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**Chairman: Mrs. Aase LIONAES (Norway).**

**AGENDA ITEM 12**

**Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters VI and VII) (A/3613, A/C.3/L.608 and Add.1) (continued)**

**UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (A/C.3/L.608 and Add.1) (concluded)**

1. Mr. Francisco LIMA (El Salvador), introducing a draft resolution sponsored by his delegation and the delegations of Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt and Finland (A/C.3/L.608), said that it faithfully reflected the satisfaction with the work of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which had been expressed during the debate. The preamble briefly summarized the points which had been made but the sponsors had felt that the operative part should go further than a mere expression of satisfaction with the work of UNICEF and that in it the Assembly should urge Governments to give the Fund increased support, whether economic, moral or financial. As there could be no disagreement with any of the operative part, he was convinced that the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously.

2. Mr. CALAMARI (Panama) and Mr. ASIROGLU (Turkey) strongly supported the draft resolution, which they would be happy to co-sponsor.<sup>1/</sup>

3. Mr. TEJERA (Uruguay) said that there could be no question about his country's appreciation of the work of UNICEF. It had made a contribution of \$1 million to UNICEF, which it could ill afford, and was supporting the Fund's work in Uruguay by action on the part of government and private organizations. As Uruguay was already doing its utmost, he could not subscribe to operative paragraph 1, on which he would be obliged to abstain.

4. Mr. Francisco LIMA (El Salvador) said that the words "increased support" in operative paragraph 1 should not be interpreted in a strictly financial sense, although larger contributions would always be welcome. In drafting that paragraph, the sponsors had wished to express a hope that further support of all kinds, moral, economic, technical and financial, would

be forthcoming, as there were many needs which UNICEF was unable to meet.

5. Mr. TEJERA (Uruguay) said that, in view of the explanation given by the representative of El Salvador, he would be able to vote for the draft resolution.

6. Mr. OSMAN (Morocco) strongly supported the draft resolution and stressed the Fund's need of financial support. Such support was particularly important for the UNICEF programmes in Morocco, where the majority of the population was under the age of twenty and lack of funds was holding up the implementation of other programmes.

The draft resolution (A/C.3/L.608 and Add.1) was adopted unanimously.

7. Mr. SHAFQAT (Chairman of the Executive Board of UNICEF) thanked the Committee for the tribute it had paid to the work of UNICEF. He would not fail to convey the Committee's expression of appreciation to the Executive Board and to all the others who had helped the Fund in its task.

**STATEMENT BY THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

8. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the world social situation gave grounds for moderate optimism but not for complacency. It was clear from the Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1)<sup>2/</sup> that some progress had been made in recent years. By and large, people lived a little longer than in 1950, suffered from fewer debilitating diseases, ate a little more and a little better, had slightly larger incomes and kept their children at school a little longer. On the other hand, the progress was slight compared with human needs and was by no means evenly distributed between different countries and social groups; furthermore, some new and ominous social problems had arisen.

9. He would not attempt to summarize the conclusions of the report, but the unprecedented increase in population in recent years was undoubtedly one of the most important factors in the social situation, particularly in backward countries, where considerably more goods and services than formerly had to be produced in order to maintain even the existing low living standard. The economic implications of the problem were, of course, for the Second Committee to consider, but they should also be borne in mind when social policies were being discussed. Every effort should be made to co-ordinate social programmes with economic development plans in both the planning and the execution stages. Policy-makers were faced with a continual problem of choice among social objectives each of which might be desirable in itself. In the case of the under-developed

<sup>1/</sup>The addition of Panama and Turkey to the list of sponsors was subsequently indicated in document A/C.3/L.608/Add.1.

<sup>2/</sup>United Nations publication, Sales No.:1957.IV.3.

countries, the choice between measures for long-term development and those for the relief of immediate needs was particularly painful. It was necessary to decide whether a measure exceeded the administrative capacity of a country, whether management costs would not be too high compared with the value of the services provided, whether the beneficiaries would be a large fraction of the population or only a minority, and whether they would be encouraged to help themselves. It must also be asked whether the methods of financing would not result in a system of regressive taxation which would hurt the poor as much as it would help them or lead to inflation and finally whether the foreseeable effects on migration, occupational mobility, the family structure and birth-rates would be in the broadest national interest.

10. The answers to such questions might lead to the rejection of measures otherwise generally desirable. Most countries were anxious to undertake advanced social programmes, a tendency which was probably reinforced by the establishment of international standards through conventions and declarations of rights. Moreover many of the technical advisers came from countries where social conditions were highly developed; and constant care must therefore be exercised to ensure that social programmes should not be merely transplanted wholesale, regardless of differing conditions, instead of being adapted to the needs of the countries concerned. Nevertheless, it was fitting that countries should always strive for a higher standard. The peoples of the world would not long be content with a mere declaration of rights if they could not exercise them.

11. Even if not too ambitious, social policies were apt to suffer from an imperfect knowledge of existing conditions and from failure to establish priorities and take into account the possible effects of earlier measures on subsequent ones. The United Nations did not claim to have found a clear answer to those difficulties, yet its experience enabled it to lay down certain principles of action. In that connexion, the Economic and Social Council had considered (Council resolution 663 B (XXIV)) that the report of the Group of Experts on a co-ordinated policy regarding family levels of living (E/CN.5/321, appendix I), when supplemented by the comments of the Governments and non-governmental organizations, should be examined by experts with a view to drawing up recommendations on the scope and content of national social service programmes and the establishment of priorities.

12. The extent to which social programmes reached the different sectors of a country's population had in the past often been neglected, to the detriment of the rural population. The programmes of community development, to which increasing attention was being paid, both by the United Nations and by many Member States, represented an effort to restore the balance between town and country. An attempt was being made to improve living conditions in rural areas through community action in which the persons directly concerned worked together with social experts. In the brief space of a few years, considerable agreement had been achieved on the principles and methods of community development, and the Council had approved a number of those principles and adopted a long-range programme of action. The Secretariat would be grateful for any comments or additional instructions which the

Committee might care to give with respect to that programme.

13. In many countries, the existing social programmes failed to meet the need of a third rapidly growing group of the population, namely recent arrivals in the cities who had not yet adapted themselves to urban life. Driven away from rural areas by poverty, they could no longer rely on the support of their families or communities and having settled on the outskirts of a city were frequently beyond the reach of such urban services as the water supply. The Secretariat was making a study of measures taken in different countries to meet the special needs of that group. Community development methods, such as those used in rural areas, could perhaps be adapted to their case, but it was important that the people involved should themselves become aware of the fact that they could do much to help themselves and that the public authorities stood ready to assist them. In addition, the exodus towards the cities could be affected by raising the level of living of the rural population, and the Council had therefore emphasized that, in efforts to solve the problems of urbanization, account should be taken of their rural as well as their urban aspects. The Committee's comments on the matter would be greatly appreciated.

14. Turning to the international control of narcotics, he said that, despite the efforts of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and many Governments, the situation in several regions of the world was causing anxiety. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had stressed that illicit traffic was still supplied almost entirely from illicit sources, was highly organized, had widespread international ramifications and had considerable financial backing. Addiction also remained widespread, and more effective methods of national and international control were plainly called for.

15. Under Council resolution 626 (XXII), technical assistance in the control of narcotics had been granted for the first time, with the participation of the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization. Such assistance appeared to be very useful, and interested Governments would do well to make judicious use of the funds available in regions where the situation was most serious.

16. In two of its resolutions (resolutions 626 E (XXII) and 667 G (XXIV)), the Council had stressed the economic and social problems consequent upon the far-reaching decision of the Iranian Government to prohibit opium production completely and the part to be played by technical assistance in solving them.

17. The Council had decided (resolution 667 E (XXIV)) to prolong by one week the 1958 session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, to enable it to complete its work of codifying the treaty law on narcotic drugs.

18. Chapter VII of the Council's report (A/3613) gave an account of activities in the field of human rights during the year under review. In the early years of its existence, the United Nations had accomplished much useful work in the formulation of general standards and broad definitions. Notably, those proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and further elaborated in the draft Covenants on Human Rights, which the Third Committee was continuing to examine. In recent years there had been a new phase which emphasized an exchange of experience and in-

formation relating to human rights. The three elements of the programme were: a system of periodic reports, studies of specific rights and special problems, and advisory services.

19. A summary, by subject, of the first periodic reports submitted by Governments would be placed before the Commission on Human Rights at its fourteenth session. It was hoped that Governments which had not already done so would submit their reports soon. The procedure called for neither praise nor blame; on the contrary, reports would be considered in a constructive spirit, and the Commission's recommendations would be of an objective and general character.

20. The first topic chosen for special study had been "the right of everyone to be free from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile". More than sixty Governments had already submitted information on the subject. The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had prepared a study of discrimination in education, which might serve as a basis for one or more conventions, and was engaged in studies on discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices and in the matter of political rights. The Commission on the Status of Women was engaged in studies on the political rights of women, the nationality of married women, the status of women in private law, access of women to education and economic opportunities for women.

21. The advisory services programme, which was still in an experimental stage, included regional seminars, the services of experts, and fellowships. The first seminar under that programme had recently been held in Bangkok on the subject of civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life. Regional seminars on the protection of human rights in criminal law and procedure would be held at Manila, Philippines, and Santiago, Chile, in 1958. If properly organized, such seminars, which would be attended by persons prominent in their field, should result in a valuable exchange of experience and lead to practical action.

22. The rights of man were not absolute or static concepts. Each right was recognized, established, elaborated and extended, but seldom, if ever, reached a state of perfection where no further improvement was possible. In the current era of great economic and social change, new problems were constantly arising which affected human rights as often adversely as favourably. It was important, however, to remember that no economic enterprise or social experiment was an end in itself. The ultimate purpose of all human activity must be to enable men and women, even the humblest, to live in increasingly larger freedom and in ever greater security.

#### GENERAL DEBATE

23. Mr. CHENG Paonan (China) thanked Mr. de Seynes for his interesting statement and expressed the hope that it would be reproduced in extenso.

24. The Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1) gave grounds for both satisfaction and concern since, although there had been some significant improvements in the past few years, no solution had been found for some important problems. The mortality rate in the under-developed countries had declined, the

health of their populations had improved and more than half of the children of school age in the world were enrolled in schools; nevertheless, the rates of population growth in many under-developed countries were higher than ever before and food consumption was still below the pre-war level. Moreover, the gap in per caput income between the developed and less-developed countries was widening.

25. Although the under-developed countries were making intensive efforts to accelerate their economic development and to increase social welfare facilities, one of the handicaps with which they were faced was the lack of adequate and accurate statistics on population trends. It was to be hoped that the Population Commission would continue to pay due attention to the improvement of those statistics in the under-developed countries and that the United Nations and the specialized agencies would try to increase technical assistance in the demographic field.

26. The Council had paid special attention to the question of urbanization, which had formerly been dealt with as a series of social problems in urban localities, but should be considered not only from the urban, but also from the rural, point of view. Problems of urbanization derived to a great extent from poverty and difficulties in the rural areas of emigration, and it was essential to raise the level of living in those areas. The Council had therefore recommended the integration of policies.

27. The Council had examined both the concepts and principles of community development and long-term programmes of international action. The Chinese delegation to the twenty-fourth session of the Council had stated that primary and fundamental education programmes had been initiated thirty years earlier in China, but that it had soon been realized that those programmes must be accompanied by health and agricultural extension programmes. The economy of the rural areas had thus been strengthened and the attitude of the local population towards community programmes had been changed. Similar activities were taking place in approximately sixty-five countries throughout the world. In a new country, Ghana, the first community development programme had also been started as an educational campaign, but had been extended to related health and agricultural programmes. Thus, the oldest country in Asia and the youngest in Africa had had analogous experiences in the evolution of community development. The Chinese delegation also considered that community development should be directed towards increased and improved participation of the people in community affairs, the vitalization of existing forms of local government and transition towards effective local administration where it had not functioned before. That was especially true where national resources were limited and where the people were slow to take part in public affairs; participation in community development programmes would foster the spirit and habit of self-government.

28. Further progress would undoubtedly be made in various spheres of social activities by 1963, when the next Report on the World Social Situation would be issued. It was to be hoped that, in preparing that report, the Secretary-General would consider including a special chapter on his conclusions and recommendations with regard to the world social situation as a whole. The conclusions should relate not so much to

the progress made as to the major problems still to be faced and the action which might be taken by the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

29. Turning to the question of international control of narcotic drugs, in which his Government had long been interested, he expressed his delegation's deep concern at the fact that, according to the report of the Permanent Central Opium Board (E/OB/12 and Addendum),<sup>3/</sup> the problems of illicit traffic and drug addiction had lost none of their gravity in recent years. Opium and opiates were still by far the most important drugs in the illicit traffic, which seemed to be concentrated, as before, in the Far East and the Near and Middle East; the mainland of China was still one of the principal illicit sources of opium. Experience had shown that effective investigation, heavy penalties and international co-operation were the principal measures for dealing with illicit traffic. Although commendable efforts had been made by the countries neighbouring China to combat traffic, still more vigorous measures could be taken. The Chinese Government, which had imposed heavy penalties on convicted traffickers, was prepared to co-operate with all countries in strengthening the international control system.

30. Figures for drug addiction showed an increase in the number of addicts for 1955 as compared with 1954. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had devoted considerable time to the question of the medical treatment of addicts; however, the problem could not be solved by medical treatment alone and education and penalties were just as essential. Propaganda against the use of narcotics should be conducted vigorously in countries where addiction was widespread and heavy penalties and long prison sentences should be adopted to deter offenders. The concept of using education and penalties to eliminate addiction should also be embodied in the draft single convention which was to be prepared by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

31. The Chinese delegation wished to pay a tribute to the Government of Iran for its bold decision to prohibit and eradicate opium production. In view of the economic sacrifice entailed by that useful contribution to international control, it was to be hoped that the United Nations and the competent specialized agencies would give Iran every assistance in achieving its aim.

<sup>3/</sup> Permanent Central Opium Board, Report to the Economic and Social Council on the Work of the Board in 1956 (United Nations publication, Sales No.:1956.XI.4) and Addendum (United Nations publication, Sales No.:1956.XI.4.Addendum).

32. With regard to the Council's work on human rights, he observed that the work programmes of the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities showed a tendency to proceed from the establishment of general standards and broad definitions to action programmes, consisting in applying standards and inquiring into principles and practices in respect of specific rights. In the case of the Commission on Human Rights, periodic reports were to be submitted by Governments and intensive studies were to be made of specific rights, beginning with freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile; on the instructions of the Commission on the Status of Women, a global study was being made of the access of women to training and employment. The Sub-Commission had completed a study on discrimination in education and studies were being made of discrimination in religious rights and practices and in political rights. The Chinese delegation approved of the new approach to the question of human rights, but considered that the success or failure of the projects depended on objective and bold recommendations by the commissions concerned and on the sincere co-operation of Governments.

33. In the nine years that had passed since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, little progress had been made in the protection and observance of human rights and freedoms. Large groups of people were living in constant fear and were often deprived of their fundamental rights. The Chinese delegation hoped that Member States would ponder that situation in the period preceding the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration.

34. Mrs. CISELET (Belgium) requested the Secretariat to prepare a brief report on the extremely interesting seminar recently held at Bangkok.

35. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) warmly supported the request.

36. The CHAIRMAN stated that such a report would be presented.

37. Mr. ADOMAKO-MENSAH (Ghana) thanked all those speakers who had extended a warm welcome to his delegation. As a new Member of the United Nations, Ghana was fully aware of its responsibilities and would do its best to contribute to the Committee's work.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.