than fourteen years. It was also noted that the Economic and Social Council had decided to include this recommendation by the Conference in the provisional agenda for its twenty-third session, to be held in April 1957. Several members expressed their hope that the Commission would give particular attention to the subject of child marriage at its next session.

186. The requirement of free consent to marriage was generally considered to be a basic prerequisite for raising the status of women in areas where such practices as polygamy and bride-price existed. There was general agreement that such a requirement, as well as any other measures relating to marriage practices, including regulation of bride-price or of polygamy, could be enforced only if registration of marriage were to be made compulsory. For that reason many members considered the establishment of compulsory registration of marriage in the presence of both prospective spouses as a most important and basic measure to be taken by Governments; it was also pointed out that there was no inconsistency between respect for customary and religious law and compulsory registration of marriage.

187. In the course of its discussion, the Commission's attention was drawn to the debates in the Third Com-

mittee at the eleventh session of the General Assembly on article 10 of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>3</sup> It was noted that the provision to the effect that marriage required the free consent of both spouses had been included in that article at the insistence of certain representatives, members both of the Third Committee and of the Commission on the Status of Women. There was general agreement that such a provision should be included in relevant articles of both the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the draft Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

188. Although the status of women in private law was considered with particular reference to the less advanced areas, several members also discussed the legal provisions relating to family and property rights of women contained in the civil codes of more highly developed countries. It was noted that several countries whose civil law was based on the Napoleonic Code had either recently adopted reforms or were in the process of considering reforms in order to remove inequalities with respect to parental and other family rights and with respect to property rights under matrimonial régimes. It was pointed out that some of the reforms were along the lines recommended by the Economic and Social Council on the request of the Commission on the Status of Women. Certain members stated that in some countries the provisions referring to the husband as the head of the family had been retained even after legal reforms had removed all specific applications of the principle in such matters as domicile, residence, parental rights, legal capacity of the wife and her right to undertake independent work. The opinion was expressed that such a provision should not be retained in new codes.

189. It was suggested that the Commission should continue to take an active interest in the reform of civil codes in order that women might achieve full equality in the field of family law and property rights, and it was felt that the possibility of convening a working group of jurists to study the question deserved consideration.

190. During its discussion the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the Inter-American Commission of Women, the International Federation of Women Lawyers and St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance.

191. A draft resolution was submitted by the representatives of Cuba and France (E/CN.6/L.225). The United Kingdom proposed amendments (E/CN.6/L.231) to the second paragraph of the preamble and to the operative paragraph of the draft resolution recommended therein for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. The sponsors of the draft resolution accepted the United Kingdom amendments. A drafting change, proposed orally by the representative of Belgium to the operative paragraph, was also accepted.

192. The representative of the Byelorussian SSR orally proposed an amendment consisting in the inser-

tion of the words "the introduction of a minimum age of marriage and" before the words "a system of compulsory registration of marriage" in both the second paragraph of the preamble and in the operative paragraph of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Council. Several representatives felt that action on the question of the age of marriage should await action by the Council on the recommendation of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries to which reference was made in the preamble of the draft resolution submitted by Cuba and France. The Byelorussian amendment was withdrawn, although its sponsor stated that in her opinion a recommendation on the establishment of a minimum marriage age would be appropriate.

193. The representative of Poland proposed an oral amendment consisting in the deletion of the words "civil or religious" in the phrase "in the presence of a competent civil or religious authority" in the operative paragraph of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Council. It was the opinion of the sponsor of the amendment that such a deletion would make allowance for States whose law required registration of marriages by civil authorities. Other representatives stated, however, that there was no legal difference between the phrase "competent authorities" and "competent religious or civil authorities" since the laws of the respective States defined competent authorities. Certain members felt that it was important to keep the words "civil or religious" in order explicitly to recognize that in some countries religious authorities were competent to register marriages.

194. The Polish amendment was put to a roll-call vote at the request of the representative of the Dominican Republic and was rejected by 10 votes to 4, with 4 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

*In favour:* Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Mexico, Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

*Against:* Argentina, Australia, Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Israel, Pakistan, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela.

*Abstaining:* Cuba, France, Indonesia, United States of America.

195. The following draft resolution as amended was adopted by the Commission at its 252nd meeting by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions:

#### *Resolution 8 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Having considered the Secretary-General's report on bride-price, polygamy and rights of the mother with respect to her children (E/CN.6/295),*

*"Recalling that at its tenth session the Commission had decided also to undertake a study of child marriage,<sup>4</sup>*

*"Noting the resolution adopted by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on a Supple-*

<sup>3</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Eleventh Session, Third Committee, 730th to 738th meetings.*

<sup>4</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 4, para. 139.*

mentary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave-Trade, and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery,<sup>5</sup> in which the Conference recommended to the Economic and Social Council to consider the appropriateness of initiating a study of the question of marriage, from the point of view of the desirability of free consent of both parties and of the establishment of a minimum age of marriage,

“*Noting also* that the Economic and Social Council included this recommendation of the Conference in its programme of work for 1957, and placed it on the provisional agenda for its twenty-third session, which is to convene in April 1957,

“*Believing* that the study recommended by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on a Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave-Trade, and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery is closely connected with the question of child marriage and bride-price, and with other aspects of family law which the Commission has had under review for several years, and that it is of considerable importance for the status of women,

“1. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to adopt the recommendation of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on a Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave-Trade, and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery, and to decide that the study referred to in this recommendation should be undertaken by the Commission on the Status of Women;

“2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, if the Economic and Social Council decides to refer the above-mentioned study to the Commission on the Status of Women, to prepare a report on the subject for its twelfth session;

“3. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . .”

[For the text of the draft resolution, see annex, draft resolution G.]

## CHAPTER IX

### Tax legislation affecting married women workers

196. The Commission considered item 10 of its agenda at its 249th to 251st meetings. It had before it a preliminary study prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/297) containing the relevant factual data, opinions and proposals submitted by several non-governmental organizations in consultative status and such information on fiscal legislation in the government replies to the questionnaire (E/CN.6/W.1) as was found still to be valid.

197. Several members of the Commission expressed their appreciation of the large response by non-governmental organizations to the request for information and expressions of opinions on the subject under discussion.

The Secretary-General's report (E/CN.6/297), based largely on those replies from non-governmental organizations, would be useful to organizations and Governments in reforming tax legislation.

198. Some members felt that it was important for the Commission to deal with tax legislation affecting married women who worked in view of the increasingly important effects of tax legislation in the economic, legal and social fields. The Commission on the Status of Women could achieve results in the field of tax laws no less important than those already achieved in the field of political rights for women. The opinion was expressed that the recommendations of the Commission might give rise to more equitable practices in that field in many countries. One member suggested the possibility of adopting in the future a convention on tax legislation affecting married women who worked.

199. Several representatives expressed agreement with many of the views of non-governmental organizations contained in the Secretary-General's report, to the effect that certain tax legislation applicable to the earnings of married women had undesirable effects not only on women but on society as a whole. It was felt that joint taxation in many countries hampered recognition of the economic independence of the married woman who worked, and discouraged economic activities by married women; it was, furthermore, in some instances considered to be inconsistent with the principle of protection of the institution of marriage and the family. On the other hand, certain members stated that joint taxation in itself had not been considered by authorities in the field to be unfair or inconsistent with the modern concept of marriage.

200. In discussing the disadvantageous position in which married women were placed as a result of certain tax provisions for the aggregation of the revenues of husband and wife, some recent progress towards more just solutions in some countries was noted; however, in the opinion of many members of the Commission, the situation was not yet satisfactory.

201. Mention was made of two different types of measures to prevent the imposition of unduly high tax rates on the income of married women. Some members of the Commission referred to recently enacted provisions for separate taxation in cases where the wife had an income from separate and independent professional or commercial activities; or where she was the wife of a public official and was herself gainfully employed.

202. The second type of measures mentioned was the granting of special deductions with respect to the incomes of married women who worked. One member referred to the opinion of certain national government tax authorities, who considered that such deductions might operate so as to give a married couple, both of whom were earning, an unduly favourable tax treatment as compared with that accorded a couple for whom the husband was the sole earner. Other representatives made favourable mention of deductions granted in some countries for paid domestic help and child care to a married woman working outside the home. Such deductions should, it was felt, be provided to meet the necessary expenses

<sup>5</sup> See E/CONF.24/22.

of a working woman, just as deductions were granted for business expenses. It was also contended that deductions for children and other dependants should be equally credited to husband and wife; that was already the case under some existing legislation.

203. Allowing a married woman to apply for separate taxation in a system where joint taxation was the basic system was considered preferable to compulsory joint taxation but still incompatible (in so far as she must make a special request) with the independent status of women, who should be treated on equal terms with men in all matters concerning tax legislation.

204. Several members were of the opinion that it would be desirable for the Commission to obtain further information on the matter from Member States of the United Nations and from non-governmental organizations in consultative status.

205. In the course of the discussion, the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Federation of Women Lawyers and of the International Federation of University Women.

206. A draft resolution was submitted jointly by the representatives of Belgium, France, Israel and the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.227) containing a draft resolution for the Economic and Social Council requesting Governments and non-governmental organizations to provide information on tax legislating applicable to women and requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a study based on that information.

207. It was noted that the second paragraph of the preamble of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Council referred to "tax legislation applicable to women". The sponsors indicated their wish to retain that wording in the preamble but added to operative paragraph 1 the words "especially to married women employed gainfully".

208. Several representatives were of the opinion that it would be desirable to send a questionnaire to Governments in order to obtain complete and detailed information; it was stated by one member that specific questions would greatly simplify the task of Governments in supplying the requested information and were of particular importance to countries which lacked resources for large staffs specially devoted to the task of meeting such requests. It was however suggested that the preparation of a questionnaire would not be practicable at that time. The sponsors of the draft resolution agreed to the insertion of the word "precise" before the word "information" in paragraph 1 of the operative part of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

209. The word "study" was replaced by the word "report" in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, on the general understanding that the information to be presented to the Commission at its thirteenth session would be limited to that supplied by Governments and by non-governmental organizations in consultative status.

210. With those changes and the deletion of the words

"and treatment" in the first paragraph of the preamble, the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.227) was put to the vote and adopted by the Commission at its 251st meeting, by 17 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

211. The text of the resolution as adopted by the Commission is as follows:

#### *Resolution 9 (XI)*

##### *"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Recalling the decision of the Commission at its tenth session to undertake a preliminary study of tax legislation applicable to married women who work, based on information obtained from non-governmental organizations and on replies already received from Governments to the questionnaire on the legal status of women,"<sup>6</sup>*

*"Noting with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on this subject (E/CN.6/297),*

*"Noting the observation of the Secretary-General that the available information did not constitute a sufficient basis for a balanced study of this subject,*

*"Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . ."*

*[For the text of the draft resolution, see annex, draft resolution H.]*

#### CHAPTER X

##### **Technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women and advisory services in the field of human rights**

212. The Commission discussed item 11 of its agenda at its 250th, 251st and 254th meetings. It had before it a memorandum on technical assistance by the Secretary-General containing a summary of selected projects affecting the status of women (E/CN.6/289), and a report by the Secretary-General on advisory services in the field of human rights (E/CN.6/294).

213. The representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) provided further information on a number of the projects carried out by WHO which had been described in the Secretary-General's memorandum (E/CN.6/289).

214. In discussing the question of technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women, members of the Commission expressed their appreciation of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary-General containing a summary of selected projects affecting the status of women (E/CN.6/289), which in their opinion showed the wide range of the services available under the technical assistance programmes. The value of those programmes in furthering international understanding, peace and prosperity was stressed. Members participating in the debate also emphasized that most of the projects undertaken contributed directly or in-

<sup>6</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 4*, paras. 177 and 182.

directly to the acceleration of the emancipation of women. Two members laid particular stress on the importance of community development projects to those countries whose economies were relatively underdeveloped, and several members described their Governments' activities under the technical assistance programmes.

215. One member noted that the activities under the technical assistance programmes had been somewhat hampered in the past by difficulties with respect to funds and operating costs; she expressed the hope that the recent measures which had been taken to overcome those difficulties would place the programmes on a sounder footing. Two members noted that it was important, when recruiting experts under the technical assistance programme to choose persons who were adaptable, and they felt that the duration of the experts' assignments should be of sufficient length to enable them to make valid contributions in their respective fields.

216. Members also stressed the importance of increasing the participation of women in the technical assistance programmes as experts, fellows and scholars; one member noted that it was up to the Governments concerned both to request that women experts be recruited for projects to be undertaken in their respective countries and to submit applications for fellowships and scholarships on behalf of qualified women nationals. Another member suggested that the Secretary-General be invited to prepare a report for the twelfth session of the Commission on the number of women participating in the technical assistance programmes in various capacities in 1956 and 1957.

217. With respect to the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, the Commission heard the representative of the Secretary-General, who reported on further developments regarding the forthcoming seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of Asian women in public life. The representative of the Secretary-General noted that it was the first such seminar to be organized under the advisory services programme and that it would be held in August 1957 in Bangkok at the invitation of the Government of Thailand. She stated that the Secretary-General and the Government of Thailand had invited the twenty-one Governments in the geographical area of study of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East to nominate candidates from whom the participants in the seminar would be selected. The representative of the Secretary-General also noted that the ILO, UNESCO, FAO, WHO and UNICEF had been invited to participate in the seminar and that arrangements were under way for inviting non-governmental organizations which had demonstrated their interest in the work of the Commission also to indicate their interest in sending observers to the seminar. Details were also given concerning the seminar agenda and working papers, which were based on the recommendations of the preceding expert working group held at Bangkok in October 1956.

218. In reply to questions put by several members of the Commission, the representative of the Secretary-

General noted that several Governments had indicated their interest in acting as host countries for seminars concerned with the status of women. She explained that the procedures and experience of the Technical Assistance Administration of the United Nations were being followed in connexion with the working out of the advisory services programme, and that the Secretary-General would submit reports as appropriate on the development of the programme to the Commission on the Status of Women in accordance with General Assembly resolution 926 (X). The representative of the Secretary-General also described the procedure followed in connexion with the organization of the *ad hoc* expert working group held at Bangkok in October 1956.

219. During the debate on the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, the representative of the Dominican Republic stated that, in response to the *note verbale* on the programme addressed to Governments by the Secretary-General on 6 June 1956, her Government had indicated its willingness to act as host country for a seminar under the programme on a subject related to the status of women. She drew attention to the resolution adopted at the eleventh session of the Inter-American Commission of Women in June 1956, in which the Inter-American Commission had recommended that a seminar to increase the participation of women in public life be organized under the United Nations programme of advisory services in the field of human rights. The representative of the Dominican Republic expressed the hope that the Commission on the Status of Women, the Inter-American Commission of Women, the specialized agencies and interested non-governmental organizations would participate in the seminar which was to be held in her country. She also expressed the hope that other Governments in Latin America would in future offer host facilities to seminars under the advisory services programme.

220. The representative of the United States of America recalled that in 1956 her Government had invited the Secretary-General to consider holding a seminar on citizenship education in the United States during 1957. At that time, her Government had expressed willingness to defer its invitation if an Asian country offered host facilities for 1957. When the Government of Thailand had offered to act as host for the seminar in course of organization, the United States Government had accordingly agreed to defer its own invitation. The representative of the United States noted that her Government was still prepared to welcome the opportunity to act as host for a seminar on civic education in 1958 or 1959, unless other invitations appeared to offer greater opportunity.

221. During the debate, members of the Commission expressed their satisfaction with the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights and in particular with the plans for the forthcoming seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of Asian women in public life, which would be held in August 1957 under the auspices of the United Nations and the Government of Thailand. That and future seminars could contribute greatly to the improvement of the status of women and to the growth of inter-

national co-operation and understanding. The representative of the Soviet Union described the seminar which had been organized by her Government in September 1956 on the equality of women's rights in the USSR and noted that at that seminar, 98 representatives from 37 countries and 27 non-governmental organizations had participated. Their comments indicated that such seminars were useful and that their organization should be encouraged.

222. In discussing the forthcoming seminar to be held in Bangkok, members noted that those parts of the advisory services programme which concerned women had come into being largely as a result of the Commission's initiative, and they expressed great interest in the programme and organization of the 1957 seminar. It was felt that seminars concerning civic responsibilities were important not only for countries where women had recently acquired political rights, but also for countries where women had enjoyed those legal rights for some time. Several members also expressed the view that the Commission should be kept fully informed of developments under the advisory services programme with respect to the status of women, and they offered their assistance in working out the programmes of future seminars. They also suggested that members of the Commission could attend future seminars in the capacity of observers, and they felt that the convening of expert working groups was a useful device in the planning of seminars to be held under the advisory services programme.

223. Members also noted the resolution adopted by the Commission in connexion with the political rights of women (see para. 62 above), in which the Secretary-General was requested to consult with the Governments of Member States concerning the possibility of convening an international seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life, under the United Nations programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, with the participation of women leaders in that field as representatives of Member States and of interested non-governmental organizations in consultative status and to present to the Commission at its twelfth session a report on the results of his consultation with Governments.

224. Members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed the hope that seminars designed to improve the status of women would be held annually under the advisory services programme, and many felt that it would be preferable to organize such seminars on a regional basis. One member felt that a seminar on the improvement of the status of women in private law should be held in Europe.

225. During the debate the Commission heard a statement by the representative of the Inter-American Commission of Women.

226. At its 255th meeting, the Commission considered the draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Pakistan and Venezuela (E/CN.6/L.229). The representative of the Soviet Union orally proposed an amendment to operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution; as finally drafted, the amendment consisted in the inser-

tion, after the word "regional", of the words "but also on an international".

227. The representative of Poland also proposed an amendment to the same paragraph, consisting in the deletion of the words "preferably on a regional basis", in the event that the USSR amendment was not adopted.

228. The Rapporteur stated that the debate on those amendments was reflected in the records of the Commission.

229. The Commission adopted the USSR amendment by 10 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions. The Polish amendment was therefore not put to the vote.

230. The Commission then adopted the draft resolution, as amended, by 15 votes to none, with 1 abstention. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

#### *Resolution 10 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Noting with satisfaction that the Secretary-General continued the exploratory process in connexion with the organization of seminars by convening an Expert Working group in Bangkok (Thailand) in October 1956, and that, as a result of this meeting, the decision was taken to hold in 1957 a seminar on the subject of civic responsibilities and increased participation of Asian women in public life,*

*"Noting also with satisfaction the response by several Governments to the note verbale of the Secretary-General of 6 June 1956, sent in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 605 (XXI), of 3 May 1956, welcoming the advisory services programme with respect to seminars on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life and indicating the possibility of acting as host countries for such seminars,*

*"Noting also the resolution adopted by the Inter-American Commission of Women at its eleventh annual session in June 1956 recommending that a seminar aimed at assisting women to participate in the public life of their countries be organized by the Secretary-General in Latin America at an early date,*

*"Considering the increasing number of experts who have participated in the implementation of the technical assistance programmes and the increasing number of fellowships made available and seminars which are being organized,*

*"Convinced that all these programmes of technical assistance are of interest to women and that women's participation in them should be assured,*

*"1. Expresses the hope that seminars designed to improve the status of women will be organized each year, preferably on a regional but also on an international basis, under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights;*

*"2. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for the twelfth session of the Commission on the Status of Women a report on the proportional number of women who participated in 1956 and in 1957 as*

experts, scholars and fellows, in the regular programme and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, and to include available information on any preferences evinced by women in the different fields of activities as shown in the applications received by the United Nations for scholarships and fellowships."

## CHAPTER XI

### Participation of women in the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies

231. The Commission discussed item 12 of its agenda at its 253rd and 254th meetings.

232. During the general debate, members of the Commission expressed disappointment at the delays encountered in the full implementation of Article 8 of the United Nations Charter. Particular reference was made to the relatively low number of women holding senior or policy-making posts in the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariats of the specialized agencies, and to the definitions of dependency affecting the conditions of employment of women members of the United Nations Secretariat.

233. With regard to the number of women holding senior or policy-making posts, several representatives noted that a number of Governments had already appointed women to senior posts in national civil services, and to an increasing degree had included women in the national delegations to international conferences and organizations. These members felt also that the United Nations should set an example to all Governments by appointing and promoting women to responsible posts in the career service of the United Nations. The view was expressed that there were a number of women throughout the world who were qualified to fill such vacancies as did occur in the Secretariat, even when the necessity of securing an optimal geographical distribution of staff was taken into account.

234. One representative said that since the Secretary-General was one of the most convinced champions of the rights of women, she hoped that he would redouble his efforts to have women appointed to senior positions in the Secretariat.

235. With respect to the conditions of employment of women on the United Nations staff, some members participating in the debate considered that in its report (A/3209)<sup>7</sup> the Salary Review Committee had proposed a definition of dependency which discriminated against female staff members. One member noted that her views on the question differed from those held by her fellow-national who had participated in the work of the Salary Review Committee, but she felt that it was incumbent on the members of the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to press for the full implementation of Article 8 of the Charter. It was also noted that

the conditions of employment with respect to home leave and to the reversibility of pensions were less favourable for women than those for men. One member of the Commission also expressed the view that conditions of employment were not equal for men and women in the secretariats of the various specialized agencies; in that connexion she cited statistics concerning the situation of women in the UNESCO secretariat.

236. The Commission heard a statement by the United Nations Director of Personnel, Mr. J. A. C. Robertson, who spoke as the representative of the Secretary-General.

237. With reference to the application of Article 8 of the Charter, he recalled that the Secretary-General, in his previous statements to the Commission, had assured the Commission that under his administration there was and would be no discrimination on the ground of sex. With respect to the appointment and promotion of women to policy-making posts in the Secretariat of the United Nations, the Director of Personnel drew the attention of the Commission to the difficulties inherent in ensuring as wide a geographical basis as possible in the recruitment of the staff; he noted also that relatively few vacancies occurred in the Secretariat at its current stage of development. The Director of Personnel stated that the Secretary-General, in his capacity, under Article 97 of the Charter, as the chief administrative officer of the United Nations, was responsible, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, for securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity in the employment of the staff, and that the persons best qualified under those criteria would be appointed or promoted to vacancies as they occurred, without distinction as to sex, race, colour or creed.

238. In his statement, the Director of Personnel cited statistics relating to the numbers and grades of women staff members as compared to men. He noted that the statistics had been prepared for the consideration of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, as the only appropriate body to which the Secretary-General reported on all matters of personnel administration. In analysing those statistics, he noted that the number of women holding policy-making posts in the Secretariat had remained quite stationary over the past few years, and that the net situation had neither improved nor deteriorated. Relatively few women had held such posts at any given time, although such posts had been held and voluntarily vacated in the last decade; and that the high rate of turnover and the demand for qualified senior women personnel in the civil services of their own countries were factors to be considered in evaluating the record of the United Nations in that regard. It was the Secretary-General's contention that there was no discrimination. The Director of Personnel outlined the recruitment procedure of the Secretariat, and drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that national civil services were a primary source of candidates for appointments, from outside, to higher posts in the United Nations. He noted that although some Governments among the twenty-one new Members had put forward candidates for consideration for employment by the United Nations, practically no women candidates had been included. The Director of Personnel agreed

<sup>7</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Eleventh Session, separate fascicle.*

that the United Nations should set an example in its recruitment and promotion policies, and he noted that a possible source of improvement in the situation would be the recruitment of more qualified women at junior levels of the career service, who, if well chosen in the first place, could then be expected to attain policy-making posts by career advancement over the years. In describing the operations of the Appointment and Promotion Board, the Director of Personnel noted that in regard to promotions, the Board went out of its way to avoid any discrimination whatsoever, including discrimination against or in favour of women.

239. With respect to conditions of employment and in particular to the question of the definition of dependency, the Director of Personnel drew the attention of the Commission to the tentative definitions agreed upon by the Consultative Committee for Administrative Questions, a committee composed of representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The definitions were summarized as follows:

(a) A spouse would be recognized as a dependant of a staff member, whether a man or a woman, if the spouse's earnings were less than a fixed amount equally applicable to men and women.

(b) Children would be recognized as dependants of the staff member automatically and without any dependency test. The allowance payable on behalf of children would be subject to certain deductions on account of special benefits or tax relief to which the parents might be entitled under national laws, but the deductions would apply to staff members of both sexes without difference.

240. The Director of Personnel also pointed out that these definitions, which required final approval by the executive heads of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, would represent a further development in the application of Article 8 of the Charter.

241. In conclusion, the Director of Personnel recalled the Secretary-General's continuing and profound interest in that aspect of the Commission's work, and noted that his attention would be carefully drawn to all aspects of the debates of the Commission on the subject of participation of women in higher posts and their conditions of employment when in service; he undertook to report to the Secretary-General that it was the Commission's view that all possible efforts should be made to improve the number and proportion of women holding policy-making posts in the United Nations Secretariat.

242. In expressing their appreciation of the statement made by the Director of Personnel as the representative of the Secretary-General, members of the Commission reiterated their confidence in the Secretary-General, and emphasized that there was no intention of implying that the Secretary-General had not applied the terms of Article 8 of the Charter. The consensus was, however, that much remained to be done before Article 8 could be said to be fully implemented.

243. One representative pointed out that in the female staff of 1,119 members, only one woman held the post

of director; in UNICEF one woman held a high position.

244. Members of the Commission drew attention to the fact that the item had been on the Commission's agenda for the past eight years, and expressed the hope that the situation would improve in the near future. One member recommended that members of the Commission draw the attention of their country's representatives on the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly to the debates and the resolutions of the Commission on the question.

245. One member also noted that at its third session the Commission had adopted a resolution requesting that its secretariat be given the status of a Division in the organization of the Secretariat.<sup>8</sup> Nothing had come of the request and the Commission continued, unlike other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, to be serviced by a Section. Her remarks were not intended as a reflection on the Section in question, to which she paid a high tribute for its outstanding service to the Commission. She felt, however, that the administrative arrangements in force reflected on the prestige of the Commission.

246. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Federation of University Women and of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

247. At its 253rd and 254th meetings, the Commission considered the draft resolution submitted by Argentina, the Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Mexico and Venezuela (E/CN.6/L.232). At the 253rd meeting, the representative of Sweden orally suggested the deletion of the words "continue to" in operative paragraph 2. She withdrew her suggestion in favour of an amendment proposed by the representative of the Dominican Republic, consisting in the addition of the words "there will be an increase in" after the words "trusts that", in operative paragraph 2, and the consequential deletion of the words "will continue to increase". The Dominican proposal was accepted by the sponsors of the draft resolution.

248. At the 254th meeting, the co-sponsors of the draft resolution accepted the amendments submitted by the United Kingdom (E/CN.6/L.234) in which revised wording was suggested for both the second paragraph of the preamble and operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution.

249. At its 254th meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted the draft resolution as amended. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

#### *Resolution 11 (XI)*

*"The Commission on the Status of Women,*

*"Considering that the General Assembly, by its resolution 1095 (XI) of 27 February 1957, has endorsed the conclusion of the Fifth Committee that*

<sup>8</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Ninth Session, Supplement No. 5, annex D.*

the Secretary-General, in consultation with the executive heads of the specialized agencies, and taking full account of the proposals of the Salary Review Committee and of the views expressed in the Fifth Committee, should formulate the definition of dependency, apply it to the staff and report the results to the General Assembly at its twelfth session,

“*Noting* that the Salary Review Committee has proposed a definition of dependency which differs in some respects for men and women staff members,

“*Recalling* that the Charter, in its Article 8, prohibits all discrimination on grounds of sex,

“1. *Expresses the hope* that the Secretary-General will bear in mind the necessity of avoiding discrimination against women staff members in respect of dependency allowances, and of employing men and women in accordance with Article 8, as well as Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter.

“2. *Trusts* that there will be an increase in the number of women and proportion of women appointed and promoted to senior and policy-making positions in the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies.”

## CHAPTER XII

### Report of the Inter-American Commission of Women

250. The Commission had before it the report of the Inter-American Commission of Women (E/CN.6/306), and, at its 251st meeting heard a statement by the representative of that Commission.

251. Several members expressed their interest in the report and statement and commented on the great value of the work of the Inter-American Commission of Women. Satisfaction was particularly expressed with the close working relationship between that Commission and the Commission on the Status of Women.

252. The Commission took note, with appreciation, of the report of the Inter-American Commission of Women.

## CHAPTER XIII

### Communications concerning the status of women

253. In accordance with resolution 76 (V) of the Economic and Social Council, as amended by resolution 304 I (XI), communications concerning the status of women had been summarized by the Secretary-General in a non-confidential list (E/CN.6/CR.10); no confidential communication had been received.

254. The non-confidential list was reviewed by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Communications, whose report (E/CN.6/L.228) was unanimously approved by the Commission at its 252nd meeting.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Review of the programme of work and establishment of priorities

255. At its 256th meeting, the Commission considered item 15 of its agenda. In addition to a report on the action taken on decisions reached by the Commission on the Status of Women on its tenth session (E/CN.6/304), the Commission had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and the establishment of priorities (E/CN.6/307) and a working paper by the Secretary-General on the same subject suggesting a list of priorities on the basis of decisions reached at the eleventh session of the Commission (E/CN.6/L.233).

256. The representative of the Secretary-General made a statement to the Commission with particular reference to the Secretary-General's note (E/CN.6/307), which had already been brought to the attention of the Commission earlier in the session. In reviewing the origin and purpose of the document, the representative of the Secretary-General explained that many delegations to the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-second session had felt the need for further efforts towards greater concentration of international resources so as to ensure the best possible use of limited resources available throughout the whole economic and social field. As a result, a resolution had been adopted by the Council placing special responsibilities on the commissions, both regional and functional, and on the Secretary-General. The Commissions had been requested to pay particular attention to further concentration of their activities on major economic, social and human rights problems and to more efficient co-ordination of those activities and also to include in their reports to the Council a special section thereon. The Secretary-General, who had already submitted a report in 1956 containing observations on the work programme of the Council, had been asked to produce a further report on the same lines, including comments on the work programmes of the Commissions. The report, together with the relevant sections of the reports of the commissions and specialized agencies, was to be considered by the Co-ordination Committee of the Council before the opening of the Council's twenty-fourth session. The note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/307) was one of several papers to be submitted to each commission of the Council, containing suggestions for the streamlining of work programmes; the suggestions contained in such papers as the Secretary-General's note (E/CN.6/307) would, of course, be reflected in the document to be prepared by the Secretary-General for the Economic and Social Council.

257. With specific reference to the Secretary-General's note (E/CN.6/307), the representative of the Secretary-General drew the Commission's attention to the suggestion that a number of reports that had in the past been prepared on an annual basis should be prepared once every two years. He noted with gratification that the Commission had already decided in its resolution 3 (XI) concerning access of women to education (see para. 88

and annex, draft resolution C) to space its work on that subject over the twelfth and thirteenth sessions and that its resolution 4 (XI) on equal pay for equal work (see para. 113 and annex, draft resolution D) did not itself prejudice acceptance of the suggestion that such reports be made in alternate years. He also noted that the annual reports on political rights of women and on the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories were included among those suggested by the Secretary-General for preparation in alternate years.

258. He drew the Commission's attention to the suggestion contained in the note by the Secretary-General to the effect that reports on government action for the removal of economic discrimination against women might helpfully take the form of a series of reports on specific economic rights and stated that the Secretary-General had suggested, after consultation with the International Labour Organisation, that the right to rest and material security for old age and in case of illness or loss of capacity to work be taken up at the twelfth session of the Commission and that other aspects of economic rights mentioned in Economic and Social Council resolution 587 F (XX) should be covered in subsequent reports. He stated that he was happy that, in addition to having to plead a cause, he could express gratification at the steps already taken by the Commission at its eleventh session, which were in line both with the Secretary-General's views and with the general policy of the Economic and Social Council.

259. The representative of the Dominican Republic asked whether the *Newsletter on the Status of Women* would be issued also in the Spanish language. She expressed the hope that the Secretariat would find it possible to accede to her request.

260. One member suggested that it might be helpful in future if, at the beginning of each session, the Secretary-General were to draw the Commission's attention to his proposals for the future programme of work, so that the Commission could bear them in mind while considering the various items on its agenda. Several members expressed their appreciation of the suggestion made in the note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/307) and of the statement by the representative of the Secretary-General. The opinion was expressed that it would be useful for the Commission to concentrate on studies "in depth" as suggested in paragraph 6 of the Secretary-General's note and to reduce the number of items on the agenda of each session. Others emphasized, however, the close inter-connexion among the various subjects relating to the status of women.

261. One representative reported to the Commission that there were "rumours" that an effort would be made to reduce the sessions of the Commission to one session every other year. Several representatives stated their understanding that nothing in the note by the Secretary-General suggested that possibility and that the Commission would continue to hold annual sessions but that reports on certain topics now presented annually for its consideration might in the future be presented every other year.

262. In discussing the note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/307), and with particular reference to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the note, concerning the frequency of documentation, several members expressed the opinion that the question of political rights of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories was a most important item and that reports should be received annually on the subject. It was also noted that the annual reports on the Status of Women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories included not only information on political rights but also on other aspects of the status of women including access to education. Certain members were of the opinion that the Commission's decision on the frequency of such documentation should await further consideration. One member, however, expressed the opinion that it would be appropriate for reports to be submitted every two years, as suggested in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Secretary-General's note.

263. The representative of Poland moved that further consideration of paragraphs 4 and 5 of the note (E/CN.6/307) be postponed until the next session of the Commission. The motion was adopted by 15 votes to 1.

264. The Commission proceeded to consider a working paper by the Secretary-General entitled "Review of programme of work and establishment of priorities" (E/CN.6/L.233). The representative of the United States suggested that for each project, the programme of work should indicate whether the memorandum or report was to be prepared by the Secretary-General or by any one or more of the specialized agencies, and also suggested that the authority for the reports should be indicated in each case. The Commission agreed that the programme of work should be so amended.

265. The representative of the USSR proposed that the projects listed under the heading "Continuing projects of high priority" be rearranged so that the item "Nationality of married women" would be transposed from item (b) to item (d) and would immediately precede the project on "Private law". This proposal, with the consequential changes in the order of the projects on "Access of women to education" and on "Equal pay for equal work", was accepted by the Commission.

266. With respect to *ad hoc* projects of high priority, the representative of the United States of America proposed that under item (b): "Economic opportunities for women", the report on conditions of working women with family responsibilities should become sub-item (i) and that, under sub-item (ii) should appear the projects: "(a) Report on the steps taken by States members of the United Nations and of the International Labour Organisation for the removal of economic discrimination against women by granting them equal rights with men to rest and material security in case of old age, illness or loss of capacity to work"; and "(b) request to non-governmental organizations for their opinion on the age of retirement and the right to pension of women workers and preparation of a report concerning their replies". The Commission accepted the United States proposal.

267. With respect to the item "Economic opportunities for women", the representative of the United Kingdom proposed that the request to Governments and non-governmental organizations for information on the occupational outlook for women be removed from the list under "*Ad hoc* projects of high priority" and placed under the heading of "*Ad hoc* projects of low priority" for the thirteenth session of the Commission. The Commission agreed to this proposal on the understanding that the words "and report by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned" would be added.

268. The following programme of work was adopted unanimously by the Commission at its 256th meeting:

#### I. *Continuing projects of high priority*

- (a) Political rights of women: (i) Memorandum by the Secretary-General for the General Assembly on the franchise of women (Economic and Social Council resolution 120 A (VI)); (ii) Report by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Trust Territories (E/1316, para. 18 (2)); (iii) Report by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/1316, para. 18);
- (b) Access of women to education: Progress report on activities of UNESCO concerning access of women to education (Economic and Social Council resolution 154 F (VII));
- (c) Equal pay for equal work: Progress report by the International Labour Office on implementation by Governments of the principle of equal pay for equal work including signatures and ratification of the ILO Convention (No. 100) on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (Economic and Social Council resolution 504 G (XVI));
- (d) Nationality of married women: Report by the Secretary-General containing information on recent changes in legislation concerning the nationality of married women (E/2850, para. 182);
- (e) Private law: Annual reports by the Secretary-General on legislation and practice in family law and property rights of women (Economic and Social Council resolution 546 F (XVIII));
- (f) Advisory services in the field of human rights: Progress report by the Secretary-General (General Assembly resolution 926 (X));
- (g) *Biannual Newsletter on the Status of Women* (E/1712, para. 93)

#### II. *Ad Hoc projects of high priority*

- (a) Equal pay for equal work: Draft pamphlet by the Secretary-General in consultation with the International Labour Office on equal pay for equal work (E/2850, para. 69);
- (b) Economic opportunities for women: (i) Reports by the Secretary-General and by the International

Labour Office on the conditions of working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities (Economic and Social Council resolution 625 B II (XXII));

(ii) a. Reports by the Secretary-General and by the International Labour Office on steps taken by States Members of the United Nations and members of the International Labour Organisation for the removal of economic discrimination against women by granting them equal rights with men to rest and material security in case of old age, illness or loss of capacity to work (Economic and Social Council resolution 625 B III (XXII));

b. Request to non-governmental organizations for their opinion on the age of retirement and the right to pension of women workers and report by the Secretary-General containing their replies (E/CN.6/L.226/Add. 3, para. 15);

- (c) Access of women to education: Report by UNESCO on access of women to higher education (E/CN.6/L.226, para. 42);

Supplementary statistical data supplied by UNESCO concerning access of women to secondary education (E/CN.6/L.226, para. 42);

- (d) Political rights of women: Report by the Secretary-General on his consultation with Governments on convening an international seminar (E/CN.6/L.226/Add. 1, para. 46);
- (e) Status of women in private law: Report by the Secretary-General on age of marriage and requirement of free consent of both parties (if the Economic and Social Council refers this study to the Commission on the Status of Women) (E/CN.6/L.226/Add. 5, para. 19);
- (f) Technical assistance: Statistical information by the Secretary-General on participation of women in technical assistance programmes (E/CN.6/L.226/Add. 6, para. 18).

#### III. *Ad hoc projects of low priority*

(for the thirteenth session of the Commission)

- (a) Tax legislation applicable to women: Request to Member States and non-governmental organizations for information and report by the Secretary-General containing replies (E/CN.6/L.226/Add. 5, para. 35);
- (b) Access of women to education: Report by UNESCO on access of women to the teaching profession (E/CN.6/L.226, para. 42);
- (c) Economic opportunities for women: Request to Member States and non-governmental organizations for information on the occupational outlook for women, and report by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned (E/CN.6/L.226/Add. 4, para. 20).

## CHAPTER XV

### Consideration of the place of meeting of the next session

269. The Commission considered the place of meeting of its next session at its 255th meeting.

270. The attention of the Commission was drawn to General Assembly resolution 790 (VIII), in which the Assembly requested organs of the United Nations to adhere to the pattern of conferences established for 1954 to 1957.

271. The Commission unanimously adopted the following draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.235) submitted by Argentina, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Israel, Poland, Sweden, the USSR, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Venezuela:

## Resolution 12 (XI)

*"The Commission on the Status of Women*

*"Recommends to the Economic and Social Council to decide that the Commission on the Status of Women should meet in Geneva in 1958."*

## CHAPTER XVI

### Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

272. At its 257th meeting the Commission unanimously adopted the report of its eleventh session to the Economic and Social Council.

## ANNEX

### Draft resolutions for action by the Economic and Social Council

#### A

*The Economic and Social Council*

*Takes note of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (eleventh session).<sup>a</sup>*

#### B

##### POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Considering the importance of recognizing political rights of women,*

*Believing it important to increase the participation of women in public life,*

*Observing the significant role of non-governmental organizations in furthering the political rights of women,*

*Recalling its resolutions 504 E (XVI) of 23 July 1953 and 547 B (XVIII) of 12 July 1954, in which it appealed to States Members of the United Nations, and recommended to non-member States which have been so invited by the General Assembly, to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women,<sup>b</sup>*

1. *Recommends* all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies which have not yet done so to recognize the political rights of women;

2. *Invites* non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, to continue their activities in support of political rights for women, and to apply their efforts towards increasing public support in the various countries for the signature and ratification of, or accession to, the Convention on the Political Rights of Women;

3. *Recommends* those States which have been invited to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women and which have not already done so, to sign and ratify or accede to this Convention.

#### C

##### ACCESS OF WOMEN TO EDUCATION

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Considering that it appears from the analytical summary of information on discrimination in education based on sex prepared by the Secretary-General<sup>c</sup> and from the documents prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization<sup>d</sup> for the eleventh session of the Commission on the Status of*

Women that, in parts of the world where the general development of education has not reached an advanced stage, illiteracy is particularly widespread among women and school attendance by girls falls considerably below that by boys,

*Recalling its resolutions 547 K (XVIII) of 12 July 1954 and 587 G (XX) of 3 August 1955 in which it recognized that, in such areas, special measures were needed to encourage increased school attendance by girls and also to provide more extensive opportunities for fundamental education of women, and recommended that Governments take legislative and other measures to improve the position of women in the field of education,*

*Considering that in its resolution 547 K (XVIII) it recommended inter alia that Governments take the necessary measures to institute free and compulsory primary education,*

*Considering that many States are prepared to proceed, in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, with a programme directly benefiting women and facilitating their access to education and to all levels of the teaching profession without discrimination,*

1. *Recommends* that States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies should in their programmes of educational advancement:

(a) Make provision for equal participation, in fundamental education programmes, by all who have not received primary education and for an intensified campaign against illiteracy among the female population of areas where the general development of education is not advanced;

(b) Make necessary provision for increased attendance by girls at primary schools by:

(i) Instituting or extending universal, free and compulsory primary education for all;

(ii) Providing a sufficient number of schools, teachers and general educational facilities;

2. *Requests* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue its studies concerning access of women to education and, in particular,

(a) To prepare a report on the access of women to higher education containing a chapter on the distribution, among students of both sexes, of scholarships and other material aids to higher education;

(b) To bring up to date for the twelfth session of the Commission on the Status of Women statistical data contained in its report on access of women to secondary education<sup>e</sup> which was prepared for the ninth session;

(c) To supplement, for the Commission at its thirteenth session, the documentation relating to the access of women to the teaching profession.

<sup>a</sup> E/2968.

<sup>b</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventh Session, Supplement No. 20, resolution 640 (VII), annex.*

<sup>c</sup> E/CN.6/287.

<sup>d</sup> E/CN.6/291 and E/CN.6/301.

<sup>e</sup> E/CN.6/266.

## D

### EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

#### *The Economic and Social Council,*

Considering that the implementation, by legislation, collective bargaining or other measures, of the principle of equal remuneration for workers of both sexes is of primary importance in securing respect for women's rights in the economic field,

Considering that non-governmental organizations expressing the wishes of millions of women have repeatedly called for constructive action in this field, in international conferences as well as in meetings at the national and local levels,

1. *Urges* all Member States of the United Nations to expedite the signing and ratification of the International Labour Organisation Convention (No. 100) on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, or otherwise to carry out their responsibilities with respect to the Convention;

2. *Recommends* that Governments of States Members of the United Nations implement the principle of equal pay for men and women for equal work, by legislation, by collective bargaining or by other measures;

3. *Requests* the International Labour Office to continue to provide current information to the Commission on the results of the efforts undertaken by Member States to eliminate wage discrimination against women and to ensure the practical application of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

## E

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

#### *The Economic and Social Council*

*Requests* the Secretary-General, as a first step in the global study of the access of women to training and employment in the principal professional and technical fields, to collect information and prepare, in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned, a report on the availability of opportunities for women as jurists, teachers, architects and engineers and in medical and health sciences and related occupations, and to that end:

(a) To circulate the attached questionnaire, together with the list of the above-mentioned professional and technical occupations as described and defined in the International Classification of Occupations for Migration and Employment Placement (Volume I) published by the International Labour Office, June 1952, to States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and to non-governmental organizations in consultative status;

(b) To invite such States and non-governmental organizations to transmit their replies to the Secretary-General, if possible before 1 September 1958, or, if such information has already been transmitted to the United Nations or to a specialized agency, to give a precise reference to the information previously furnished;

(c) To prepare, in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned, a report on this subject for the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirteenth session, on the basis of information received from Member States, specialized agencies, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

#### *Annex*

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

I. What are the major occupations in this field?

- A. List each major occupation.
- B. Explain principal characteristics, using as a guide the International Classification of Occupations for Migration

and Employment Placement (volume I) published by the International Labour Office, June 1952.

II. Do women have access to these occupations on the same basis as men?

A. In law: State restrictions, if any, in:

1. Recruitment
2. Appointments
3. Salaries
4. Advancement

Indicate in each case the effect of marital status (marriage, divorce, separation) and maternal status.

B. In fact: Indicate differences, if any, in:

1. Recruitment
2. Appointments
3. Salaries
4. Advancement

Indicate in each case the effect of marital status (marriage, divorce, separation) and maternal status.

C. Give statistical data showing proportion of men and women employed.

III. What training and other qualifications are required for engaging in the major occupations?

- A. Education
- B. Experience
- C. Other qualifications

IV. Do women have access to training on the same basis as men?

A. In law:

1. Education
2. Other forms of training

B. In fact:

1. Vocational guidance
2. Admission to school
  - (a) Restrictions, if any, applying to women
  - (b) Proportionate number of schools open to women

C. Give statistical data showing proportion of men and women enrolled in schools

V. Observations.

## F

### CONVENTION ON THE NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN

#### *The Economic and Social Council,*

Noting that the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 1040 (XI) of 29 January 1957, was opened, on 20 February 1957, for signature and ratification, or accession, to States Members of the United Nations and any other State which is or hereafter becomes a member of any specialized agency of the United Nations, or which is or hereafter becomes a Party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice,

1. *Urges* States Members of the United Nations which have not yet done so to sign and ratify, or accede to, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women;

2. *Recommends* that States Members of the specialized agencies and States Parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice which have not yet done so sign and ratify, or accede to, the Convention.

G

STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 843 (IX) of 17 December 1954,

*Observing* that the time is appropriate for the introduction of a system of compulsory registration of marriage as a significant safeguard in achieving the free and full consent of intending spouses to marriage, and considering that such registration should also relate to divorce,

*Recommends* States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies to encourage a system of compulsory registration of marriage, whereby prospective spouses in a marriage themselves express their consent freely in the presence of a competent civil or religious authority, and further to encourage a system of compulsory registration of divorce.

H

TAX LEGISLATION APPLICABLE TO WOMEN

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Noting* the importance of having the Commission on the Status of Women study tax legislation applicable to women,

*Noting further* the insufficiency of available information on this subject,

*Requests* the Secretary-General:

1. To invite Governments of States Members of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to provide precise information on tax legislation applicable to women and especially to married women employed gainfully;

2. To prepare for the Commission at its thirteenth session a report on this subject on the basis of information made available by Governments of States Members of the United Nations and on additional information supplied by non-governmental organizations in consultative status.