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HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Report of the Third Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, at its 2353rd plenary meeting on 19 September 1975, allocated to the Third Committee agenda item 69, entitled "Human rights and scientific and technological developments: report of the Secretary-General".
2. The Committee considered this item at its 2135th to 2138th and 2141st meetings, from 20 to 27 October 1975. The summary records of these meetings (A/C.3/SR.2135-2138 and 2141) contain the views of representatives of Member States and the specialized agencies on the item.
3. In connexion with item 69, the Committee had before it:
 - (a) A note by the Secretary-General (A/10162) containing background information on the item;
 - (b) A report of the Secretary-General on protection of broad sectors of the population against social and material inequalities, as well as other harmful effects which might arise from the use of scientific and technological developments (A/10146), prepared in accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 3150 (XXVIII) of 14 December 1973;
 - (c) The draft declaration on the use of scientific and technological progress in the interests of peace and for the benefit of mankind, proposed by Bangladesh, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Mauritius, Poland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/C.3/L.2144), the amendments thereto proposed by Morocco (A/C.3/L.2146), and the amendment proposed by Germany (Federal Republic of) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (A/C.3/L.2147), subsequently joined by Cuba, Italy and the United States of America (A/C.3/L.2148);
 - (d) Comments received as at 15 October 1975 from Member States on the draft Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind (A/10226 and Add.1-2).
4. The Director of the Division of Human Rights introduced the item at the Committee's 2135th meeting, on 20 October.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE USE OF
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS IN THE INTERESTS
OF PEACE AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANKIND (A/C.3/L.2144)

5. The text of the draft Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind (A/C.3/L.2144), submitted at the twenty-ninth session, was re-introduced by the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic at the 2135th meeting on 20 October. It read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Noting that scientific and technological progress has become one of the most important factors in the development of human society,

"Taking into consideration the fact that, while scientific and technological developments provide ever-increasing opportunities to better the human condition, in a number of instances they can give rise to social problems and may be accompanied by an increase in social and material inequality and a deterioration of the social situation of broad sectors of the population,

"Noting with concern that scientific and technological achievements can be used to intensify the arms race, suppress national liberation movements and deprive the peoples of their fundamental rights, and also to the detriment of human rights and freedoms,

"Recognizing that, in the light of scientific and technological developments, in a number of cases social problems arise which influence the internal and foreign policy of States and international relations as a whole,

"Noting the urgent need to make full use of scientific and technological developments for the welfare of man and to neutralize the present and possible future harmful consequences of certain scientific and technological achievements,

"Recognizing that scientific and technological progress is of great importance in accelerating the social and economic development of developing countries,

"Reaffirming the right of peoples to self-determination and the need to respect human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human personality in the light of scientific and technological developments,

"Desiring to promote the realization of the principles which form the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial

Countries and Peoples, the Declaration of Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and the Declaration on Social Progress and Development,

"Solemnly proclaims that:

"1. All States shall promote international co-operation to ensure that the results of scientific and technological developments are used in the interests of strengthening international peace and security, freedom and independence, and also for the purpose of the economic and social development of peoples and the realization of human rights and freedoms on the basis of the principles of the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, respect for State sovereignty, equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

"2. All States shall take measures to ensure that scientific and technological achievements satisfy the material and spiritual needs of all sectors of the population.

"3. All States shall refrain from any acts involving the use of scientific and technological achievements for the purpose of violating the sovereignty of other States, interfering in their internal affairs, waging aggressive wars, suppressing national liberation movements, or pursuing a policy of racial discrimination. Such acts are not only a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, but constitute an inadmissible distortion of the purposes that should guide scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind.

"4. All States shall take measures to protect broad sectors of the population from an increase in social and material inequality as a result of the use of scientific and technological achievements and also from other possible harmful effects of scientific and technological developments, including the intensified exploitation of the working masses.

"5. All States shall take the necessary measures, including legislative measures, to ensure that the utilization of scientific and technological achievements promotes the fullest realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination whatsoever on grounds of race, sex, language or religious beliefs.

"6. All States shall take effective measures, including legislative measures, to prevent and preclude the utilization of scientific and technological achievements to the detriment of human rights and freedoms and the harmonious development of the individual.

"7. All States shall, whenever necessary, take action to enact, and ensure compliance with legislation guaranteeing human rights and freedoms in the light of scientific and technological developments."

6. The amendments to the draft Declaration submitted at the twenty-ninth session by Morocco (A/C.3/L.2146), were to delete all the words after "give rise to social problems" in the second preambular paragraph and to replace operative paragraph 4 by the following text:

"4. All States must take measures to extend the benefits of science and technology to all strata of the population and to protect them, both socially and materially, from possible harmful effects of the 'misuse of scientific and technological developments'."

7. The amendment to the draft Declaration submitted at the twenty-ninth session by Germany (Federal Republic of) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (A/C.3/L.2147), subsequently joined by Cuba and Italy, were to add the following new operative paragraph 2:

"2. All States shall take appropriate measures to prevent the use of scientific and technological developments, particularly by the State organs, to limit or interfere with the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

8. The amendments to the draft Declaration submitted at the twenty-ninth session by the United States of America (A/C.3/L.2148) were as follows:

"1. In preambular paragraph 3 replace the phrase "deprive the peoples of their fundamental rights, and also to the detriment of human rights and freedoms," by the words "deprive individuals and peoples of their human rights and fundamental freedoms,".

"2. Add the following paragraph between present preambular paragraphs 3 and 4:

"Noting also with concern that scientific and technological achievements can entail dangers for the civil and political rights of the individual or of the group and for human dignity,"

"3. Amend preambular paragraph 8 by inserting after the words "the Charter of the United Nations" the words "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

"4. Amend operative paragraph 3 by replacing the word "must" by the word "should".

"5. Amend operative paragraph 4 by replacing the word "must" by the word "should"; further amend operative paragraph 4 by deleting the phrase "from other possible harmful effects of scientific and technological developments, including the intensified exploitation of the working masses"; add to the operative paragraph 4, after "technological achievements and also", the following phrase: "to protect the rights of the individual or of the group, particularly with regard to respect for privacy and the protection of the human personality and its physical and intellectual integrity,".

"6. Amend operative paragraph 7 by replacing the word "must" by the word "should"."

9. At the 2138th meeting, on 22 October, the following amendments were submitted by Germany (Federal Republic of) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and later co-sponsored by Italy (A/C.3/L.2160):

"1. In second preambular paragraph, delete the words "give rise to social problems" and substitute the following: "threaten the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual as well as give rise to social problems".

"2. Fourth preambular paragraph: delete.

"3. Operative paragraph 1: delete all after the words "human rights and freedoms" and substitute "in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations".

"4. Operative paragraph 3: amend to read as follows:

"All States should ensure that scientific and technological achievements are not abused for the purpose of violating sovereignty of States, suppressing national liberation movements or pursuing a policy of racial discrimination contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, since such abuses constitute an inadmissible distortion of the purposes that should guide scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind."

"5. Operative paragraph 6: delete the last eight words and substitute fundamental freedoms and the dignity of the human personality."

10. At the same meeting, the Philippines submitted amendments (A/C.3/L.2161) later co-sponsored by Cuba and Mexico, which, as orally revised, read as follows:

"1. Add a new preambular paragraph after preambular paragraph 6:

"Aware that the transfer of science and technology is one of the principal ways of accelerating the economic development of developing countries,

"2. After operative paragraph 3, add the following paragraph and renumber the other paragraphs accordingly:

"All States shall co-operate in the establishment, strengthening and development of the scientific and technological capacity of developing countries with a view to accelerating the realization of the social and economic rights of the peoples of those countries."

11. At the 2141st meeting, on 27 October, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic introduced a revised text of the draft Declaration (A/C.3/L.2144/Rev.1), which incorporated most of the amendments, with some revisions, which had been submitted. Cuba and Mongolia became co-sponsors of the revised draft Declaration, the text of which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Noting that scientific and technological progress has become one of the most important factors in the development of human society,

"Taking into consideration that, while scientific and technological developments provide ever increasing opportunities to better the conditions of life of people and nations, in a number of instances they can give rise to social problems, as well as threaten the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual,

"Noting with concern that scientific and technological achievements can be used to intensify the arms race, suppress national liberation movements and deprive the peoples and countries of their fundamental rights, and also to the detriment of human rights and freedoms,

"Noting the urgent need to make full use of scientific and technological developments for the welfare of man and to neutralize the present and possible future harmful consequences of certain scientific and technological achievements,

"Recognizing that scientific and technological progress is of great importance in accelerating the social and economic development of developing countries,

"Aware that the transfer of science and technology is one of the principal ways of accelerating the economic development of developing countries,

"Reaffirming the right of peoples to self-determination and the need to respect human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human person in the conditions of scientific and technological progress,

"Desiring to promote the realization of the principles which form the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Declaration

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on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Declaration of Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,

"Solemnly proclaims that:

"1. All States shall promote international co-operation to ensure that the results of scientific and technological developments are used in the interests of strengthening international peace and security, freedom and independence, and also for the purpose of the economic and social development of peoples and the realization of human rights and freedoms on the basis of the principles of the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, respect for State sovereignty, equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

"2. All States shall take appropriate measures to prevent the use of scientific and technological developments, particularly by the State organs, to limit or interfere with the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

"3. All States shall take measures to ensure that scientific and technological achievements satisfy the material and spiritual needs of all sectors of the population.

"4. All States shall refrain from any acts involving the use of scientific and technological achievements for the purpose of violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States, interfering in their internal affairs, waging aggressive wars, suppressing national liberation movements, or pursuing a policy of racial discrimination. Such acts are not only a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, but constitute an inadmissible distortion of the purposes that should guide scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind.

"5. All States shall co-operate in the establishment, strengthening and development of the scientific and technological capacity of developing countries with a view to accelerating the realization of the social and economic rights of the peoples of those countries,

"6. All States shall take measures to extend the benefits of science and technology to all strata of the population and to protect them, both socially and materially, from possible harmful effects of the misuse of scientific and technological developments.

"7. All States shall take the necessary measures, including legislative measures, to ensure that the utilization of scientific and technological achievements promotes the fullest realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination whatsoever on grounds of race, sex, language or religious beliefs.

"8. All States shall take effective measures, including legislative measures, to prevent and preclude the utilization of scientific and technological achievements to the detriment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the dignity of the human person.

"9. All States shall, whenever necessary, take action to ensure compliance with legislation guaranteeing human rights and freedoms in the conditions of scientific and technological developments."

12. The following written amendments were not accepted by the sponsors of the revised draft Declaration:

(a) A/C.3/L.2148, items 1 and 2, submitted by the United States of America (see para. 8, above);

(b) A/C.3/L.2160, items 3 and 4, submitted by Germany (Federal Republic of), Italy and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (see para. 9, above).

13. The following oral amendments were submitted at the 2141st meeting:

(a) An amendment submitted by Cuba to add the following words at the end of operative paragraph 2: "and other relevant international instruments";

(b) An amendment submitted by the United States of America to add the following words at the end of operative paragraph 6: "including their misuse to infringe upon the rights of the individual or of the group, particularly with regard to respect for privacy and protection of the human personality and its physical and intellectual integrity".

The oral amendment submitted by Cuba was accepted by the sponsors of the draft Declaration.

14. At the same meeting, the Committee voted as follows on the revised draft Declaration and amendments thereto:

(a) The amendment to the third preambular paragraph (A/C.3/L.2148, item 1), was adopted by 36 votes to 15, with 57 abstentions;

(b) The third preambular paragraph, as amended, was adopted by 34 votes to none, with 57 abstentions;

(c) The amendment to add a new preambular paragraph after the third preambular paragraph, (A/C.3/L.2148, item 2) was adopted by 40 votes to 13, with 59 abstentions;

(d) The amendment to operative paragraph 1 (A/C.3/L.2160, item 3) was adopted by a roll-call vote of 28 to 21, with 70 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bhutan, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Honduras, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Luxembourg, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Philippines, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: Argentina, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Hungary, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Venezuela.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Iceland, India, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

(e) Operative paragraph 1, as amended, was adopted by 38 votes to none, with 75 abstentions;

(f) The amendment to operative paragraph 4 (A/C.3/L.2160, item 4), was rejected by 38 votes to 23, with 50 abstentions;

(g) The oral amendment submitted by the United States of America to operative paragraph 6 was adopted by 51 votes to 12, with 61 abstentions;

(h) The draft Declaration as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 95 votes to none, with 20 abstentions (see para. 18, below).

III. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT DECISION A/C.3/L.2162

15. A draft decision for approval by the General Assembly was submitted by Australia, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Japan, Lebanon, the Philippines and Tunisia, later joined by Greece and Jordan. The draft decision read as follows:

"The General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, taking note of the work begun by the Commission on Human Rights in this field, decided to include in the provisional agenda of the thirty-first session the item entitled Human rights and scientific and technological developments as a priority item."

16. At the 2141st meeting, on 27 October, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted an oral amendment to insert the following in the first line of the draft decision, after the words "Third Committee": "recalling its resolution 3268 (XXIX) and". The sponsors of the draft decision accepted this amendment and revised the text accordingly.

17. The Committee then adopted the draft decision, as revised, by 105 votes to none, with 7 abstentions (see para. 19, below).

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

18. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft Declaration:

Draft Declaration on the Use of Scientific and
Technological Progress in the Interests of
Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind

The General Assembly,

Noting that scientific and technological progress has become one of the most important factors in the development of human society,

Taking into consideration that, while scientific and technological developments provide ever increasing opportunities to better the conditions of life of people and nations, in a number of instances they can give rise to social problems, as well as threaten the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual,

Noting with concern that scientific and technological achievements can be used to intensify the arms race, suppress national liberation movements and deprive individuals and peoples of their human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Also noting with concern that scientific and technological achievements can entail dangers for the civil and political rights of the individual or of the group and for human dignity,

Noting the urgent need to make full use of scientific and technological developments for the welfare of man and to neutralize the present and possible future harmful consequences of certain scientific and technological achievements,

Recognizing that scientific and technological progress is of great importance in accelerating the social and economic development of developing countries,

Aware that the transfer of science and technology is one of the principal ways of accelerating the economic development of developing countries,

Reaffirming the right of peoples to self-determination and the need to respect human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human person in the conditions of scientific and technological progress,

Desiring to promote the realization of the principles which form the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,

/...

Solemnly proclaims that:

1. All States shall promote international co-operation to ensure that the results of scientific and technological developments are used in the interests of strengthening international peace and security, freedom and independence, and also for the purpose of the economic and social development of peoples and the realization of human rights and freedoms in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

2. All States shall take appropriate measures to prevent the use of scientific and technological developments, particularly by the State organs, to limit or interfere with the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other relevant international instruments.

3. All States shall take measures to ensure that scientific and technological achievements satisfy the material and spiritual needs of all sectors of the population.

4. All States shall refrain from any acts involving the use of scientific and technological achievements for the purposes of violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States, interfering in their internal affairs, waging aggressive wars, suppressing national liberation movements, or pursuing a policy of racial discrimination. Such acts are not only a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and principles of international law, but constitute an inadmissible distortion of the purposes that should guide scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind.

5. All States shall co-operate in the establishment, strengthening and development of the scientific and technological capacity of developing countries with a view to accelerating the realization of the social and economic rights of the peoples of those countries.

6. All States shall take measures to extend the benefits of science and technology to all strata of the population and to protect them, both socially and materially, from possible harmful effects of the misuse of scientific and technological developments, including their misuse to infringe upon the rights of the individual or of the group, particularly with regard to respect for privacy and the protection of the human personality and its physical and intellectual integrity.

7. All States shall take the necessary measures, including legislative measures, to ensure that the utilization of scientific and technological achievements promotes the fullest realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination whatsoever on grounds of race, sex, language or religious beliefs.

8. All States shall take effective measures, including legislative measures, to prevent and preclude the utilization of scientific and technological achievements to the detriment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the dignity of the human person.

9. All States shall, whenever necessary, take action to ensure compliance with legislation guaranteeing human rights and freedoms in the conditions of scientific and technological developments.

19. The Third Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 3268 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974 on human rights and scientific and technological developments and taking note of the work begun by the Commission on Human Rights in this field, decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-first session the item entitled "Human rights and scientific and technological developments" as a priority item.
