

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION

*Official Records**



UN/SA COLLECTION

THIRD COMMITTEE
49th meeting
held on
Monday, 19 November 1979
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 49th MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. de REYES (Colombia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 76: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 77: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON SOCIAL PROGRESS AND
DEVELOPMENT (continued)

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza (Alcoa Building), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

79-58577 5606E (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/34/SR.49
23 November 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION (continued) (E/CN.5/557 and Add.1-3; A/34/389 and Corr.1)

AGENDA ITEM 77: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON SOCIAL PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (E/CN.5/563; A/C.3/34/L.38)

1. Ms. MORGENTHAU (United States of America) said that recent United Nations decisions that focused attention on the social aspects of development demonstrated that the United Nations system was on the way to reinforcing its social development sector. That represented a stage of growth in the international community's understanding of how interdependent the processes of change were. Such interdependence limited options in social policy. Since it would be hard to understand international interdependence without effective preparation of social analyses by the Secretariat, her delegation welcomed the renewed emphasis in the Secretariat's work on global aspects of social development. Fresh United Nations tools of analysis could be useful for the formulation of national policies, as well as in establishing international programmes. Her delegation hoped to learn from the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation how he intended to prepare, for the Preparatory Committee for the International Development Strategy, documentation facilitating a review of the social aspects of the new international development strategy.

2. The introductory statement of the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs had shown that he grasped the central relevance of a few key concepts, such as popular participation, integrated rural development and appropriate technology, and that he was rightly seeking to go beyond the urban bias of the past. Where qualitative concepts were taken into account, there were better prospects of equity in the distribution of the fruits of development. Where growth was left simply to trickle down, existing problems stood out, as demonstrated by the figures quoted in the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/557), which showed that even while annual per capita GNP grew, inequality grew along with it. However, effective policy could improve distribution and reduce poverty at the lower end of the scale.

3. Social questions currently constituted the major preoccupation of the United Nations system. Although delegations might differ on matters of terminology or ideology, they had co-operated in the United Nations system on a remarkably large, diverse and complex set of operations affecting social welfare. One of the tasks of the 1980s would be to give socially related United Nations programmes shape, purpose and direction.

(Ms. Morgenthau, United States)

4. Her delegation had always held that there were many roads to development. As to the question of whether social development was an appropriate topic of concern for leaders of developing countries, she observed that all Governments knew that distribution of the fruits of development was at the core of the political process. In rich or poor nations, Governments were vulnerable to social unrest when people did not have enough to eat or inflation reduced effective income. Many countries now expected the United Nations system to provide techniques and means of development that would allow them to offer better services to all social groups. That being the case, it might be asked what was left that was controversial about social development. Actually, what remained were simply differences in needs and problems. During the preceding session of the Commission for Social Development reference had been made to the various ways in which industrialized and developing countries coped with weaker social groups. Policy-makers in developed countries might learn from many developing countries the benefits to be derived from solid and extensive family structures, while policy-makers in developing countries were looking at developed societies to see what to avoid in striving to prevent juvenile delinquency and isolation of the elderly and infirm. From the United Nations system developing countries were more interested in finding out how to improve conditions for their entire population, since in the poorest countries practically everyone was equally vulnerable. In that connexion, all countries could derive practical benefit from exchanging experiences and information during the International Year for Disabled Persons and the World Assembly on the Elderly. As the international community perfected its understanding of the mutually reinforcing processes of social and economic development, the United Nations might become truly useful in helping Governments to fulfil the expectations of all social groups.

5. For the most part, success in reaching the rural poor had eluded international institutions so far, and finding ways to encourage decentralized rural self-help programmes should therefore be a special goal in the United Nations system. Food Corps programmes, in other words, national structures to encourage rural self-help, were of special interest in that connexion. Reaching low-income rural groups, which was perhaps the major development problem facing the international community in the 1980s, was a task that all nations must undertake together through the United Nations system.

6. Mr. VOICU (Romania) said that his delegation took note of the close correlation established in the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/557) between the world economic situation and the world social situation, as well as the emphasis that it placed on the need to implement General Assembly resolutions relating to the establishment of a new international economic order. It also took note of the different aspects of economic and social policies designed to raise the level of living of all social strata. The provisions of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development must be implemented, and that Declaration must form the cornerstone of the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the field of social development.

(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

7. In general, the Report on the World Social Situation complied with the mandate given to the Secretary-General and succeeded in stressing the major gap in terms of both economic prosperity and levels of living that separated rich geographic regions from poor ones. Moreover, the report rightly stressed that the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order had outlined the forms of international economic co-operation conducive to a reduction of inequalities among nations (p. 18, second para.).

8. Document E/CN.5/557/Add.1, which analysed access to social consumption services in three groups of countries, gave a correct picture, where the group of European socialist countries was concerned, of trends in the matter of access to such services. The references made to his country regarding the right of the population to social consumption on a basis of equality indicated the considerable advantages that Romanian citizens derived from their dual status as participants in and beneficiaries of the development process in a society that had eliminated the division between rich and poor.

9. However, there were certain omissions that diminished the value of the report. Except in the case of policies relating to social consumption, the reader was not in a position to identify national policies relating to the creation of national wealth, the distribution of that wealth and the moral principles and principles of equity that governed that distribution. Moreover, mobilization of national human and material resources in the interest of social progress and the question of self-help in development had, unfortunately, received little attention in the report. Although the role played by women, industrial workers and the elderly in the development process was analysed in chapter IV, the report did not make any reference to the contribution made by young people. In that connexion, he recalled that General Assembly resolution 33/193 concerning preparations for an international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade made a specific reference to the need to mobilize and integrate women and youth in the development process.

10. In future, the report on the world social situation should make a more specific contribution to analysis of, and offer suggestions regarding, ways and means of eliminating under-development and the division of the world into rich and poor countries and of promoting the harmonious development of all States and the establishment of a new international economic order. However, elimination of the existing gap called for a new approach to international relations and respect for the right of all peoples to be the masters of their own destiny and to use their material resources in accordance with their national requirements and priorities. At the same time, elimination of under-development and independent economic and social development in accordance with the realities of each country called for sustained self-help efforts. The report should also build on the favourable beginning made in the current report in order to achieve a closer organic integration of the world social situation with the world economic situation and to analyse the implications of economic factors for social factors, as well as the role of the latter where general progress was concerned. That analysis at the international level should also be extended to the regional and national levels.

(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

11. On that very day the Twelfth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party was beginning its work and would assess the accomplishments of the Romanian people and adopt decisions that would be particularly important for the economic and social future of the country. A radical structural transformation had taken place in Romania's social sector and had given rise to swift development in the fields of education, science and culture, as well as a substantial improvement in the levels of living of the entire population, which had resulted from the implementation of the socialist principles of social justice and equity. In 1985 his country would enter on a new stage of its development; by that year the gap that separated its per capita GNP from that of such countries as the United States, Sweden and the Federal Republic of Germany would be substantially reduced. In a recent interview with the Dutch weekly Nieuws Net President Ceausescu had stressed that, in view of current world economic problems and the widening gap between developed and developing countries, his country was determined to pursue, over the following five years, sustained efforts to catch up with the economically developed countries and, at the same time, contribute to the over-all solution of problems of under-development and the establishment of the new international economic order.

12. Mr. OZADOVSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the events of recent years convincingly demonstrated that substantial social progress was impossible without the strengthening of international peace and security and the deepening of détente. The socialist countries were doing everything possible to consolidate détente and ensure that its benefits were enjoyed by all peoples. It was regrettable that the authors of the report had said nothing about those questions and merely noted the existence in the world of various approaches to development. It was also regrettable that the report failed to recognize that the policy of aggression and neo-colonialism, the expansionist aspirations of certain States and the existence of racist régimes in southern Africa were having an adverse effect on the world social situation. The General Assembly, in resolution 31/84, had clearly indicated the interdependence between social and economic development on the one hand and the political prerequisites for achieving such development on the other and had requested the Secretary-General to take those principles into account when preparing the report on the world social situation. If an over-simplified approach to those questions was taken or they were entirely omitted, a full picture of the world social situation would not emerge.

13. An objective analysis of the social processes taking place in the Western countries showed that the most serious threat to the implementation of economic and social development plans was posed by monopoly capital, which was trying to direct the development of the forces of production not toward goals that would be in the interests of society but toward military objectives, including the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction. From the figures given in the report, it could be calculated that nearly 400,000 scientists, engineers and other specialists were engaged in military activities, which represented a colossal waste of the present and future mental and physical potential of mankind. At the same time, hundreds of millions of people were continuing to live in poverty and deprivation. It was therefore astonishing that a number of NATO countries had recently further stepped up their expenditure for military purposes. By contrast, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries were reducing the resources

/...

(Mr. Ozadovsky, Ukrainian SSR)

allocated to defence: while in 1970 defence expenditure in the Soviet Union had amounted to 11.4 per cent of the State budget, in 1979 it had been only 6.4 per cent. The Soviet Union considered that the ultimate objective of the struggle for peace was general and complete disarmament carried out on the basis of the principle of the equal security of States. In a world without the arms race, many economic and social problems of the developing countries would be quickly solved. United Nations experts estimated that about 8 to 10 per cent of the world military expenditure would be sufficient to put an end to hunger, disease and illiteracy. Under conditions of total or partial disarmament, many countries would be able to use the resources saved to increase considerably their capital investment in the world economy and to provide broader financing for social programmes which in most capitalist countries were cut back in order to build up stocks for weapons.

14. The report showed that the economic contradictions inherent in the capitalist system of production were adversely affecting the course of social development. Although the authors had not described the whole range of factors which had been reflected in the crises of the 1970s, it was evident that those crises had particularly affected the highly developed State monopolistic economy in many countries of the West and had been accompanied by a further intensification of inflation, resulting in particular from the arms race, and by a sharp increase in unemployment among nearly all categories of the population, particularly young people. Unemployment was also prevalent in many developing countries. The authors of the report should have identified the basic causes of unemployment and pointed to the responsibility of the State, Government and community in that connexion. They should also have shown to what extent levels of unemployment benefits corresponded to the minimum wage in particular countries. It was well known that in the majority of capitalist countries many of those who received unemployment benefits or pensions were living on the brink of poverty or below the poverty line. During the 1970s those countries had experienced a serious deterioration in the material situation of the working people accentuated by chronic increases in prices and taxes. The report provided ample evidence that the capitalist system failed to meet the increasing social needs of the population. Unfortunately, it did not indicate the whole range of factors which determined the different levels of requirements and the possibilities of meeting them in States with different social and economic systems. Moreover, the authors of the report did not take into account the underlying socio-political aspects of the social system or the mechanism for the distribution and redistribution of national income, although the latter gave rise to the acute social contrasts which were mentioned in only general terms in the report. Taking into consideration the fact that a large proportion of the adult population in capitalist and developing countries was illiterate, one could see that the situation in the non-socialist world was somewhat different from that described in the report. Another major omission was the question of the adverse consequences of transnational corporations for social development in developed capitalist and developing countries: that too must be reflected in future reports on the world social situation.

(Mr. Ozadovsky, Ukrainian SSR)

15. Chapter III of the report was concerned, inter alia, with the search for an integrated approach to social policies, but that was the very approach which had been followed in the five-year economic development plan of the Ukrainian SSR for the period 1976-1980. It was highly regrettable that the authors of the report had not described the social and economic development programmes of the socialist countries or identified the countries in which such programmes were being successfully implemented.

16. In the Ukrainian SSR, the selfless labour of the working class, the peasantry of the collective farms and the intelligentsia was ensuring the dynamic development of the economy, the successful fulfilment of social development plans and the stable growth of national income, which had increased by 16.1 per cent over the past three years. More than three quarters of the national income was used for consumption, or more than four fifths of expenditure on housing and social and cultural construction was included. Over the previous two decades one third of the population had received new housing or improved their existing housing. The national education and health systems were developing successfully; secondary education had been made compulsory and the number of specialists with higher or secondary specialist education was nine times higher than it had been 40 years previously. For every 300 inhabitants there were one doctor and three middle-level medical workers, and that rate was one and a half times higher than in some of the most developed Western States, including the United States. Particular attention was paid to health care for children, and the number of pre-school children's establishments had been considerably increased so that the requirements of the population were almost fully met. The supreme goal of social production was the fullest possible satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the working people, and in recent years major efforts had been made to enhance national well-being to increase the earnings of manual and non-manual workers and of collective farm workers and to expand social consumption funds.

17. The new Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR, adopted in 1978, once again proclaimed basic social guarantees and created the appropriate machinery for the practical implementation of social policy. The planned system of the socialist economy made it possible to co-ordinate the steady development of production with a corresponding rise in the material well-being and cultural level of the people. The Ukrainian SSR's achievements were an inseparable part of the rich experience accumulated by the community of socialist countries. It would be difficult to solve the problems faced by the modern world, in particular by developing countries, without taking that experience into account. Accordingly, it must be more fully reflected in the preparation of future reports on the world social situation.

18. His delegation felt that the substantial reduction of the size of the report compared with previous reports and the failure to take fully into account the whole range of the social and economic problems involved diminished the significance of the report. The report also tended to find aspects which were common to the social policies of States belonging to different social and economic systems; if its approach had been to describe the socio-economic nature of society, the production system and the distribution of material wealth and services under conditions of capitalism and socialism it would have been clear

/...

(Mr. Ozadovsky, Ukrainian SSR)

that in the conditions of genuine socialism the needs of the population were satisfied more fully than in the developed capitalist countries. Similarly, the extreme economic backwardness of the developing countries caused by the neo-colonialist policy of the imperialist States and multinational corporations was not made sufficiently clear.

19. With all its short-comings, the report confirmed that the social problems facing mankind at the end of the 1970s were becoming increasingly significant, and that the way in which those problems were solved would determine the future development of social progress in the world. His delegation hoped that the Committee's discussions would contribute to the search for more acceptable ways of solving social development problems.

20. With regard to the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development his delegation stressed the underlying significance of the progressive provisions of that Declaration for the work of the social bodies of the United Nations and also the advisability of taking into account the principles and purposes of that important international document when working out policies and programmes for social development at the national level. It supported the draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development submitted by the Economic and Social Council (A/C.3/34/L.38).

21. Ms. ILIC (Yugoslavia) observed that little progress had been made in achieving the objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and in reaching the social targets laid down in the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade, and that the world economic and social situation remained unsatisfactory, especially in developing countries. It was a matter of concern that in many cases the relative position of some segments of society, especially the poorest segments in both developing and developed countries, had deteriorated. New approaches must be evolved if the provisions of the Declaration were to be implemented more rapidly, and social elements must be adequately reflected in the new international development strategy.

22. During the 10 years that had elapsed since the adoption of the Declaration many important resolutions concerning such matters as the international development strategy, the new international economic order and the economic rights and duties of States had been adopted. At specialized conferences other important resolutions and decisions had been adopted which contained specific recommendations aimed at improving economic and social situations and at contributing to the improvement of the quality of life for whole peoples and for individuals and creating conditions in which their rights could be meaningfully enjoyed.

23. Profound social upheavals were currently taking place as a result of inequities inherited from the past. Those upheavals underlined the growing affirmation of the aspirations to freedom and independence of various peoples and countries struggling for social progress and equitable international relations. Ending under-development and establishing a new international economic order constituted one of the most acute problems facing mankind in the context of peace and security. The economic difficulties of the developing countries had been growing and the economic and energy crises were becoming increasingly serious.

/...

(Ms. Ilic, Yugoslavia)

It was in the interest of all countries to remove obstacles to the speedier development of the developing countries and to find ways of overcoming current difficulties in the world economy and in international economic relations. However, a just solution of those problems was possible only through the co-operation of all countries on the basis of equality, within the framework of the new international economic order and the context of the United Nations. A successful outcome for the global negotiations on international economic co-operation proposed during the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries would bring far-reaching economic, political and social benefits.

24. In referring to economic interdependence, which was becoming increasingly universal, her delegation took the position that every State should be able freely to decide on its own economic and social development. Since economic development alone did not automatically result in improving social conditions for all strata of a population, it must be accompanied by far-reaching social changes. However, such changes fell within the purview of the sovereign rights of States, and no foreign models should be imposed under any pretext. The experience of her country, as well as that of other developing countries, proved that many difficulties could be overcome if all available internal forces were mobilized and the necessary internal changes were made. The strengthening of mutual co-operation among non-aligned and other developing countries was an additional factor affecting the self-reliance of developing countries. Such co-operation should be based on the principles of the new international economic order and on the political guidelines for strengthening collective self-reliance adopted during the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries.

25. In her country, greater participation by workers in management and by citizens in the decision-making process at all levels had been one of the most important elements in promoting effective enjoyment of human rights and in accelerating national development. The profound changes that had taken place in social production relations were based on the concept of self-management, as laid down in her country's legislation, from which all other changes in the social, economic and political system stemmed. That socio-economic order was based on freely associated labour, socially owned means of production and self-management by the working people. The system of self-management had thus enabled the men and women of her country to participate directly in the decision-making process. At the same time, it had resulted in full enjoyment of human rights and further democratization and decentralization of the decision-making process, and had contributed enormously to the development of the country. In order to enjoy human rights, the individual must be in control of his or her working and living conditions. In view of the importance of her country's experience, it was surprising that it had not been mentioned in the Report on the World Social Situation.

26. In connexion with the reference made by the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs to the fact that the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women had proposed that the notion of the "integration of women into the development process" should be replaced by the notion of the "role of women in development",

/...

(Ms. Ilic, Yugoslavia)

she observed that society must ensure equality of opportunities and rights for women in education and employment and provide child care and other services for children and the family.

27. Mrs. KRISHTALEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the social problems facing mankind were becoming increasingly acute and were of vital significance for the peoples of different regions and countries of the world. The Great October Socialist Revolution, which had opened an era of revolutionary renewal in the world, had constituted a radical turning-point in the life of the Byelorussian people and liberated them from social and national oppression and from suffering, poverty, hunger and despair. In 1979 the Byelorussian people had celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Byelorussian SSR. The Byelorussian SSR was successfully implementing a broad programme of social and economic change worked out by the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Twenty-eighth Congress of the Communist Party of Byelorussia. One of the most important achievements of socialism was society's concern for the all-round development of the Soviet individual which constituted the basis of the socialist economy. As a result of the dynamic growth of social production, real per capita income was steadily rising; over the past three years it had increased by 14 per cent, while social consumption funds had increased by 17.5 per cent. More than a third of the reserves of the social consumption funds were used for social security and social insurance, and a number of measures had been taken for the further improvement of social security, from which about 12 per cent of the population was drawing benefits. In general, the level of living of the inhabitants of the Byelorussian SSR improved by a factor of two every 15 years. However, material benefits were not an end in themselves but the prerequisite for the all-round development of the personality, and increasing well-being was accompanied by an enrichment of the intellectual life of the people. All the most important problems of the political, economic, social and cultural life of the Republic were discussed and decided upon with the direct participation of the manual and non-manual workers and the intelligentsia, and the annual and five-year plans and comprehensive plans for long-term economic and social development were drawn up by and for the working people.

28. Her delegation considered that the Byelorussian SSR's achievements in the social sphere must be adequately reflected in United Nations documents and in the reports on the world social situation, and that there should be a fuller chapter on the social situation in the socialist countries. Moreover, the indicators of economic and social development in the Soviet Union and other States of the socialist community attested to the magnitude of their achievements in the social sphere and were in marked contrast to the social situation in a number of capitalist countries. The data reproduced in the Report on the World Social Situation and elsewhere confirmed the seriousness of the crises typical of the capitalist countries and the periodic slumps in production, the growth of unemployment and inflation, the steadily rising prices and costs of services, education and medical care and the increasing crime which characterized the social situation in contemporary capitalist society. The unsolved social problems affecting young people and national minorities who bore a heavy burden of social inequality and social oppression in the capitalist world gave rise to deep concern.

(Mrs. Krishtalevich,
Byelorussian SSR)

29. Moreover, the deep-seated crises in the developed capitalist countries had a pernicious influence on the rate of social and economic change in many developing countries in which the levels of living of the broad masses of the working people were still very low and it had not been possible to overcome centuries-old economic and social backwardness aggravated by unequal economic relations with the developed capitalist countries.

30. The provisions of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development were of paramount significance in preparing the social section of the international development strategy for the 1980s.

31. There was a close connexion between social progress and the strengthening of peace and security, the limitation of the arms race and achievement of disarmament: all strategies and programmes of development would remain a dead letter until the world was freed from the arms race imposed on it by imperialism. The introduction of far-reaching social and economic changes within countries, industrialization, co-operative agriculture, the introduction of State planning, the establishment of progressive legislation, the mobilization of internal resources and the equitable distribution of national income were of decisive significance in ensuring social progress and development and improving the level of living of the broad masses of the people. The experience of the Byelorussian SSR and of the Soviet Union and all the countries of the socialist community demonstrated the need for such changes so as to overcome social and economic backwardness. The Report on the World Social Situation did not fully reflect the experience of the socialist countries in solving the problems of social development. Moreover, there was no justification for issuing the important chapters on regions in the form of annexes to the Report, since they were an inseparable part of the Report. Her delegation hoped that the discussions in the Committee would contribute substantially to the development and implementation in various countries of policies and measures aimed at enhancing the material and cultural levels of living of the population and creating international conditions which would be conducive to the social and economic progress of the peoples.

32. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) said that the situation portrayed in the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/557) and in the report on implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (E/CN.5/563) was discouraging. It was regrettable that those reports were limited to presenting a statistical compilation, a general factual account and arbitrary comparisons while details concerning the important experience that had been accumulated were omitted. It was also regrettable that the former document did not make sufficient reference to countries that remained under colonial domination and foreign occupation, in accordance with the request to the Secretary-General in General Assembly resolution 31/83, which her country had sponsored, and that there was not a more comprehensive evaluation of the negative impact on the world social situation of the factors referred to in resolution 31/84. Those omissions, among others, made it necessary to work for the formulation of substantive recommendations that would provide the Secretary-General with more definite guidelines for future work.

(Mrs. Rodríguez, Cuba)

33. The fact that development was a long-drawn-out process became truly alarming when the highly unsatisfactory economic and social conditions in developing countries were taken into account. The Report on the World Social Situation itself provided proof of that situation, and it must be borne in mind that the Report had been prepared prior to the failure of the fifth session of UNCTAD and the resulting disappointment of those who had hoped that the developed market-economy countries would display the necessary political will.

34. During the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries it had been emphasized that the struggle to establish the new international economic order was an integral part of the struggle for political, economic, cultural and social liberation. During that Conference the methods used by the developed countries to preserve their privileged position had been condemned, and emphasis had been placed on the determination of the non-aligned and other developing countries to reach a common position on questions that were being negotiated with the developed countries. It had also been stressed that the negotiations on the establishment of the new international economic order must be conducted within the context of the United Nations system, and the central role of the General Assembly in that connexion had been reaffirmed.

35. Her country was among those that had been able to solve or at least to begin solving their most pressing social problems. In Cuba's case, that achievement had been the result of a far-reaching social revolution that had transformed the economic structures on which social progress was based. Her country had thus made significant progress in the fields of health, education and care of the elderly and handicapped, and it was in that context that her delegation vigorously supported implementation of the International Year for Disabled Persons. Since 1970 her country has been undertaking action to solve its housing problems, and it had at the same time placed greater emphasis on social services.

36. Notwithstanding the quantitative and qualitative progress that her country had made, it remained very much aware of the social and economic inequities existing in the world, as demonstrated in the statement made by President Castro before the General Assembly during the current session. In that statement President Castro had put forward an important formal proposal aimed at solving the most pressing current problems. That proposal was based on an integral approach to the problem of development, which reflected the fact that development was a matter not simply of agriculture and industrialization but, essentially, of concern for the human being. According to that proposal, from the outset the strategy for the forthcoming development decade should include, as a contribution from the developed world and countries with resources, an additional annual sum of at least \$25 billion in the form of donations and long-term loans at low interest, for investment in the under-developed countries. As President Castro had said in his statement, if a peaceful solution could not be found to the current problems of injustice and inequality the future would be apocalyptic.

37. Mr. RAKOTOZAFY (Madagascar) said that the question of the world social situation involved a number of different elements, all of which were concerned with achieving the well-being of the individual in a just and equitable society. Although social progress depended above all on well-defined national policy, the international context had a definite influence on the efforts made at the national level to achieve social progress. The international situation gave rise to concern because most of the declarations of principle and programmes of action adopted by numerous international conferences had not yet been effectively implemented, many multinational negotiating meetings between the developed and the developing countries had ended in deadlock, and although the international community was becoming aware of the increased interdependence of national economies, the machinery of the existing structure was only consolidating the prosperity of the rich countries and depriving the poor countries of the little which they had. His delegation had constantly insisted on the need for a general restructuring of international economic relations which would make national efforts to improve the social situation more effective. Despite the diversity of economic, political and social systems, those efforts were being made, as was shown by the figures given in the two reports.

38. Madagascar's economic and social development was organized within the context of a long-term plan defining the global development strategy and medium-term plans or short-term programmes providing for action or projects to be undertaken. Since the triumph of the socialist revolution, his Government had decided to wage an active struggle against unemployment and underemployment, to increase social facilities, particularly for health, education, sports and culture, to expand the mass communications media and to improve the level of living by pursuing an appropriate policy in the sphere of housing and social security. The United Nations had an essential role to play in ensuring a better harmonization of social progress and development so as to enable the developing countries to win the fight against poverty.

39. Mr. ROHEEN (Afghanistan) said that the victory of the revolution of April 1978 in Afghanistan had resulted in the transfer of power from the exploiting class to the people and in fundamental social and political changes which had laid the foundation of a democratic society. One of the prime objectives of the new Government was to establish social and economic justice in a free society. The first specific step taken had been the total elimination of the former system of land ownership and the unjust relations between landlords and peasants and agricultural workers, which had traditionally involved the payment of exorbitant sums by landless peasants and agricultural workers to feudal lords and money-lenders. The distribution of Government-owned land and land owned by feudal landlords to poor landless peasants, agricultural workers and nomads was of great economic and social significance, especially in the agriculture and animal husbandry sectors, which were among the major sources of income and employment. The Government had also established animal husbandry stations and had expanded agricultural banks and co-operatives which provided seed, fertilizer, credits and subsidies. Banks had been nationalized and services extended to cover the entire country in accordance with the economic and social needs of the people; the Government now guaranteed savings deposits held in banks.

(Mr. Roheen, Afghanistan)

40. Health had also received considerable attention with the establishment of new preventative and curative medical institutions, such as hospitals, clinics and blood banks, with particular stress on combating tuberculosis, smallpox and malaria. Education had been improved qualitatively and quantitatively to make it a moving force in social and economic strategies and an instrument of development. Primary education had been made compulsory and education at all levels was free. Many new schools, centres and institutes had been constructed, ranging from the pre-school to the university level, and the campaign against illiteracy had been strengthened. Much attention was also being paid to preparing and publishing reading materials and textbooks in the different languages spoken by minority groups. Lastly, the new five-year development plan also devoted special attention to the exploitation of natural resources and to industrialization.

41. Mr. HASSA (Jordan) said that although 10 years had passed since the adoption of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the world needed to develop its co-operation more than ever before in order to attain the objectives set forth in the United Nations Charter. His delegation was disappointed at the realities reflected in the documents before the Committee, which showed that most developing countries had achieved little success in the social sphere, and that even the successes of the developed countries had been lessened by unforeseen economic and social problems and the imbalance between material progress and spiritual values. The current world outlook was extremely gloomy, and international co-operation in all fields was needed if a global catastrophe was to be averted. The documents before the Committee showed the enormous gap between the developed and the developing worlds, which had been widening over the years because of the absence of international co-operation based on justice and equality. The causes which were preventing the developing countries from achieving social progress included their historical backgrounds and the precarious economic situations in most developing countries resulting from colonialism and occupation by countries which had given no priority to social progress. Real economic progress had to be accompanied by improvements in the social sphere and could not be achieved without political stability. The burdensome legacy of colonialism gave rise to political troubles in most developing countries which were further obstacles to progress, and the efforts of developing countries were also hindered by their own traditions and customs, and by the increasing outflow of capital.

42. Jordan was a small country with modest resources, but, considering the many difficulties which it had faced for decades, its achievements were very substantial. Over the past decade it had made great advances in education, health care, the role of women, and the provision of social services to all sectors of the population, including housing for the poorest sectors.

43. One problem which impeded social progress in Jordan was the assistance it had provided for many years to Palestinian refugees who had been driven from their homes by Israel in 1948; the United Nations Relief and Works Agency provided for only a small proportion of those refugees, who included a large number of children, and the gaps in Jordan's own services needed to be filled.

(Mr. Hassa, Jordan)

44. States must take the opportunity to review their international and domestic policies in the social sphere and work towards the objectives of economic and social progress in order to avert a world catastrophe.

45. Mr. ERRAZURIZ (Chile) said that his delegation shared the concern expressed by other delegations over the existing world social situation and felt that the United Nations should focus on specific and realistic action and programmes at the national, regional and international levels which would effectively improve the quality of life of all mankind. Such an approach should involve an integrated concept of development, combining both social and economic components. The human being was both the chief agent of social development and the main resource in economic development; his effectiveness could be maintained only by improving the quality of his life.

46. To that end, the Government of Chile had adopted a long-term social and economic policy aimed at achieving balanced and harmonious economic development which would lead to improvements in the quality of the life of all Chileans. The rate of growth in the national product had increased by 7.3 to 8.6 per cent in the past three years. Efforts were being made to maintain the increase in income and improvements in income distribution, so as to guarantee long-term improvements in the welfare of the population, including the poorest segments. Social welfare expenditures had also been increased to nearly 12.3 per cent of the gross national product in an effort to eliminate poverty. Government expenditures for health, housing, social security, education and regional development amounted to nearly 54 per cent of the budget, which meant that the increase in the per capita expenditure for social services amounted to 22 per cent.

47. Investment in social services was not in itself sufficient unless it was accompanied by the reform of obsolete structures, by appropriate income distribution and by the development of alternative strategies specifically aimed at marginal groups, particularly the poorest. In the field of health, his Government was seeking to channel its resources towards programmes which would have an immediate effect on the health conditions of the lowest income sectors. In that connexion he said that the infant mortality rate had declined from 92 per thousand live births in 1968 to 39.7 in 1978 and that mortality among pre-school children had declined from 6.5 per thousand to 1.9 during the same period. Maternal mortality had also dropped from 1.32 per thousand to 0.96 for the same period and life expectancy had risen from 61.2 years to 66.

48. His Government was also seeking to improve nutrition by distributing free milk and enriched food to children and by subsidizing school lunches for children of low-income families. The proportion of children under six years of age showing signs of nutritional deficiencies in 1968 had been 67.7 per cent; by 1978 it was only 12.3 per cent. Education continued to receive a major portion of the social services budget, with special efforts to bring curricula into alignment with the country's needs and the future occupation of the student. Enrolment in pre-school activities had risen and literacy campaigns had reduced illiteracy to 6.8 per cent. Public housing construction had been increased, mainly for the benefit of low-income groups. New jobs were being created at the rate of approximately 4.4 per cent annually. Free training programmes had been set up

/...

(Mr. Errazuriz, Chile)

to keep pace with the structural changes in the economy. Food production was increasing by an average of 5.9 per cent annually, which was above the 4 per cent target set by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Agrarian reform had led to a redistribution of 56 per cent of the irrigated land, benefiting 50,000 peasant families, with the result that 47 per cent of the irrigated land was now divided into properties ranging between 20 and 80 hectares. Purchasing power had risen by more than 12 per cent annually and real salaries by an average of 13.5 per cent annually for the years 1976-1978.

49. He hoped the information he had provided would help other States to understand how Chile, a developing country with limited resources, was striving to implement the Declaration on Development and Social Progress.

50. Ms. PADUA (Portugal) noted that the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation showed that economic growth had not reached its predicted level and could not, of itself, bring about the progress desired. Another Development Decade had passed and progress in the achievement of equity, both among and within countries, was well below the target level. Her delegation had drawn attention in the Second Committee to the structural maladjustment of the world economy, leading to high inflation, unemployment and slow growth in the developed countries and to insufficient growth, continued dependence on developed countries and internal problems of distribution, failure to satisfy human needs and widespread poverty in the developing countries. Development was also affected by failures in other social areas, such as the failure to protect human rights. She noted that the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (E/CN.5/563) stressed that real progress was dependent not only on social structural transformation at the national level but also on the existence of an equitable international economic order. Her delegation therefore hoped that the third development decade would bring the international community closer to the objectives of a more just economic order, which would be a logical consequence of the current trend in international economic relations, i.e. the growing interdependence of developed and developing countries.

51. Her delegation supported the recommendations of the Commission for Social Development to the Preparatory Committee for the New International Development Strategy, drafted in compliance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 33/48 and adopted at the Commission's fifty-seventh session earlier in 1979.

52. Mrs. RAHMAN (Bangladesh), noting that social development was dependent on economic progress, said that during the past decade income had grown least where it was needed most and that social and economic disparities between countries were even wider than they had been in 1960. Furthermore, there had been a net decline in the real value of official development assistance. The inequities which existed within a given society were inescapably related to, and were the result of, widening global disparities. The reports before the Committee presented a depressing picture of the world social situation. The Second Development Decade, although it had strengthened the ability of the world community to identify and recognize fundamental problems, had not been able to give real answers to mass poverty and mass unemployment or to bring about the eradication of social and

(Mrs. Rahman, Bangladesh)

economic disparities between and within nations. In drawing up the programme of the new development decade, the deadlock must be broken and answers to the various social problems must be found.

53. The main objectives of Bangladesh's development plans were to assist individuals, groups and communities to overcome their present difficulties and develop their social and economic potentials and thus become self-sufficient. Development plans concentrated on the transformation of social and economic structures through decentralization down to the grass roots level, so as to ensure the widest possible participation of the people in development, with emphasis on the rural and agricultural sectors. She cited some areas where Bangladesh had made progress, in particular in constructing facilities for primary education, in integrating women into the development process - 10 per cent of all jobs in Government and national institutions were reserved for women - and in providing rehabilitation and occupational training for the handicapped.

54. Social development was an enormous task and required substantially increased financial and technical support from the developed world. It was regrettable that the developed countries had failed to reach their assistance target during the current decade. Her delegation hoped that that failure would not be repeated in the new decade.

55. Mr. BA (Mali) said that the reports before the Committee showed that there had been alarmingly little progress or improvement in the world social situation, despite the guidelines and targets established by the General Assembly in resolution 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI). In order to achieve acceptable living standards for all, the international community would have to take concerted action to implement FAO's World Food Programme, reduce under-employment and unemployment so as to make rational use of human resources, and effect a real transfer of resources to the developing countries.

56. In its efforts to achieve social justice at home, Mali had embarked on an ambitious programme for health, education and agricultural development. Development in the rural sectors was linked with development in other sectors and included technical and vocational training and the development of social services.

57. He urged all States to make a concerted effort to implement the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.

58. Mr. KIPLAGAT (Kenya) said that the reports before the Committee gave a grim picture of the world economic and social situation, particularly in the countries of the third world. Kenya traditionally assigned the highest priority in its development plans to rural development, agriculture, health and education, and unemployment. As a result of the major agrarian reforms undertaken immediately after the attainment of independence and the back-to-the-land policy, Kenya was now able to feed its own population. Furthermore, incentives were given to industrialists to invest in the smaller urban centres or the rural areas. Expenditures on education constituted a major item in the total recurrent budget, to which should be added the efforts of the peoples themselves through the spirit of self-reliance and Harambee (pulling together), thanks to which many new schools

/...

(Mr. Kiplagat, Kenya)

and colleges had been built. In order to deal with the problem of unemployment among school leavers, village polytechnic programmes had been introduced to provide such persons with basic technical education and inculcate in them the spirit of initiative and self-employment. It was hoped that appropriate industrialization would provide relief from the over-all unemployment problem. In the health area priority was now being given to the prevention programme, especially in the areas of maternal and child health care and family planning. Multi-purpose rural health centres were planned for each province and approximately 1,000 rural health workers had been trained. In that connexion he cited valuable co-operation with UNICEF and other agencies in developing a new approach towards community health care with popular participation. The cost of drugs was a major item of the health budget and his delegation welcomed the efforts of the World Health Organization and its programme on essential drugs. The WHO report on essential drugs should be given the widest possible circulation.

59. The third world faced immense problems, for which it required massive resources. His delegation therefore appealed for the cancellation of external debts, which had become a major burden for third world countries; for an increase in the level of development aid to the target of at least 1 per cent of GNP - no lower figure took into account the reverse flow of resources due mainly to the brain drain; for the speedy conclusion of negotiations on the establishment of a commodities fund; and for longer-term investment in the third world.

60. In conclusion, he said that his delegation would like to see a resumption of the discussion on the new international economic order.

61. Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines) said her delegation especially appreciated the form in which the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation had been prepared, with its focus on selected aspects of social development and their relation to international economic relations and equity. Her delegation also welcomed the prominence given in the Report to the position of women. The Report showed that poverty remained the unaltered condition of the majority of the population of the world and that the gap between living conditions in the developed and developing countries continued to widen. That was also confirmed by the Report on the Implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development. Social progress required the existence of a whole complex of factors, such as political stability, the political will at the highest levels to implement structural changes and reforms, a favourable climate in international economic relations, and economic growth at the national level. There was growing awareness of the fact that economic and social factors operated at both the national and the international levels and that countries were now interdependent. Furthermore, the developing countries had realized that fundamental structural changes had to take place at the national level, involving land reform, equitable distribution of income and access to social and health services, democratization of the decision-making process and the equalization of educational and employment opportunities. One problem was that structural changes and the provision of social services in developing countries could at some stages adversely affect the rate of economic growth; the task was therefore, to find the right combination of economic growth and social equity for a given stage of development. Recent upheavals experienced by some developing countries had shown that a one-sided

(Mrs. Shahani, Philippines)

emphasis on economic growth without any accompanying policy oriented towards social needs, cultural values, nationalist aspirations and respect for human rights could nullify seemingly impressive economic gains. However, responsibility for progress and development did not lie entirely at the national level: the efforts of third world countries to develop could be considerably set back by the refusal of the developed countries to recognize the need to establish a new international economic order. Industries in developed countries would have to be restructured so as to be complementary to those of the developing countries; protectionism must be replaced by a freer exchange of goods and services; non-tariff barriers must be removed so that the products of developing countries could compete on the world market. Without such reforms in the world economy, the world social situation could not be significantly improved.

62. Her delegation found that the section of the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation dealing with the participation of workers in decision-making was too narrow in scope, as it was limited to industrial workers and did not include rural workers. She suggested that the Secretary-General should produce a report on the ways and means by which States Members of the United Nations could ensure and encourage proper participation in the achievement of development plans. The study should deal with all sectors of the population and focus on institutions and the machinery of such participation.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.