



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 53rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HAMER (Netherlands)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/41/3, 180, 183, 189, 213, 274 and Add.1, 315, 317 and Add.1, 326, 334, 337, 354, 398, 461 and Corr.1, 462, 494, 507, 523, 607, 667, 710, 719, 729, 771, 778 and 787; A/C.3/41/1, 3, 6, 10 and 11; A/C.3/41/L.1, L.6, L.76-L.79)

1. Mr. LEWIS (Antigua and Barbuda) said that all appeals, by international organizations for an improvement of the human rights situation in Iran had been ignored by the Iranian Government, which had denied entry to representatives of those organizations. The persistence of inhuman practices, and the Government's refusal to end them, was well documented in a number of United Nations reports. No segment of the Iranian population was safe from persecution. Executions and torture were even growing and one result was an increase in the number of refugees leaving Iran. He therefore urged Iran to obey the humanitarian precepts of Islam and to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2. Mr. BOLKUS (Australia) said that his delegation was disappointed that the Secretary-General's budget cuts did not adequately reflect the importance of human rights activities and resulted in a disproportionate curtailment of them. Cuts must henceforth be considered carefully so as not to jeopardize such priority activities as those relating to disappearances, indigenous populations and arbitrary executions. A board of trustees must also be established immediately for the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations so as not to discourage Governments from making contributions to it.

3. Australia had supported the adoption of resolutions relating to specific countries so as to encourage those countries to improve their human rights practices. It welcomed the decision of the Government of Chile to allow a special rapporteur to visit the country and prepare a report, and was encouraged by the establishment of a commission on human rights in that country. However, it regretted the imposition by the authorities of a state of siege there, and appealed to them to end it and return to democracy.

4. Australia also welcomed the notable improvements in the human rights situation in El Salvador, particularly where torture and disappearances were concerned, but noted that abuses relating to the military conflict persisted and that the country's judicial system urgently needed reform. He therefore urged the Government to resume its dialogue with the revolutionary forces and make a serious effort to reach an agreement. The General Assembly should adopt a balanced resolution that would keep the situation in El Salvador under scrutiny.

5. The General Assembly should also continue its scrutiny of the situation in Guatemala and send a message of support to the President in his efforts to stop human rights violations and protect the activities of human rights groups.

6. The systematic and well-documented repression of human rights in Afghanistan, and the severity with which the Afghan authorities, with the support of foreign troops, acted against their opponents, gave no cause for optimism. His delegation

(Mr. Bolkus, Australia)

was therefore prepared to co-sponsor a resolution on the situation on that country and appealed to the Afghan authorities to stop flouting the United Nations and to allow a special rapporteur to visit the country. Australia made the same appeal to the Government of Iran and urged it to permit a visit from a United Nations special representative. The General Assembly should adopt a resolution highlighting the allegations against Iran and encouraging it to co-operate with the United Nations.

7. His country was equally concerned with human rights situations elsewhere, particularly in Sri Lanka, where the question of disappearances was a serious one, and hoped that the United Nations would focus on human rights everywhere with undiminished attention.

8. Mr. UKEIWE (France) said that the International Covenants on Human Rights rightly stressed the interdependence of all human rights, and his delegation therefore welcomed the preparation of a declaration on the right to development as a human right.

9. The establishment of norms, however, was not enough, and his delegation regretted that the financial situation had led to a reduction in the activities of the United Nations human rights monitoring bodies.

10. France attached special importance to the protection of the physical and moral integrity of the individual and had therefore been among the first to ratify the Convention against Torture and was one of the largest contributors to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

11. His delegation attached great importance to the role of special rapporteurs or special representatives in investigating human rights abuses but stressed that they could be fully effective only with the total co-operation of the States involved and if their reports were made available in all the official languages, regardless of budget problems.

12. His delegation welcomed the return to democracy in certain countries while deploring the continued sufferings of the Khmer and Afghan peoples and the deteriorating situation in South Africa, whose apartheid system had to be eliminated and not just reformed.

13. His delegation noted the progress that had been made in restoring human rights in El Salvador but felt that persisting violations could be remedied only through the restoration of peace through a dialogue between the conflict parties. The new Government of Guatemala should be encouraged in its efforts to restore human rights and should be commended for progress already achieved. In the case of Chile, his delegation welcomed the co-operation between the special rapporteur and that country's Government but regretted the return to a state of siege and hoped for a restoration of democracy. The situation in Iran was still cause for concern and his delegation hoped that that country's Government would co-operate with the special rapporteur by providing the information he needed for his report.

(Mr. Ukeiwe, France)

14. According to the special rapporteur, the conflict in Afghanistan had grown worse and, according to witnesses, so had the human rights situation, thereby creating a massive refugee problem. His country deplored Afghanistan's flouting of the United Nations Charter and the General Assembly resolutions concerning Afghanistan.

15. Mr. YAKOVLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the lack of realism and moderation shown by the United States delegation in its remarks about the USSR on the previous day would do nothing to increase its prestige. The USSR considered those allegations were not worthy of a reply; they were complete lies in the best traditions of the gutter press.

16. The United States delegation had "modestly" declared the United States to be the oldest democratic republic in the world. However, that "ancient republic" refused to acknowledge basic human rights. It was not a party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and continued to persecute the indigenous Indian population of the country. Nor was it a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The position of the United States with regard to the International Covenants on Human Rights was a disgrace. The International Covenants and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were based on the indivisibility of civil and political rights from economic, social and cultural rights. In the United States, that was taken to mean that violation of one group of rights was an excuse for violation of the other. There was no way for the disadvantaged in United States society to make themselves heard when the State and society were controlled by a handful of people who owned all the national wealth.

17. The United States aimed its entire military, political and propaganda arsenal against recently-established countries, which were fighting against hunger and illiteracy and the legacy of colonialism and fascism. The United States used mercenaries against Nicaragua, Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan and Kampuchea, yet it dared to defend its policies before the Third Committee. Groups of terrorists and armies of mercenaries equipped by the United States carried out attacks and "covert operations" against sovereign States, murdering peaceful inhabitants, destroying schools and hospitals and mining ports. In Nicaragua, for example, the Contras had claimed over 14,000 innocent victims. The United States used mercenaries to control the policies of sovereign States in accordance with its "vital interests" and its policy of "neo-globalism".

18. The United States had spent more than \$2 billion on military operations against the legitimate Government of Afghanistan. The Central Intelligence Agency directed the activities of bandits in that country. Mercenaries and terrorists murdered Afghan women and children and destroyed roads, bridges, schools and mosques. The USSR rejected the report on Afghanistan by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/1986/24), which was as prejudiced as his previous report.

(Mr. Yakovlev, USSR)

19. The USSR supported Afghanistan's efforts to preserve its sovereignty. A timetable had been drawn up for the gradual withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country as soon as the political situation was sufficiently stable. The USSR endorsed the efforts of the Afghan Government to achieve national reconciliation and extend the social base of the April revolution. Those who were financing the undeclared war against Afghanistan should realize that, while such intervention continued, the USSR would not desert its neighbour.
20. Even within the Third Committee, there were attempts to hamper the peaceful settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. He called upon all delegations to show a sense of responsibility and concern for human rights.
21. Mr. CALDERON (Chile), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Chile had expected a serious dialogue on the question of human rights; that was why it had co-operated with the Special Rapporteur. The statements made by the representatives of the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union were not new; indeed, the same statements had been made the year before and they repeated baseless accusations against Chile. It was strange that the Soviet Union should speak of human rights when that country was virtually one large concentration camp with a network of Gulags. The Soviet Union practised territorial expansion and nazism, as could be seen by its occupation of the Baltic States, Poland and Romania. It could hardly accuse anyone of fascism, because it was itself the chief proponent of Hitlerism. East Germany, occupied by the Soviet Union, had built the Berlin Wall to keep in those who sought to flee the atrocities practised there.
22. Mr. WIJEWARDANE (Sri Lanka), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the reference made to human rights in his country was selective and misleading. Sri Lanka's Constitution protected human rights; for example, Sri Lanka believed in and practised the rule of law and the right of habeas corpus. The Government regretted that the ghastly denial of human rights by terrorist groups in Sri Lanka had not been given publicity in the Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 97: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)  
(A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 98: REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF STATES PARTIES TO UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)  
(A/C.3/41/L.72)

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1

23. Miss YOUNG (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that the Twelve would abstain in the vote on the draft resolution, despite the importance of implementing the International Covenants on Human Rights.
24. The Twelve could not accept the premise, contained in the title and the sixth preambular paragraph, that all human rights were indivisible and interdependent. The list of obstacles to the realization of human rights in the eighth preambular paragraph could not be complete without a reference to further obstacles such as

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(Miss Young, United Kingdom)

totalitarian practices. The wording of the ninth preambular paragraph was not consistent with the language of the International Covenants, and the tenth preambular paragraph oversimplified the complex relationship between disarmament, security and development. The objection of the 12 member States to the eleventh preambular paragraph was consistent with the objections they had expressed during the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.41/Rev.1, submitted under item 101.

25. Paragraph 1 contained no reference to the International Covenant on Human Rights, although the draft resolution had been submitted under that item. The 12 member States also had objections to paragraph 2.

26. Mr. DAMM (Chile) said that his delegation supported the principle behind the draft resolution, but regretted that the sponsors had refused to include international terrorism among the obstacles to the realization of human rights listed in the eighth preambular paragraph. His delegation would abstain in the vote.

27. A recorded vote was taken on the ninth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Central African Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.

28. The ninth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1, was adopted by 103 votes to 9, with 15 abstentions.

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29. A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1 as a whole.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

30. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1 as a whole was adopted by 103 votes to 1, with 25 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.72

31. Mr. BOLKUS (Australia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, read out several drafting changes in paragraph 4. Furthermore, a paragraph 4 (d) had been added to acknowledge the role of States parties in adjusting reporting procedures; it would read: "And to report on the results of their deliberations to the appropriate meetings of States parties;".

32. In paragraph 5, subparagraph (b) had been deleted entirely. The following text would be added as a new paragraph 6: "Requests the Secretary-General to consider making provision in his proposed programme budget for the next biennium for a meeting of the chairpersons of these bodies in 1988". The sponsors had agreed to delete paragraph 7 in the interest of consensus, since a compromise could not be reached. Paragraph 6 had then been re-numbered paragraph 7. The sponsors hoped the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

33. The CHAIRMAN said that draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.72, as orally revised, had no programme budget implications.

34. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.72, as orally revised, was adopted without a vote.

Explanations of vote

35. Mr. HYNES (Canada) said that Canada had not supported draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1, because it over-emphasized the importance of economic, social and cultural rights as compared with civil and political rights. In draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.70, adopted by consensus, an appropriate balance had already been struck between the rights embodied in the two International Covenants. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1 was based on a questionable interpretation of United Nations accomplishments in human rights.

36. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) said that Costa Rica had not participated in either the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1 or the separate vote on the ninth preambular paragraph. The draft resolution diminished the importance of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol by stressing economic, social and cultural rights. Costa Rica had demonstrated its unflinching support for sovereignty over natural wealth and resources, but the ninth preambular paragraph distorted that principle. It was true that man did not live by bread alone, but given the choice, Costa Rica would prefer freedom with hunger.

37. Mrs. ITO (Japan) said her delegation did not accept the concept of the interdependence of economic, social and cultural rights on the one hand, and civil and political rights on the other. It had therefore abstained from voting on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights should not be a prerequisite to the enjoyment of rights under the other Covenant. Moreover, there were discrepancies between the language of the ninth preambular paragraph and the provision on sovereignty over natural resources in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Indeed, in the Third Committee every effort was being made to reach a consensus on the right to development mentioned in the eleventh preambular paragraph.

38. Mr. QUINN (Australia) said that it had abstained from voting on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1 for reasons of principle. The draft resolution lacked balance, and stipulated an unfortunate conditionality for the enjoyment of fundamental rights in the preamble and in paragraphs 1 and 2. His delegation had worked hard with others to achieve a consensus and, to that end, had proposed amendments several weeks earlier. Last-minute changes, however welcome, had not gone far enough. A consensus must be sought on such an important question, and it was Australia's hope that the Committee would treat it more effectively in future.

39. Mr. VILLATRA DELGADO (Argentina) said that Argentina attached great importance to the indivisibility and interdependence of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, as expressed in draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1. It was unfortunate that paragraph 1 contained no mention of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.



40. Miss BYRNE (United States) said that the United States had voted against draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.65/Rev.1 because it objected to the sponsors' effort to re-define and re-interpret the concept of human rights as developed by the United Nations over the past 40 years. The view of the United States had been expressed earlier when the Committee had considered alternative approaches in the field of human rights.

41. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said his delegation had not objected to the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.72 without a vote, since the amended text represented an improvement. None the less, mentioning "burden" twice in the third preambular paragraph could be an obstacle to the introduction of new international legal instruments.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of item 98.

AGENDA ITEM 99: OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES  
(continued) (A/C.3/41/L.56)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)  
(A/C.3/41/L.50-57)

Draft resolutions A/C.3/41/L.50, L.52, L.53 and L.54

43. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that Argentina, Canada, the Central African Republic, India, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritania, Romania, and the United States had joined as sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.53 on the situation of refugees in the Sudan.

44. Mr. LINDHOLM (Sweden) asked why the word "voluntary" did not appear before "returnees" in the preamble to draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.54 on emergency assistance to returnees and displaced persons in Chad.

45. Mrs. NDUKU BOOTO (Zaire) said she would like to consult with the other sponsors on that point.

The meeting was suspended at 5 p.m. and resumed at 5.05 p.m.

46. Mrs. NDUKU BOOTO (Zaire) said the sponsors would rectify the omission by inserting the word "voluntary" where appropriate.

47. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.50 and L.52, and draft resolutions A/C.3/41/L.53 and L.54, as orally revised, were adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55

48. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee of the oral revisions in A/C.3/41/L.55 on assistance to displaced persons in Ethiopia.

49. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that Bolivia, Italy, Jamaica and Poland had joined as sponsors.

50. A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Israel.

51. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55, as orally revised, was adopted by 128 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

Explanations of vote

52. Miss BYRNE (United States) said the United States had joined the consensus on draft resolutions A/C.3/41/L.50, L.52 and L.54 out of empathy for the people suffering in Africa. Nevertheless, it had reservations on those draft resolutions, because they did not reflect changes over the past year. They would be more effective if they acknowledged that the drought was largely over and that famine and new refugee flows had decreased. Indeed, food shortages were primarily the result of uncertainty about the number of people in need of assistance.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

53. The inter-agency missions called for in some of the draft resolutions only duplicated work already done. Furthermore, inter-agency co-operation would accomplish little if Governments themselves did nothing to integrate refugee-related and national development programmes. Neither should the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and of other United Nations agencies be confused. UNHCR handled refugees, but displaced persons and disaster victims should be handled by other agencies such as the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO). It would also be more useful if reports were presented directly to UNHCR's Executive Committee, rather than to the General Assembly.

54. The United States had voted against draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55, because a distinction should be made between the Government of Ethiopia and the people of Ethiopia. The United States would continue to assist the Ethiopian people, but it did not support the policies of the Government which, in fact, had caused loss of lives and suppression of human rights. Those policies were aggravating refugee flows across frontiers and within Ethiopia itself. Obviously, the country of origin could not be treated on a par with the countries of asylum. Furthermore, the international community could be expected to assist the victims of man-made disasters only if the Governments responsible corrected the causes of those disasters.

55. The United States did not lack humanitarian ideals, but it had voted against the draft resolution in the interest of highlighting the truth and improving the lot of the Ethiopian people. Other delegations might provide co-sponsorship and votes, but the Government and people of the United States had provided tangible assistance to the refugees and displaced persons in Ethiopia. It was unfortunate that the Ethiopian delegation had publicly refused to find language that would ease the United States concerns about the draft resolution.

56. The United States had supported draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.56 on the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, but it did not condemn the use of force against refugee camps which were being used for non-civilian purposes. Any such proposition would clearly contradict the principle of self-defence contained in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

57. Mr. BRAUN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation had voted for draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55 because it supported efforts to assist Ethiopian refugees. With the other members of the European Communities, the Federal Republic of Germany had provided food and emergency assistance to Ethiopia. There was some confusion, however, over the term "displaced persons", which applied only to victims of natural disaster or conflict, and not to persons in resettlement programmes.

58. Mrs. ALVAREZ (France) said that France had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55 on the understanding that it did not apply to programmes for displaced persons within the country concerned.

59. Mr. DOWEK (Israel) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus on draft resolutions A/C.3/41/L.50, L.52, L.53 and L.54 even though it did not have diplomatic relations with some of the States concerned because they were hostile to Israel. However, Israel wished to provide assistance to refugees throughout the world. His delegation had not voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55 because the Government of Ethiopia had politicized the issue of assistance to refugees.

60. Miss BARKER HARLAND (United Kingdom) said that her delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55 because it recognized the need for humanitarian assistance. However, it had strong reservations about Ethiopia's politicization of the refugee issue.

Rights of reply

61. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the United States representative had accused the Ethiopian Government of using starvation as a political weapon. That was patently false: the President of the United States himself had said that available evidence did not justify accusations that the Ethiopian Government was conducting a policy of starvation. The United States Administration used food as a political weapon and, accordingly, had voted against a draft resolution of a purely humanitarian character. The negative United States vote on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.55 should confirm to all that the United States measured basic human needs by political yardsticks. It posed as a champion of human rights; his delegation wondered, however, whether the United States regarded the entire world as its protectorate.

62. Miss BYRNE (United States), intervening on a point of order, asked the Chairman to rule whether the statement being made by the representative of Ethiopia was an explanation of vote.

63. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had completed the explanations of vote and the representative of Ethiopia was now speaking on a point of order.

64. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia), resuming his statement, said that the United States was among the few Governments that did not believe in the equality of peoples and had no regard for the dignity and rights of others. The United States had a very poor human rights record and had earned the reference to it as an imperialist Power.

65. Miss BYRNE (United States), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that in replying to the intemperate, inaccurate and nasty statement by the representative of Ethiopia, she wished to point out that, for the past two years, one third of all assistance to Ethiopia had come from the United States.

66. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his country wished to thank the people of the United States for their generous assistance.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its discussion of item 99 and the relevant parts of item 12.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)  
(A/C.3/41/L.33, L. 49, L.57)

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.33

68. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica), introducing the draft resolution, of which Bangladesh, Jordan and Uruguay had become sponsors, said that its purpose, in view of the financial crisis of the United Nations, was to extend the mandate of the present members of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to ensure their participation in the forthcoming session of the Sub-Commission, and to postpone the election of a new Sub-Commission until the forty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights. The sponsors hoped that the Third Committee would view the proposals favourably and adopt the draft resolution without objection.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.49

69. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica), introducing the draft resolution, said that its purpose was to present another aspect in the consideration of human rights in El Salvador. The sponsors wished to offer an alternative, realistic and just approach with a view to finding a solution by consensus. It was important to note that the Government of El Salvador, from the very time of the decision to appoint a Special Representative, had co-operated fully with the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly. That went far beyond what could be said of other Governments which had categorically refused to receive any official from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The sponsors hoped to work with the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.18 in order to see whether it was possible to achieve a unified document that would respond in a broad humanitarian manner to the true needs of the Salvadorian people.

70. Mr. MEZA (El Salvador) said that the two draft resolutions had been introduced by the representative of a country that had great moral prestige throughout the international community because it was a stable democratic régime which ensured equal distribution of income and maintained its neutrality. Very few countries could claim that. El Salvador, like Costa Rica, felt that the other draft resolutions did not truly reflect the situation of human rights in his country and therefore, like the Costa Rican representative, he appealed for a unified draft resolution that reflected the true situation.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.57

71. Mr. ORTIZ (Uruguay), introducing the draft resolution, said that certainly in Guatemala, as in nearly all Latin American countries, in many periods of history, the reason of force had been substituted for the force of reason. However, it should be remembered that when the night was darkest, it was closest to the dawn. While it would be self-deceiving to claim that there was peace, tranquillity and the absolute rule of law in Guatemala, the situation had improved markedly. The elections held under normal conditions and the new constitutional texts which provided guarantees for the enjoyment of human rights were realities which could

(Mr. Ortiz, Uruguay)

not be ignored. For that reason, the sponsors of the draft resolution, which was self-explanatory, welcomed the progress made and hoped that at the next session of the General Assembly, the favourable culmination of that process would be confirmed, thus making unnecessary the continued attention of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.