



UNITED NATIONS

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
REPORT OF THE FOURTH SESSION

(8-19 MAY 1950)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

OFFICIAL RECORDS
FIFTH YEAR: ELEVENTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 6

LAKE SUCCESS, NEW YORK

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FIFTH YEAR, ELEVENTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT NO. 6

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Report to the Economic and Social Council on the fourth session of the Commission, held at Lake Success, New York, from 8 to 19 May 1950

[Original text: English]
[31 May 1950]

I. Organization of the fourth session of the Commission

1. The fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women opened on Monday, 8 May 1950, at the interim headquarters of the United Nations, Lake Success. The Commission held eighteen plenary meetings and terminated its work on 19 May 1950.

2. The following representatives of Member States on the Commission attended:

Chairman:

Mrs. Marie-Hélène Lefauchaux (*France*), Representative.

First Vice-Chairman:

Mrs. Isabel Urdaneta (*Venezuela*), Representative.

Second Vice-Chairman:

Mrs. Hannah Sen (*India*), Representative.

Rapporteur:

Mrs. Angela Jurdak Khoury (*Lebanon*), Representative.

Members:

Australia: Miss Isabel McCorkindale, Representative.

China: Miss Cecilia Sieu-Ling Zung, Representative.

Costa Rica: Miss Irma Morales, Alternate.

Denmark: Miss Helga Pedersen, Alternate.

Greece: Mrs. Lina P. Tsaldaris, Representative.

Mexico: Mrs. Amalia C. de Castillo Ledón, Representative.

Turkey: Mrs. Mihri Pektas, Representative.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: Miss Mary Sutherland, Representative.

United States of America: Mrs. Olive Remington Goldman, Representative.

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

International Labour Organisation: Mrs. Mildred Fairchild-Woodbury.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Miss Jeanne H. Chaton.

4. The Inter-American Commission of Women, an inter-governmental organization, was represented in an advisory and informative capacity by Mrs. Ofelia Mendoza de Barret, in accordance with resolution 48 B (IV), paragraph 7, of the Economic and Social Council.

5. The following authorized representatives from non-governmental organizations were also present:

CATEGORY A:

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Miss Toni Sender.

World Federation of United Nations Associations: Miss Perla Berg, Mrs. I. G. Sprague.

CATEGORY B:

Catholic International Union for Social Service: Mrs. Grace Aleta.

Commission of Churches on International Affairs: Mrs. E. F. Nolde.

Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organizations for Consultation with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: Mr. Stanley D. Halperin.

International Alliance of Women: Miss Hanna Rydh, Miss B. Van den Berg.

International Council of Women: Mrs. Eunice H. Carter, Mrs. Frances Freeman.

International Federation of Business and Professional Women: Mrs. Esther W. Hymer, Miss Ruth Tomlinson.

International Federation of Friends of Young Women: Mrs. M. Schwarzenbach, Mrs. A. Lagemann.

International Federation of University Women: Miss Janet Robb.

International League for the Rights of Men: Mr. Max Beer.

International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues: Miss Jean Gartlan, Miss A. J. Zizzamia.

Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations: Mrs. Frances Freeman.

World's Young Women's Christian Association: Miss Alice Arnold, Mrs. C. B. Fox.

6. The representatives of Haiti, Mrs. Fortuna André Guéry, and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mrs. Elizavieta Alekseevna Popova, did not attend the session.

7. Mrs. Emma de Zalamea and Miss Uldarica Manas, observers representing respectively the Governments of Colombia and Cuba, attended various meetings of the session.

8. Mrs. Alva Myrdal represented the Secretary-General. Mrs. Lakshmi Nandan Menon acted as Secretary of the Commission.

9. 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.64 to E/CN.6/SR.81).

10. In order to expedite its work the Commission established three Committees, as follows:

Committee on Resolutions:

The representatives of Venezuela (*Chairman*), Australia, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, Mexico, Turkey and the United States of America.

Committee on Communications:

The representatives of the United Kingdom (*Chairman*), Australia, France, Greece, Turkey and Venezuela.

Committee on Questionnaires:

The representatives of India (*Chairman*), Denmark, Lebanon, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

II. Agenda

11. In considering the agenda of its fourth session, the Commission had before it a provisional agenda (E/CN.6/128) drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairman.

12. At its 64th meeting, the Commission decided that since the documentation submitted on item 10 of the provisional agenda, the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, related chiefly to the political and legal status of women, item 10 should not be treated as a separate subject but should be considered in connexion with item 3, political rights of women. The view was expressed that this change would be in line with the Commission's established policy of not discriminating between different classes of women in considering their political rights.

13. The representative of Greece proposed that a study be made of private law (*droit civil*) in its relation to the status of women. Consequently it was decided to include the study of the questionnaire on family law prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/W.1/Add.3) as part of item 5 of the provisional agenda.

14. The agenda was thereupon unanimously adopted as amended, on the understanding that representatives who wished to submit additional items could do so up to the time of the 69th meeting, when the Commission would consider any proposed revisions.

15. At the 69th meeting of the Commission, several proposals for additions to the agenda were put forward. Three of these proposals: (a) programme of work, (b) organization of secretariat, and (c) place of the next meeting, made respectively by the representatives of

the United States of America, India and Lebanon, were merged into one as item 15. A proposal put forward by the representative of Greece resulted in the addition to the agenda of an item, the problem of Greek mothers whose children have not been repatriated. An item proposed by the Chairman as the representative of France, information concerning the situation of women who were subjected to so-called scientific experiments in the Nazi concentration camps, was also added. The representative of Mexico suggested two further items: reports of the delegates of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; and report of the Inter-American Commission of Women. These were added to the agenda as items 11 and 14.

16. The agenda of the Commission, in its final form, was as follows:

- (1) Election of officers.
- (2) Adoption of the agenda.
- (3) Political rights of women:
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General on discrimination based on sex in the field of political rights;
 - (b) Status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories;
 - (c) Report of the Secretary-General on the question of a convention on the political rights of women;
 - (d) Effective programmes of political education for women who have recently acquired the right to vote.
- (4) Nationality of married women:
 - (a) Analysis of conflicts of laws in the field of nationality of married women;
 - (b) Suggestions as to articles of a convention on the nationality of married women.
- (5) Property rights of married women.
- (6) Participation of women in the work of the United Nations.
- (7) Application of penal law to women.
- (8) Equal pay for equal work for men and women workers.
- (9) Technical assistance programme in relation to the status of women.
- (10) Educational opportunities for women.
- (11) Reports of the delegates of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.
- (12) (a) The problem of Greek mothers whose children have not been repatriated;
(b) Information concerning the situation of women who were subjected to so-called scientific experiments in the Nazi concentration camps.
- (13) Communications concerning the status of women.
- (14) Report of the Inter-American Commission of Women.

- (15) Additional items:
- (a) Programme of future work;
 - (b) Organization of the Secretariat;
 - (c) Consideration of the place of the next meeting of the Commission.
- (16) Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council.

III. Political rights of women

17. The Commission considered item 3 of its agenda, political rights of women, at its 65th, 66th, 67th, 71st, 73rd, 75th, 76th and 79th meetings. Four aspects of the question were dealt with, as follows:

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General on discrimination based on sex in the field of political rights;
- (b) Status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories;
- (c) Report of the Secretary-General on the question of a convention on the political rights of women; and
- (d) Effective programmes of political education for women who have recently acquired the right to vote.

18. In considering item 3 (a), the Commission had before it a report, prepared by the Secretary-General, on discrimination against women in the field of political rights (E/CN.6/131 and Corr.1). This report, based on constitutional or other legal provisions regulating women's right to vote and to be elected to public office, shows the extent to which women enjoy legal equality with men in this field as far as it has been possible for the Secretary-General to ascertain.

19. Members of the Commission, having examined the report, expressed the view that the progress of women toward equal political rights with men was encouraging. In particular, they noted that under the Political Constitution of Costa Rica of 7 November 1949, women had been given the same political rights as men; and that in Syria women had acquired the right to vote in 1949. Progress was also noted in Greece, where recent legislation had reduced the age at which women could take part in municipal elections and opened the way for women to be elected to municipal office. The part played by the Commission on the Status of Women and the Inter-American Commission of Women with respect to these achievements was recalled.

20. In considering item 3 (b), the Commission had before it two memoranda, prepared by the Secretary-General, on information concerning the status of women in Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories contained in annual reports submitted by Administering Authorities. The first report (E/CN.6/137) contains an analysis in tabulated form of information received concerning Non-Self-Governing Territories, on the political rights of women, including the right to vote and to hold public office. The second report (E/CN.6/138 and Corr.1) contains information received concerning Trust Territories, dealing with (a) suffrage laws; (b) status of women in general; (c) legal capacity of women in civil law; (d) employment; and (e) opportunities to enter and train for government service.

21. The Commission noted with interest the information contained in these reports, and decided to request the Secretary-General to continue to present information of this nature to them at future sessions, including it, if possible, in the annual reports on the political rights of women circulated to Member States in accordance with resolution 120 A (VI) of the Economic and Social Council.

22. In connexion with item 3 (c), the Commission examined the report of the Secretary-General on the possibility of proposing a convention in the field of political rights of women (E/CN.6/143). This report had been prepared at the request of the third session of the Commission. In it the Secretary-General points out that such a convention, if adopted, would serve a dual purpose: (a) enfranchise women not yet enfranchised, and (b) prevent the disenfranchisement of women already enfranchised. He also states that technically no difficulty would be involved in the drawing up of such a convention.

23. There was a divergence of opinion among the members of the Commission as to the desirability and importance of formulating a convention on the political rights of women at this time. On this question the Commission consulted with the representative of the International Labour Organisation, who described the experience of that body in the preparation of conventions. It also heard representatives of several international women's organizations.

24. The Commission examined in detail draft resolutions proposed by the representative of the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.1), and Mexico (E/CN.6/L.3), as amended by the representative of Australia. It adopted the principles embodied in these proposals and requested the Committee on Resolutions to combine them into a single text.

25. At its 79th meeting, the Commission adopted, by 11 votes for, none against, and 2 abstentions,¹ the following resolution prepared by its Committee on Resolutions:

“A

“POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

“The Commission on the Status of Women,

“Taking into consideration the memorandum of the Secretary-General on constitutions, electoral laws and other legal instruments relating to the franchise of women and their eligibility to public office and functions (A/1163),

“Invites the Secretary-General to continue his valuable annual reports on this subject and suggests that in future reports he include also pertinent information on the political rights of women in Trust Territories, drawn from annual reports of the Administering Authorities, and also information which may be communicated to him by the Administering Authorities of Non-Self-Governing Territories;

“Considering that the Charter of the United Nations was signed in 1945, and noting that document E/

¹The representative of the United Kingdom abstained from voting on the resolution on the ground that a convention was not an appropriate method of dealing with the problem.

CN.6/131 as corrected, lists twenty countries as still denying women equal political rights,

"Considering that at the third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in Beirut in March 1949, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to examine the possibility of proposing a convention on the political rights of women, similar to the Convention signed at Bogotá in 1948, which has to date been signed by fourteen States and ratified by four, and noting that since its signature, Chile and Costa Rica have granted equal political rights to women,

"Considering that the Commission on the Status of Women has worked for four years on a detailed investigation of the position of women in various fields, and that sufficient information has already been presented clearly to reveal the discrimination against women in the political field,

"Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for submission to this Commission at its next session a draft convention on the granting to women of equal political rights with men."

26. A proposal of the representative of India, containing a request to the Economic and Social Council to instruct the Commission on Human Rights to incorporate the substance of article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the draft covenant on human rights, was withdrawn as a result of a later decision taken by that Commission.

27. The Commission discussed item 3 (d) of its agenda, effective programmes of political education for women who have recently acquired the right to vote, at its 65th, 73rd, 75th and 76th meetings. This question had been dealt with earlier by the Commission at its first and second sessions, and by the Economic and Social Council in resolutions 48 (IV) and 154 A (VII); and the Secretary-General had presented to the Commission a report on activities undertaken to date in this field (E/CN.6/141).

28. In the course of the debate, it was pointed out by some members of the Commission and by representatives of non-governmental organizations, that steps should be taken for dissemination of the information collected by the Secretariat, and that the interest of new women voters should be aroused by showing them practical results which they could achieve in the social and economic fields, by exercising their political rights.

29. The Commission examined a proposal put forward by the representative of India (E/CN.6/L.10), recommending that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization be asked to undertake a study of programmes of education in citizenship. The representative of UNESCO stated that it was doubtful whether such a study could be carried out by that agency. The Commission took note of this statement and requested the Committee on Resolutions to revise the proposal in the light of the clarification received from the representative of UNESCO.

30. The following resolution, submitted by the Resolutions Committee, was adopted unanimously by the Commission at its 76th meeting:

"B

"POLITICAL EDUCATION OF WOMEN

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Having studied the Secretary-General's report on the collection and dissemination of information on effective programmes of political education for women who have recently acquired the right to vote,

"Appreciates the work done by non-governmental organizations in the field of political education;

"Notes that effective programmes of such education cannot be undertaken as extensively as desired in certain regions by non-governmental organizations without further assistance; and therefore

"Requests the Economic and Social Council to instruct the Secretary-General to make available the information already collected by the Secretariat, in the form of a study guide or a pamphlet which would serve as a guide to organizations working for the political education of women in countries where women have recently acquired the right to vote or are beginning to participate in public affairs."

IV. Nationality of married women

31. In considering item 4 of its agenda, nationality of married women, the Commission had before it memoranda prepared by the Secretariat on (a) analysis of conflicts of laws in the field of nationality of married women (E/CN.6/126); (b) replies of Member States to the supplementary list of questions on nationality and domicile as they affect the status of married persons (E/CN.6/127); (c) constitutions, laws, and other legal instruments relating to the nationality of married women (E/CN.6/129); (d) analysis of conflicts of laws relating to the domicile of married women (E/CN.6/133); (e) compilation of comments and suggestions of Governments in regard to conflicts of laws in the field of nationality of married women (E/CN.6/142); and (f) note on the proceedings of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Statelessness and Related Problems concerning the nationality of married women (E/CN.6/130).

32. The Commission discussed this item of its agenda at its 67th to its 70th meetings. It was pointed out by the representative of the United Kingdom that very few comments concerning a convention had been received as yet from Member States. Because of the complexity of the problem of drafting a convention on the nationality of married women, the Commission decided to restrict itself for the time being to setting forth the general principles which should be used as the basis for a convention and requested the Economic and Social Council to take appropriate measures for the drafting of such a convention.

33. The Commission based its discussion of the principles to be incorporated in such an instrument on a proposal made jointly by the representatives of Mexico, the United States of America and Venezuela (E/CN.6/L.4). The first two principles suggested were found to be generally acceptable with only minor drafting changes; these were (a) that there should be no dis-

inction based on sex as regards nationality in the legislation or in the practices of the parties to a convention, and (b) that neither marriage nor its dissolution should affect the nationality of either husband or wife, but that nothing in the proposed convention should prevent States parties thereto from making provisions for simplified voluntary naturalization of aliens married to their nationals.

34. The third principle suggesting that, in the transmission of nationality to a child under the doctrine of *jus sanguinis* there should be no distinction as between the father and the mother of the child, gave rise to considerable debate. Most of the members of the Commission felt that it would be inadvisable to include such a principle in a convention on the nationality of married women. The joint proposal of the representatives of Mexico, the United States of America and Venezuela concerning the nationality of children was rejected on the ground that this problem should be dealt with by other bodies within the framework of the United Nations. The Commission took into account the related work already undertaken by such bodies, particularly that of the Social Commission with respect to the position of children. At the suggestion of the Chairman, the Commission decided not to recommend this third principle for inclusion in the convention, but to request the Economic and Social Council to instruct the appropriate bodies of the United Nations to give consideration to the problem of the transmission of nationality to children from either the father or the mother on the basis of equality.

35. The Commission considered the various alternative procedures which it might wish to recommend to the Economic and Social Council for the drafting of the proposed convention, among them:

(a) Drafting such a convention itself and recommending that the Economic and Social Council transmit the draft to the General Assembly;

(b) Recommending that the Council request the International Law Commission to draft a convention;

(c) Recommending that the Council establish an *ad hoc* Committee of Experts to draft a convention; or

(d) Recommending that the Council convoke a General Conference where a convention might be drafted and opened for signature.

36. The Commission decided to leave the decision in this matter to the Economic and Social Council.

37. The Committee on Resolutions prepared a draft text embodying the decisions taken by the Commission (E/CN.6/L.5/Rev.1). An amended version of this resolution, prepared by the representative of Denmark (E/CN.6/L.6), was voted upon by the Commission at its 70th meeting, at which time the following resolution was adopted by 8 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.¹

"C

"NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN

"*The Commission on the Status of Women,*

"Requests the Economic and Social Council:

¹ The representative of Greece expressed the desire to have it noted in the report that she abstained from voting on this resolution.

"(a) To take appropriate measures, as soon as possible, to ensure the drafting of a convention on nationality of married women, embodying the following principles:

"(i) There shall be no distinction based on sex as regards nationality, in legislation or in practice;

"(ii) Neither marriage nor its dissolution shall affect the nationality of either spouse. Nothing in such a convention shall preclude the parties to it from making provision for the voluntary naturalization of aliens married to their nationals;

"(b) To instruct the appropriate bodies of the United Nations to give consideration to the problem of the transmission of nationality to children from either the father or the mother on a basis of equality."

V. Property rights of married women

38. The Commission considered item 5 of its agenda, property rights of married women, at its 70th, 73rd and 79th meetings. It had before it parts II and III of the questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of women, on property rights of women (E/CN.6/W.1/Add.2/Rev.1) and on family law (E/CN.6/W.1/Add.3), respectively.

39. Certain members of the Commission expressed the view that detailed questionnaires place a heavy workload on Governments, particularly on federal States and on States whose legal systems are based on common law. The view was also expressed that sufficient information could be obtained without asking such detailed questions, and it was therefore suggested that in the future questionnaires might be simplified.

40. The representative of the Secretary-General pointed out that the questionnaire had been prepared pursuant to resolution 2/11 of the Economic and Social Council, which instructed the Secretary-General "to make arrangements for a complete and detailed study of the legislation concerning the status of women and the practical application of such legislation".

41. The Chairman referred both parts of the questionnaire to the Committee on Questionnaires for examination in the light of these comments.

42. In its report to the Commission, the Committee on Questionnaires submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.21/Rev.1), which was unanimously adopted by the Commission at its 79th meeting:

"D

"INFORMATION ON THE LEGAL STATUS AND TREATMENT OF WOMEN

"*The Commission on the Status of Women,*

"Having examined the questionnaire prepared by the Secretary-General on the legal status and treatment of women, parts II and III,

"Requests the Secretary-General:

"(a) To circulate to Governments part II of the questionnaire, on property rights of women, and part III, on family law, with the request that they supply replies at the earliest possible time, but not later than 31 December 1951 in the case of part III and 30 June 1952, in the case of part II;

"(b) To forward copies of the questionnaire, together with simplified questions based on parts II and III, to specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations, and request their comments by 31 December 1950;

"(c) To prepare, for its next session, a survey of various legal systems, based on documentation available on the subjects included in parts II and III of the questionnaire, together with an analysis of replies thereto received from Governments and comments received from specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations;

"(d) To prepare also, if possible four months in advance of the next meeting of the Commission, a compilation and an analysis of the information contained in the replies already supplied by Governments to the sections of part I of the questionnaire not yet so compiled and analysed, namely section C, on public services and functions; section E, on civil liberties; and section F, on fiscal laws; supplementing this information from other sources necessary to ensure a complete and accurate picture."

43. The Commission also requested the Secretary-General to delete chapter V (v) of part III (family law) of the questionnaire.

VI. Participation of women in the work of the United Nations

44. In considering this item of its agenda at its 70th and 73rd meetings, the Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General on participation of women in the work of the United Nations (E/CN.6/132). This report describes the nature and proportion of positions occupied by women in the United Nations Secretariat, and furnishes some information on the conditions of employment of women in the Secretariat. It also provides information on the extent to which Member States have included women in their delegations to meetings of United Nations bodies and conferences of the specialized agencies.

45. In the course of the discussion it was emphasized that whereas the Secretary-General had taken a liberal attitude on working conditions for women staff members, there appeared to be a disproportionate percentage of women in the low grades, and a very low percentage of women in policy-making positions and as consultants. An apparent tendency to place women principally in positions where they dealt with child welfare, health, or other social problems was also noted, and it was pointed out that only an insignificant percentage of women had been included in delegations to meetings of United Nations organs and specialized agencies. At the same time, it was made clear that the Commission had no intention of suggesting that posts should be given to other than qualified women, or that the requirements of geographical distribution within the Secretariat, set forth in the Charter, should not be considered.

46. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Alliance of Women and the International Federation of University Women, who suggested that non-governmental organ-

izations should take steps to influence Governments to improve this situation.

47. At the 70th meeting of the Commission the representative of Greece proposed a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.7) on this subject, which was referred to the Committee on Resolutions together with an amendment thereto proposed by the representative of Mexico (E/CN.6/L.8). The first of these proposals recommended that the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Council take steps to improve the participation of women in all phases of the work of the United Nations, while the second dealt largely with the question of promotions within the Secretariat.

48. Some members of the Commission expressed the view that the Commission might go beyond its terms of reference in dealing with these problems, which were matters for decision by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by Member States. However, the following resolution, drafted by the Committee on Resolutions on the basis of the two proposals under consideration, was adopted at the Commission's 73rd meeting by 10 votes for, none against, and 3 abstentions.¹

"E

"PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Having studied the Secretary-General's report on the participation of women in the work of the United Nations in relation to their employment in the Secretariat and the extent of their participation in delegations,

"Having regard to Article 8 of the Charter, which provides that no restriction shall be placed on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity under conditions of equality in the principal and subsidiary organs of the United Nations,

"Noting that women have been engaged mainly in subordinate positions in the Secretariat, and that very few women have been appointed as members of delegations,

"Considering that the appointment of delegations is within the jurisdiction of the Member States of the United Nations,

"Suggests that the Economic and Social Council draw the attention of Member States to the desirability of greater participation of women in delegations;

"Requests the Secretary-General to examine the reasons why women have not yet been able to take up more important positions in the Secretariat, and report thereon;

"Invites the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to give promotion to qualified women staff members and to appoint more women to higher posts which they are competent to fill in order to secure equality between the sexes in the Secretariat and thereby assure more fully the participation of women in all capacities in United Nations organs."

¹ The representative of the United Kingdom abstained from voting on the resolution on the ground that matters relating to staff are not within the competence of the Commission, but belong to the Secretary-General.

49. A draft resolution, proposed by the representative of China, dealing with certain discrepancies in allowances to women members of the Secretariat as compared with allowances to men (E/CN.6/L.12), was withdrawn when the representative of China learned that the Secretariat was already considering steps to eliminate these discrepancies.

VII. Application of penal law to women

50. In considering item 7 of its agenda, application of penal law to women, the Commission had before it a preliminary report on the application of penal law to women (E/CN.6/139), prepared by the Secretary-General in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Commission at its third session. The preliminary report contains an analysis of the information supplied by inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations specializing in the field of penal law. The Commission also had before it a report on the protection of women workers by labour legislation carrying penal sanction (E/CN.6/134), prepared by the International Labour Office at the request of the Secretary-General.

51. The Commission discussed this item of its agenda at its 72nd, 73rd and 76th meetings. Upon the motion of the representative of Venezuela, the draft report of the sixth session of the Social Commission to the Economic and Social Council (E/CN.5/L.113) was circulated to the members of the Commission. The Commission also heard representatives of the Social Activities Division of the Department of Social Affairs on the action taken by the Social Commission in connexion with the item under consideration, and on the work done by the United Nations in the field of the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders.

52. At the 76th meeting of the Commission, the representative of Venezuela introduced a joint draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.13), proposed by the representatives of the United States of America, United Kingdom and Venezuela. This joint draft resolution was referred to the Committee on Resolutions, which was requested to include suggestions made by the representatives of China and the United Kingdom.

53. The revised draft resolution, prepared by the Committee on Resolutions (E/CN.6/L.15) was unanimously adopted, as follows:

"F

"APPLICATION OF PENAL LAW TO WOMEN

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Noting the report on the application of penal law to women (E/CN.6/139), prepared by the Secretary-General on the basis of information supplied by non-governmental organizations,

"Noting also that the Social Commission has undertaken a comprehensive study of problems concerning the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders,

"Considering that certain aspects of these problems are of direct interest to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular the importance of adequate and appropriate measures for the care and the social and vocational rehabilitation of women offenders,

"Requests the Economic and Social Council to ask the Social Commission:

"(a) To bear in mind, in its study, the concern of the Commission on the Status of Women that there should be no discrimination against women in penal law and its application; and that there should be provision for the particular needs of women in all parole, probation, welfare, vocational training and rehabilitation services;

"(b) To refer to the Commission on the Status of Women, for its consideration and comment, any question arising in the special field referred to in (a) above."

54. A draft resolution on this subject (E/CN.6/L.11), proposed by the representative of China, was withdrawn because the text prepared by the Committee on Resolutions met the main points raised therein.

VIII. Equal pay for equal work for men and women workers

55. In considering this item of its agenda, the Commission had before it a memorandum of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/135 and Add.1). This memorandum sets forth the work carried on by the International Labour Office in this field, and briefly summarizes the two reports on this subject prepared by the International Labour Office for the forthcoming session of the International Labour Conference.

56. The Commission discussed this item of its agenda at its 72nd and 76th meetings. The views of the representatives of the International Labour Organisation, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the International Alliance of Women were heard at the 72nd meeting.

57. The representative of the International Labour Office reviewed, for the Commission, the policy of that organization in the drawing up of international regulations covering equal pay for men and women for work of equal value. She also drew attention to two documents prepared by the International Labour Organisation, on "Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value". These set forth the various aspects of the question that call for consideration, indicated the situation as to law and practice concerning equal pay in the different countries, and included a questionnaire which had been sent to Governments in September 1949. It was noted that the International Labour Organisation had taken account, in its study, of the suggestions made by the Commission on the Status of Women at its third session on this subject, particularly as regards the inclusion of the concept of "wage rates based on job content" in its definition of equal pay for equal work.

58. The Commission, at its 76th meeting, accepted the suggestion of the Chairman that, in view of the study being undertaken by the International Labour Organisation, no specific resolution on this item would be necessary at this session. The Commission took note of the important work to be performed by the International Labour Conference on this subject at its 33rd session.

59. The Commission expressed its appreciation of the work of the International Labour Organisation in this field and decided to include this item in the agenda of the next session of the Commission for further consideration.

IX. Technical assistance programme in relation to the status of women

60. The Commission considered this item at its 76th, 77th, 79th and 80th meetings. It had before it a memorandum submitted by the Secretary-General on the technical assistance programme in relation to the status of women (E/CN.6/145). This memorandum outlines the historical development of the technical assistance programme of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and briefly discusses the projects which are already under way or which will be undertaken in the future.

61. The representative of the Secretary-General outlined for the Commission the programmes of technical assistance of the United Nations in the social and economic fields, and indicated the interest taken in these programmes by the various Commissions; it was pointed out, however, that the programme has not yet reached the stage of implementation. A conference on technical assistance will be held in June 1950, where Governments will indicate what measures they are prepared to take in order to finance the programme.

62. In the course of the debates it was stressed that the contribution of women to the programme of technical assistance is essential, and that particular emphasis should be put on technical assistance to rural populations, where women's work represents an important contribution to the economy.

63. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Labour Organisation, the World Young Women's Christian Association, and the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

64. A draft resolution proposed by Mexico (E/CN.6/L.20) was discussed and referred to the Committee on Resolutions for revision.

65. At its 80th meeting, the Commission adopted, by 12 votes for, none against, and one abstention, the following resolution, proposed by the Resolutions Committee (E/CN.6/L.24):

"G

"TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN RELATION TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Noting the types of technical assistance to be rendered by the United Nations and the specialized agencies,

"Expresses the belief that the status of women will be improved through the operation of technical assistance programmes directed toward economic development, including improvement of standards of living, health and family welfare;

"Recommends to the Economic and Social Council that attention be given to the part that women should

play in these programmes (for example, as doctors and nurses, teachers and technical advisers) both as to the eligibility of women in the countries concerned for employment in technical, professional and administrative positions and their consideration as trainees;

"Recommends also that in areas in the process of economic development, attention be given by Governments, in co-operation with the International Labour Organisation and other specialized agencies interested in the matter, to the need of safeguarding women workers against exploitation and of promoting equal pay for equal work."

X. Educational opportunities for women

66. The Commission considered this item of its agenda at its 74th, 75th and 77th meetings. It had before it a memorandum on educational opportunities for women, prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (E/CN.6/146), presenting statistical data on illiteracy, school registration and attendance, etc., by age and sex in various countries, together with an account of limitations imposed on women's education.

67. The Commission heard a statement by the representative of UNESCO, in which it was stressed that this specialized agency was concerned not only with statistics but also with the socio-economic factors which form obstacles to the access of women to education, and with possible remedies to these obstacles. The Commission also heard statements by the representatives of the International Labour Organisation, the International Alliance of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, and the International Federation of University Women, all of whom outlined the activities of their respective organizations in the field of education.

68. The Commission expressed its appreciation to UNESCO for its willingness to co-operate with the Commission on this subject, and for the very valuable study which it had prepared.

69. The consensus of opinion in the Commission was that UNESCO should continue its study of obstacles to women in the field of education, and if possible should include in its study consideration of measures for the elimination of such obstacles.

70. The Commission had before it a draft resolution, prepared by the Resolutions Committee, which it unanimously adopted at its 77th meeting in the following form:

"H

"EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Expresses its appreciation to UNESCO for its assistance in the study of educational opportunities for women throughout the world, and of obstacles to the equality of sexes in this field;

"Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of UNESCO to pursue jointly their work in this field, and, in particular:

"(a) To complete the survey with such additional and later information as is available;

"(b) To promote, throughout the world, opinion in favour of equal opportunities of access to education for both sexes;

"(c) To direct attention to the development of fundamental education and adult education in agricultural and less-developed countries, with special emphasis on such techniques as would encourage the social advancement of women;

"Requests the Secretary-General to invite the ILO to collaborate in the study and promotion of measures for the development of vocational guidance and technical education among women."

71. At its 79th meeting, the Commission endorsed in principle a proposal of the representative of Australia that Governments and non-governmental organizations should sponsor exhibits on "Women in the Life of the Nation", in which emphasis would be put on contributions made by women in social welfare and institutions, commerce, industry, culture and art.

XI. Reports of the Commission's delegates to the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

72. At its 73rd meeting, the Commission heard and noted the reports of the representatives of Mexico and of the United States of America, on their participation at the fifth and sixth sessions of the Commission on Human Rights.

73. The reports of the representatives of China (E/CN.6/140/Rev.1) and of the United States of America, on their participation in the work of the second and third sessions of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, respectively, were also noted by the Commission.

XII. The problem of Greek mothers whose children have not been repatriated

74. The Commission considered this item of its agenda at its 78th meeting. The representative of Greece gave a detailed account of the tragic situation of Greek mothers whose children had been abducted and not yet repatriated, and of the hardships to which they had been subjected. She submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.19), expressing the confidence of the Commission that the Secretary-General would draw to the attention of the General Assembly the urgent necessity of finding new ways for the solution of this important question.

75. Members of the Commission individually expressed their deep concern and sympathy for the Greek mothers involved in this situation. The representative of the United States of America proposed the addition of a new paragraph to the Greek draft resolution, requesting the Economic and Social Council to transmit this resolution to the General Assembly. This amendment was accepted by the representative of Greece.

76. The Commission thereupon unanimously adopted the following draft resolution, as amended:

"I

"THE PROBLEM OF GREEK MOTHERS WHOSE CHILDREN HAVE NOT BEEN REPATRIATED"

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Having heard the statement presented by the representative of Greece concerning the plight of the Greek mothers who were deprived of their children more than two years ago,

"Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1948, specifically refers to the family as "the natural and fundamental group unit of society which is entitled to protection by society and the state",

"Taking into account General Assembly resolutions 193 (III) of 27 November 1948, and 288 (IV) of 18 November 1949, and more particularly the announcement of the League of Red Cross Societies on 13 May 1950 that despite continuous efforts "no Greek child has so far been returned to Greece", and that "even elementary indications indispensable for solution of the problem have not been furnished by the Governments concerned",

"Appreciates the endeavours of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of the International Red Cross organizations for the repatriation of these children;

"Expresses the hope that the result of the continuing activities of the Secretary-General on this matter, in co-operation with the International Red Cross organizations, will be the prompt repatriation of the children, so as to put an end to the agony of the Greek mothers;

"Expresses its confidence that the Secretary-General will submit to the General Assembly the urgent necessity of finding new ways for the solution of this very important question, in case that the countries detaining the children have not returned them; and

"Requests the Economic and Social Council to transmit this resolution to the General Assembly."

XIII. Information concerning the situation of women who were subjected to so-called scientific experiments in the Nazi concentration camps

77. In considering this item of its agenda, the Commission had before it a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.23) proposed by the Chairman as the representative of France, calling attention to the plight of women survivors of concentration camps who were subjected, during the Nazi regime, to so-called medical experiments. Many of them are now stateless persons, who cannot count on the legal protection of any Government and are therefore unable to obtain compensation for the sufferings to which they were subjected. Several members of the Commission expressed concern for these unfortunate women, and felt that steps should be taken to alleviate their plight.

78. The representative of Denmark also called the attention of the Commission to the tragic situation of a great number of university women, who are still in displaced persons' camps.

79. At its 80th meeting, the Commission adopted the following resolution by 12 votes for, none against, and one abstention:

"J

"INFORMATION CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF WOMEN WHO WERE SUBJECTED TO SO-CALLED SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS IN THE NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS

"The Commission on the Status of Women,

"Considering the plight of women survivors of concentration camps who were subjected, during the Nazi regime, to so-called medical experiments,

"Requests the Economic and Social Council to call the attention of the Social Commission, the World Health Organization, or other appropriate agencies, to the plight of these war victims who were compelled by force to reside in Germany during the war, or at least those who may be unable to obtain compensation from any country; and to keep the Commission on the Status of Women informed of actions taken in respect thereto."

XIV. Communications concerning the status of women

80. In accordance with resolution 76 (V) of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission was given, in private meeting, a confidential list of communications concerning the status of women received by the United Nations from 21 February to 14 April 1950, prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/CR.3).

81. The Commission referred this list to its Committee on Communications, together with a memorandum prepared by the Secretary-General drawing the attention of the Commission to the changes which had been made in the procedure governing communications concerning human rights (E/CN.6/144).

82. The Committee submitted a report to the Commission (E/CN.6/L.16) at its 77th meeting, recommending that the procedure laid down regarding communications concerning the status of women in resolution 76 (V) be amended so as to conform to amendments already made by the Council to resolution 75 (V) regarding communications concerning human rights. This report was unanimously approved by the Commission, which recommended that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following draft resolution:

"K

"COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

"The Economic and Social Council

"Decides to amend paragraphs (a), (b), and (e), of resolution 76 (V) to read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council

"...

"Requests the Secretary-General:

"(a) To compile and distribute to members of the Commission on the Status of Women, before each session, a non-confidential list containing a brief indication of the substance of each communication, however addressed, which deals with the principles relating to the promotion of women's rights in the political, eco-

nomical, civil, social and educational fields, and to divulge the identity of the authors of such communications, unless they indicate that they wish their names to remain confidential;

"(b) To compile, before each session of the Commission, a confidential list containing a brief indication of the substance of other communications concerning the status of women, however addressed, and to furnish this list to members of the Commission in private meeting without divulging the identity of the authors of communications, except in cases where the authors state that they have already divulged or intend to divulge their names or that they have no objection to their names being divulged;

"...

"(e) In the future, to furnish each Member State concerned with a copy of any communication concerning the status of women which refers explicitly to that State, or to territories under its jurisdiction, without divulging the identity of the author, except as provided for in paragraph (b) above."

XV. Report of the Inter-American Commission of Women

83. At the 72nd meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Chairman welcomed the representative of the Inter-American Commission of Women and expressed appreciation of the work of that inter-governmental organization in raising the status of women in Latin America.

84. The Commission heard a report, presented by the representative of the Inter-American Commission, giving an account of the progress made by women in countries, members of that Commission, since the third session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

XVI. Additional items

A. SUMMARY OF THE PROGRESS OF THE COMMISSION

85. At the 80th meeting of the Commission, the representative of the United States analysed the progress that had been achieved during the four years of the Commission's existence. With regard to the questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of women, she recalled that part I, on public law, had been issued in 1947. The replies received to sections A and B of part I, on franchise and the right to hold public office, had been analysed by the Secretariat in 1948. Analyses of section D, on educational and professional opportunities, and section G, on nationality, had been prepared by the Secretariat in 1949 and 1950, respectively. It was anticipated that sections C, E, and F, on eligibility to public office, civil liberties and fiscal laws respectively, would be studied in 1951; the third part, on family law, in 1952; and the second part, on women's property and contractual rights, in 1953.

86. In the field of political rights, the United States representative continued, the General Assembly had adopted, as early as 1946, resolution 56 (I), recommending that all Member States, which had not already done so, "adopt measures necessary to fulfil the purposes and aims of the Charter . . . by granting to

women the same political rights as to men. This had been followed by study and analysis of those parts of the questionnaire related to the political rights of women. In 1948 the annual publication of a memorandum on the political rights of women had been authorized; that memorandum appeared in 1948 and 1949. The 1949 memorandum (A/1163) indicated that since 1945 nineteen countries had granted the franchise to women. It also showed that twelve countries still did not allow women to vote and that in eight countries, although women had the right to vote, they were subject to stricter conditions than men before they could do so.

87. With respect to educational opportunities for women, the Commission had made a preliminary review of the situation in 1948. In 1949, the Economic and Social Council had authorized an investigation into actual conditions in the field of women's education, to be carried out by the Commission with the co-operation of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. The first report of UNESCO was forwarded to the Commission in 1950.

88. In the field of economic rights of women, the United States representative recalled, the question of equal pay for equal work had been referred by the Economic and Social Council to the International Labour Organisation. The International Labour Office had published a report on the subject. It was expected that the 1950 International Labour Conference would recommend further action on the basis of information available.

89. With regard to social rights, the Commission had studied the question of the nationality of married women and the application of penal law to women. A study of the nationality of married women, authorized in 1948, had led to a preliminary discussion of the question in 1949; in 1950 the Commission had made recommendations concerning the preparation of a convention on the nationality of married women. As a result of the studies in the field of penal law, authorized in 1949, the Commission had considered the question in 1950 and had suggested collaboration with the Social Commission.

90. With regard to human rights, the United States representative went on, the Commission had been represented on the Commission on Human Rights during the preparation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the draft international covenant on human rights. Those two instruments recognized the principle that there should be no discrimination against women.

91. As for the eligibility of women to public office and their participation in the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, the Economic and Social Council had adopted a resolution on the subject in 1948. Subsequently, in 1950, the Commission had considered the Secretary-General's report on the participation of women in the work of the United Nations, both in the Secretariat and in delegations.

B. PROGRAMME OF FUTURE WORK

92. The Commission considered its programme of work at its 80th meeting. After a general discussion

the Chairman summarized the objectives of the Commission and indicated the following programme of work, arising from decisions taken by the Commission at the current session:

I. Political rights

1. Consideration of memorandum prepared annually by the Secretary-General on the advancement of the political rights of women, including information from Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories;

2. Consideration of the draft convention on political rights prepared by the Secretary-General;

3. Study of information on programmes of political education.

II. Nationality of married women

Consideration of any further measures in connexion with the drafting of a convention on nationality.

III. Public law

Study of the compilation and analysis of the replies to part I (sections C, E and F) of the questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of women.

IV. Private law

1. Consideration of the analysis and surveys prepared by the Secretary-General (a) on family law; (b) on property rights of women, based on available replies of Governments to the questionnaire, comments of specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations as well as documentation available to the Secretary-General.

2. Co-ordination of the activities of the Commission on the Status of Women in the field of private law, with the work of the Social Commission which might have a bearing on women's rights and interests.

V. Participation of women in the work of the United Nations

Consideration of the Secretary-General's report on this subject.

VI. Application of penal law to women

Consideration of such questions arising from the application of penal law to women as might be referred to the Commission on the Status of Women by the Social Commission.

VII. Equal pay for equal work for men and women workers

Consideration of the work of the International Labour Organisation in this field.

VIII. Educational opportunities for women

1. Study of the survey prepared by the Secretary-General and UNESCO.

2. Consideration of measures taken to promote equal educational opportunities for both sexes.

3. Consideration of the study by the International Labour Organisation on promotion of measures for the development of vocational guidance and vocational and technical education among women.

IX. Technical assistance programme in relation to the status of women

93. During the discussion, several members of the Commission commented on the need of receiving from the Secretary-General a semi-annual newsletter, reporting action by other organs of the United Nations which might be significant in relation to the work of the Commission. It was felt that such a newsletter would assist the members in preparing themselves for meetings of the Commission. The representative of the Secretary-General stated that such an undertaking would not have budgetary implications and could be carried out.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

94. The Commission considered this item of its agenda at its 80th meeting. Some members referred to the delay in receiving certain documents and suggested as a remedy that the Section on the Status of Women might be enlarged.

95. The representative of the Secretary-General explained that the Secretary-General will consider the suggestion if the programme of work justifies such an action. Budgetary provision has already been made, she pointed out, for increasing the staff in 1950. Two posts, provided in the 1950 budget, would be filled when the Secretary-General knew the nature of the Commission's future work programme and was able to recruit qualified personnel.

96. The Commission decided that, in view of the statement made by the representative of the Secretary-General, no further action was necessary on its part.

D. CONSIDERATION OF THE PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

97. This item of its agenda was considered by the Commission at its 80th meeting. Several members commented on the benefits derived from holding sessions in different parts of the world, both on the part of the members of the Commission and on the part of women and women's organizations in the regions where meetings were held. Some members felt that the holding of the third session of the Commission in Beirut, Lebanon, had contributed to the promotion of political rights of women in that part of the world. On the other hand, some members felt that holding of sessions away from Headquarters too often involved technical difficulties which greatly inconvenienced the members of the Commission as well as the Secretariat. It was also pointed out that sessions could only be held away from Headquarters on the invitation of a Government willing to defray expenses exceeding the cost of holding the session at Lake Success. As no such invitation had been received as yet, it was agreed that no definite decision should be taken on the place of meeting of the next session of the Commission.

XVII. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

98. The Commission unanimously adopted this report of its fourth session at its 81st meeting.

