



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/45/746
21 November 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session
Agenda item 90

WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Mario DE LEON (Philippines)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 21 September 1990, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in its agenda the item entitled "World social situation" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.
2. The Committee considered the item jointly with items 92, 96, 99 and 104 at its 11th to 17th, 25th and 37th meetings, on 17 to 23 and 30 October and 9 November 1990. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/45/SR.11-17, 25 and 37).
3. The Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General containing the Supplement to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation (A/45/137-E/1990/35).
4. At the 11th meeting, on 17 October, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and the Director of the Social Development Division made introductory statements (see A/C.3/45/SR.11).
5. At the same meeting the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Promotion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons made a statement (see A/C.3/45/SR.11).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.16

6. At the 25th meeting, on 30 October, the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/45/L.16), entitled "Achievement of social justice", also sponsored by the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and Ecuador.

7. At its 37th meeting, on 9 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.16 without a vote (see para. 14, draft resolution I).

B. Draft resolutions A/C.3/45/L.18 and Rev.1

8. At the 25th meeting, the representative of Bolivia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/45/L.18), entitled "World social situation". The draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 1392 (XIV) of 20 November 1959, 2542 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969, 40/98 and 40/100 of 13 December 1985, 42/49 of 30 November 1987, 43/113 of 8 December 1988 and 44/56 of 8 December 1989, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/39, 1987/40, 1987/46 and 1987/52 of 28 May 1987, 1989/72 of 24 May 1989, 1989/113 of 26 July 1989 and 1990/28 of 24 May 1990,

"Bearing in mind the objective of improving the well-being of the world's population on the basis of the full and equal participation of all members of society in the process of development and the fair distribution to them of the benefits therefrom,

"Conscious that each country has the sovereign right freely to adopt the economic and social system that it deems the most appropriate and that each Government has the primary role of ensuring the social progress and well-being of the people,

"Convinced of the urgent need to eradicate policies and practices that hinder social progress, including racism and racial discrimination, in particular apartheid,

"Convinced also that the pace of development in the developing countries should be accelerated substantially in order to enable them to achieve that objective, especially in meeting the basic needs for food, housing, education, employment, health care and the struggle against scourges which endanger the health and well-being of their population,

"Deeply concerned about the worsening economic situation in many developing countries, particularly of the least developed countries, including the significant decline in living conditions, the persistence and increase of widespread poverty in a large number of countries and the decline of the main social and economic indicators of those countries,

"Bearing in mind the importance of the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation 1/ for increasing awareness of the advances made towards the goals of social progress and better standards of living, established in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as of the obstacles to further progress,

"Believing that there is a need for greater efforts by the United Nations system to study and disseminate data on the existing world social situation, particularly in regard to the developing countries,

"Taking note of the deliberations on the question of the world social situation by the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1990, 2/

"Having considered the Supplement to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation, 3/

"1. Notes with satisfaction that the Supplement to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation takes into account the concerns and guidelines specified in General Assembly resolution 44/56 and in Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/72;

"2. Recalls the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation, in particular the information on the critical situation in Africa, contained in the annex to the report;

"3. Notes with satisfaction the increasing awareness of the importance of formulating policy measures at all levels based on the interrelationships between economic growth, human development and social progress in the achievement of overall development;

"4. Notes with deep concern the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in many developing countries, in particular in the least developed countries, whose numbers have increased over the years, as well as in the low-income countries;

"1/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.IV.1.

"2/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/45/3/Rev.1).

"3/ A/45/137-E/1990/35.

"5. Notes also with deep concern the substantial weakening of the position of the developing countries in international trade and finance worsened by sharp fluctuations in exchange rates, high real rates of interest, a long-term downward trend in commodity prices, a serious deterioration in the terms of trade of developing countries, increased protectionist pressures, the net transfer of resources from developing countries, and the serious debt burden;

"6. Reaffirms the principles and objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development ^{4/} and calls for their effective realization as a means of attaining a more equitable world social situation;

"7. Calls upon all Member States to promote economic development and social progress by the formulation and implementation of an interrelated set of policy measures to achieve the goals and objectives established within the framework of national plans and priorities for employment, education, health, nutrition, housing facilities, crime prevention, the well-being of children, equal opportunities for the disabled and the aging, full participation of youth in the development process and full integration and participation of women in development;

"8. Requests the Secretary-General to continue monitoring the world social situation in depth on a regular basis and to submit, in accordance with paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 44/56, an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Commission of Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, and a full report in 1993;

"9. Reaffirms the request of the Economic and Social Council, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 1990/28, for the Secretary-General to take into account, in preparing the interim report, paragraph 4 of Council resolution 1989/72;

"10. Further reaffirms the request made in paragraph 3 of Council resolution 1989/72 regarding a report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the work being done within the United Nations system to improve and further develop quantitative and qualitative indicators that measure accurately the social condition and the standard of living of the world's population, particularly in developing countries;

"11. Requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements to ensure a wider dissemination of the reports of the world social situation;

"12. Invites the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in the preparation of future reports by making available all relevant information pertaining to

^{4/} Resolution 2542 (XXIV).

their respective areas of competence and, in this connection, requests the Secretary-General to convene an Inter-Agency Meeting before the preparation of the report;

"13. Decides to include the item entitled 'World social situation' in the provisional agenda of its forty-sixth session for the purpose of considering, inter alia, the interim report, as well as the report mentioned on paragraph 10 above, and in the provisional agenda of its forty-eighth session for the purpose of considering the next full report in 1993."

9. At the 37th meeting, the Secretary of the Committee made a statement in the course of which she corrected draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.18/Rev.1 by deleting at the end of operative paragraph 4, the words "as well as in the low income countries".

10. At the same meeting, the representative of Bolivia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a revised draft resolution (A/C.3/45/L.18/Rev.1).

11. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of the United States of America made a statement.

12. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.18/Rev.1 by a recorded vote of 112 to 1, with 4 abstentions (see para. 14, draft resolution II). The voting was as follows: 1/

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago,

1/ The representatives of Angola, the Bahamas, Benin, Botswana, the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Uruguay, Zaire and Zambia subsequently indicated that, had they been present, they would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia and Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Germany, Israel, Japan and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

13. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representatives of Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Japan made statements.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

14. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Achievement of social justice

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/49 of 30 November 1987 and 44/55 of 8 December 1989, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1988/46 of 27 May 1988, 1989/71 of 24 May 1989 and 1990/25 of 24 May 1990,

Recalling also the pledge made by States Members of the United Nations in the Charter to take joint and separate action to promote higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development,

Recognizing that more extensive international and regional co-operation is important for promoting social progress at the national level,

Bearing in mind that, in accordance with the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, 2/ social progress and development shall be founded on respect for the dignity and value of the human person and shall ensure the promotion of human rights and social justice,

Mindful of the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future, 3/ the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for

2/ Resolution 2542 (XXIV).

3/ E/CONF.80/10, chap. III.

the Advancement of Women, 4/ the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons 5/ and the International Plan of Action on Aging, 6/

Persuaded of the importance of taking measures to ensure co-ordination within the United Nations system in order to develop a comprehensive approach to developmental social welfare, including better integrated and mutually supportive economic and social development policies, aimed at the achievement of social justice,

1. Confirms that social justice is one of the most important goals of social progress;

2. Reaffirms that the common purpose of the international community must be to forge from varied economic, social and political conditions a global environment of sustained development, full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and social justice and peace;

3. Reaffirms the importance of co-operation among countries in promoting a climate conducive to the achievement by individual countries of the goals of development and social justice and progress;

4. Considers that such co-operation and its promotion should continue to be a major focus of activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

5. Calls upon Member States, in elaborating policies in the field of social development and the social situation of all population groups, to take into consideration the importance of achieving social justice for all;

6. Recommends that the Secretary-General, in preparing studies and reports on social problems, should examine the question of social justice and ways in which it could be achieved;

7. Requests the Commission for Social Development, at its next regular session, to consider the question of achieving social justice.

4/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

5/ A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation 1 (IV).

6/ See Report of the World Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 26 July-6 August 1982 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16), chap. VI, sect. A.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

World social situation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 1392 (XIV) of 20 November 1959, 2542 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969, 40/98 and 40/100 of 13 December 1985, 42/49 of 30 November 1987, 43/113 of 8 December 1988 and 44/56 of 8 December 1989, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/39, 1987/40, 1987/46 and 1987/52 of 28 May 1987, 1989/72 of 24 May 1989, and 1990/28 of 24 May 1990, and Council decision 1989/113 of 28 July 1989,

Bearing in mind the objective of improving the well-being of the world's population on the basis of the full and equal participation of all members of society in the process of development and the fair distribution to them of the benefits therefrom,

Conscious that each country has the sovereign right freely to adopt the economic and social system that it deems the most appropriate and that each Government has the primary responsibility of ensuring the social progress and well-being of the people,

Convinced of the urgent need to eradicate policies and practices that hinder social progress, including racism and racial discrimination, in particular apartheid,

Convinced also that the pace of development in the developing countries should be accelerated substantially in order to enable them to achieve that objective, especially in meeting the basic needs for food, housing, education, employment and health care and the struggle against scourges which endanger the health and well-being of their population,

Deeply concerned about the worsening economic situation in many developing countries, particularly in the least developed countries, as evidenced by the significant decline in living conditions, the persistence and increase of widespread poverty in a large number of countries and the decline of the main social and economic indicators of those countries,

Bearing in mind the importance of the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation ^{7/} for increasing awareness of the advances made towards the goals of social progress and better standards of living, established in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as of the obstacles to further progress,

Believing that there is a need for greater efforts by the United Nations system to study and disseminate data on the existing world social situation, particularly in regard to the developing countries,

^{7/} United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.IV.1.

Taking note of the deliberations on the question of the world social situation by the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1990, 8/

Having considered the Supplement to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation, 9/

1. Notes with satisfaction that the Supplement to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation takes into account the concerns and guidelines specified in General Assembly resolution 44/56 and in Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/72;

2. Takes note of the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation, in particular the information on the critical situation in Africa contained in the annex to the report;

3. Notes with satisfaction the increasing awareness of the importance of formulating policy measures at all levels based on the interrelationships between economic growth, human development and social progress in the achievement of overall development;

4. Notes with deep concern the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in many developing countries, in particular in the least developed countries, whose numbers have increased over the years;

5. Notes also with deep concern the substantial weakening of the overall position of the developing countries in international trade and finance, which has been worsened by a long-term downward trend in commodity prices, a serious deterioration in the terms of trade, the net transfer of resources from developing countries, protectionism and the serious debt burden, combined with high real interest rates;

6. Reaffirms the commitments and policies for international development co-operation as set out in the Declaration on International Economic Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, 10/ adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session;

7. Reaffirms the principles and objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development 11/ and calls for their effective realization as a means of attaining a more equitable world social situation;

8/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/45/3/Rev.1).

9/ A/45/137-E/1990/35.

10/ Resolution S-18/3.

11/ Resolution 2542 (XXIV).

8. Calls upon all Member States to promote economic development and social progress by the formulation and implementation of an interrelated set of policy measures to achieve the goals and objectives established within the framework of national plans and priorities for employment, education, health, nutrition, housing facilities, crime prevention, the well-being of children, equal opportunities for the disabled and the aging, full participation of youth in the development process and full integration and participation of women in development;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to continue monitoring the world social situation in depth on a regular basis and to submit, in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 44/56, an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Commission of Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, and a full report in 1993;

10. Endorses the request of the Economic and Social Council, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 1990/28, that the Secretary-General take into account, in preparing the interim report, paragraph 4 of Council resolution 1989/72;

11. Also endorses the request made in paragraph 3 of Council resolution 1989/72 regarding the submission of a report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the work being done within the United Nations system to improve and further develop quantitative and qualitative indicators that measure accurately the social condition and the standard of living of the world's population, particularly in developing countries;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements to ensure the wider dissemination of the reports of the world social situation;

13. Invites the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in the preparation of future reports by making available all relevant information pertaining to their respective areas of competence and, in this connection, requests the Secretary-General to convene an inter-agency meeting before the preparation of the report;

14. Decides to include the item entitled "World social situation" in the provisional agenda of its forty-sixth session for the purpose of considering, inter alia, the interim report, as well as the report mentioned in paragraph 11 above, and in the provisional agenda of its forty-eighth session for the purpose of considering the next full report in 1993.
