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Chairman: Mrs. Lina P. TSALDARIS (Greece).

AGENDA ITEM 12

**Report of the Economic and Social Council
(chapters VI and VII) (A/3848)**

GENERAL DEBATE

1. Mr. SHAFQAT (Chairman of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund) said that while the recognition accorded to the efforts of UNICEF was gratifying, he wondered whether the successful operation of the Fund was not perhaps being taken too much for granted. The Fund was faced with a grave financial problem. Allocations for government programmes for the next financial year totalled \$26.3 million, about \$3 million more than the average for the past three years. Most of that sum was required for programmes already in receipt of assistance, to enlarge their scope geographically and expand the services provided. Unless there were increases in government contributions, it would not be possible to provide the increased aid requested. The United States of America, the largest contributor to UNICEF, had pledged \$11 million for 1959 provided that an equivalent amount was provided by other Governments. The latter were expected to contribute \$8.9 million for the current year, so that further contributions amounting to \$2.1 million would be needed for 1959. The amount of aid being provided by UNICEF still fell far short of needs. Some increase in funds would be required in any event, since the costs of the supplies provided by UNICEF were rising. The additional amount of \$2.1 million needed was modest, but it could only be obtained if all Governments capable of increasing their contributions responded to the need.

2. Details of UNICEF operations could be found in the semi-annual reports of the Fund's Executive Board^{1/} and in the section on UNICEF in the Secretary-General's annual report (A/3844, chap. II, sect. C). All he wished to do just then was to emphasize some of the main considerations which guided UNICEF in its approach to its problems.

3. First, the UNICEF Executive Board felt that assistance should be given to programmes which provided basic services, including the prevention of disease, the training of personnel and education, and

^{1/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-fifth Session, Supplements Nos. 2 2A and 2B.

which were both suited to the economic and administrative capacities of the countries concerned and capable of being developed into permanent services.

4. Secondly, it believed that specific measures for the health, nutrition and welfare of children should be integrated into larger programmes for the improvement of family and community levels of living.

5. Thirdly, it considered that special emphasis should be laid on education in child care and disease prevention and control; the Board therefore wished to devote greater resources to educational services, such as maternal and child health centres, school health and nutrition programmes, agriculture and home economics extension services and community development programmes.

6. Fourthly, the Board felt that endemic diseases must be eradicated before permanent services could function effectively at the local level. For that reason, UNICEF was assisting large-scale campaigns against the diseases which largely affected children. Simultaneously, it was helping seventy-three countries and territories to develop maternal and child welfare services, and UNICEF aid was being supplied to over 19,000 maternal and child health centres. Fifty-six per cent of the current programme allocations were for disease control and eradication campaigns, but it was hoped that the percentage would drop to 40 per cent by 1961, with a consequent rise in the allocations for basic maternal and child welfare services and child nutrition. The Executive Board would be reviewing the balance between the various programmes in 1959, in the light of several years' experience of expanded aid for malaria eradication programmes.

7. Fifthly, co-ordination between UNICEF and other United Nations agencies must be strengthened. An FAO/UNICEF Joint Policy Committee had been established and was currently meeting at Rome. Procedures had been worked out to ensure closer co-operation with the Bureau of Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and some progress had been made in putting them into effect. It had been clear from the discussions at the recent session of the Executive Board that if effective co-operation was to be achieved, the staff and travel budget of the Bureau of Social Affairs must keep pace with the requirements of Governments requesting UNICEF aid. The Board therefore welcomed the news that the Secretary-General proposed to add three regional social welfare officers to the Bureau's staff. A similar need was evident in connexion with nutrition programmes: increased aid from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) would be necessary if countries were to receive full benefit from UNICEF aid. The Board was glad that that fact was being increasingly recognized by both agencies.

8. Sixthly, the Executive Board had to plan both for the immediate and for a more distant future. It had decided in principle to expand aid for nutrition work at the village level, and at its next session it would examine the possibilities of extending UNICEF aid to social services for children and to certain aspects of primary education. Before programmes could be worked out in detail, considerable planning was necessary. In selecting UNICEF programmes, the Board proceeded on the basis of a scheme of priorities established with due regard to the funds available.

9. Finally, UNICEF had been giving consideration to its relations with non-governmental organizations. At its recent session, in September 1958, the Executive Board had examined and approved a special report on the subject (E/ICEF/372), the basic conclusion of which was that both UNICEF and the non-governmental organizations should be more active in developing practical co-operation. The Board felt that the steps currently envisaged in that connexion would be fruitful.

10. The work of UNICEF was dependent on the voluntary contributions of Governments. Many Governments had been generous in the past, and the achievements of UNICEF had been inspiring; but in comparison with what still remained to be done, the effort seemed far from sufficient. It was to be hoped that Governments would be able to increase their contributions.

11. His term of office as Chairman of the Executive Board of UNICEF was coming to an end. He wished to thank his colleagues for their co-operation and to pay a tribute to the Executive Director and his staff. As Chairman of the Executive Board, he had found his work with UNICEF most rewarding.

12. Mr. LAUREL (Philippines) said he would confine his remarks to the section of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/3848) relating to UNICEF. The subject was perhaps the only one on which the States Members of the United Nations were in full agreement, and best symbolized their common hopes and aspirations. Moreover, UNICEF played a central part in bringing to the knowledge of the people of the world the universal obligation to provide children with the opportunity to grow in health, intelligence and awareness of the dignity and worth of the human person. For those reasons, the Philippines had for eight years despite its financial difficulties made its modest contributions to UNICEF funds.

13. In the Philippines, the work of UNICEF at the international level was supported by a body made up of representatives of UNICEF, WHO, FAO and the Philippine Government, and UNICEF activities at the national and local levels were carried out by public and private agencies. In order to co-ordinate work on immediate problems, the Government had supported the establishment of a joint UNICEF/WHO body to deal with maternal and child health questions and a joint UNICEF/FAO body to study questions of nutrition. A law had recently been enacted establishing a food and nutrition research centre, an independent agency, attached to the Office of the President, which received co-operation from the appropriate Government departments. The experience which would be gained from the nutrition surveys already in progress would be pooled with that of other countries having similar problems.

14. His delegation hoped that the UNICEF/FAO

meeting which was being held at Rome and which was being attended by the Philippine representative on the Board, would help to extend UNICEF influence over a still wider area.

15. The Philippines whole-heartedly supported the Fund's "matching" principle, its methods of selecting projects and its policy of giving priority to assistance in training. It was to be hoped that the Fund's commendable undertakings would in the future be crowned with greater success than ever before.

16. Mr. MASSOUD-ANSARI (Iran) said the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/3848) showed that considerably greater stress had been laid on economic questions than on social questions. While that might to some extent be due to the fact that the Social Commission and the Population Commission had not met in the past year, the interdependence of economic development and social development must be borne in mind. His delegation hoped that the Economic and Social Council would continue to give due regard to a principle which it had itself laid down.

17. Turning to the section of the report relating to UNICEF, he paid a tribute to the Fund's work, which had expanded steadily until it now affected some 50 million persons in over 100 countries. The fact that some of those countries were not Members of the United Nations offered yet further proof of the Fund's purely humanitarian character. However, the expansion of UNICEF activities had given the Executive Board cause for concern, since it had not been matched by the corresponding increases in contributions, while costs were constantly rising. He therefore endorsed the appeal of the Chairman of the Executive Board for further funds from government and other sources; Iran had responded to that appeal by increasing its contribution of \$200,000 for 1958 to \$240,000 for 1959 and to 260,000 for 1960. Those last figures were subject to parliamentary approval.

18. With regard to the section of the report on international control of narcotics, he observed that some progress had been achieved in connexion with the problem of drug addiction and the codification of legislation on narcotic drugs. The draft single convention on narcotic drugs had had a second reading, and Governments had been asked to submit their observations on it within one year, after which a plenipotentiary conference would be called to adopt the convention. Meanwhile, it was gratifying to note that the number of accessions to the existing conventions and protocols was increasing year by year and that seventy-seven of the States Members of the United Nations were now parties to those instruments; the goal of universal participation was thus being achieved.

19. So far as measures to combat drug addiction were concerned, the Afghan Government's decision to prohibit opium production was welcome and praiseworthy. His country's own experience had taught it that such a step inevitably brought in its train economic and social difficulties, and it believed that the efforts needed to meet those difficulties should not be left to the country concerned, but should be shared by the international community. Accordingly, Afghanistan should be granted technical assistance by the United Nations, particularly since such assistance would benefit the international community even more than Afghanistan itself. Iran would support any proposal for such technical assistance, and was prepared to

co-operate with Afghanistan in carrying out all measures relating to the prohibition of the cultivation of the opium poppy, the cure of drug addicts and the abolition of illicit traffic.

20. Illicit traffic was still a serious problem for Iran, having been aggravated by the prohibition of the cultivation of the opium poppy in 1955, which had caused an increase in the price of opium and consequently an augmentation of illicit traffic across frontiers. More seizures had been reported, and there was reason to believe that clandestine traffic had been intensified. It must be borne in mind that the problem could not possibly be solved by the efforts of a single country, and that international co-operation was essential. He appealed to adjacent countries to joint their efforts with those of Iran.

21. Turning to chapter VII of the report, he said that the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should spur the United Nations to further efforts in promoting the cause of human rights throughout the world. His Government had made arrangements for the occasion to be observed by the dissemination of the Declaration throughout Iran and by the organization of special lectures and meetings. The Third Committee, which was specially concerned with the matter, should regard the anniversary as a stimulus to greater speed in its consideration of the draft International Covenants on Human Rights, the adoption of which could do much to ensure the observance of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

22. Mr. CHENG (China) said that during the year under review the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary organs had made steady progress in promoting social advancement in various parts of the world.

23. The United Nations Children's Fund, in particular, had continued to expand its activities. His delegation was deeply impressed not only by the soundness of the policy of UNICEF, but also by the excellent co-ordination of its work with that of other agencies. He was pleased to note that arrangements had already been made to ensure even closer co-operation between UNICEF and the Bureau of Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, and that UNESCO, whose experience should prove invaluable, had recently begun to collaborate with UNICEF in educational programmes. In recent years, UNICEF had devoted increasing attention to the training of personnel and to the provision of increased aid within the framework of community development, and had made encouraging progress with child nutrition.

24. As UNICEF was now allocating almost half of its resources to malaria eradication programmes, which it was carrying out in co-operation with several other international agencies, proper co-ordination was of the utmost importance. Moreover, UNICEF should reappraise its role in the financing of malaria campaigns with a view to ensuring that they should not absorb funds required for its other work. He expressed his appreciation to the non-governmental organizations which had collaborated with UNICEF in the past, and hoped that they and UNICEF would work out specific arrangements to make that collaboration even more effective.

25. Turning to the section of the report on inter-

national control of narcotics, he noted with satisfaction that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had completed the second draft of the single convention, and he welcomed the decision of the Economic and Social Council to convene a plenipotentiary conference for the adoption of that instrument. (Council resolution 689 J (XXVI)). The Commission had also made some important recommendations, and had received the encouraging news that the Government of Afghanistan proposed to prohibit completely the production of opium. His delegation congratulated the Afghan Government on its decision, which would not only improve economic and social conditions in its own country but would strengthen the international narcotics control system as a whole.

26. While notable progress had been achieved, the pattern of illicit traffic and the problem of drug addiction had remained virtually unchanged, and only one of the seven opium-producing countries had acceded to the 1953 Protocol. He urged the remaining six to accede as soon as possible, in order to bring the Protocol into force.

27. He noted with regret that traffic in opium and opiates was still concentrated in the Far and Middle East. While a solution of the problem necessitated the closest international co-operation, the countries concerned could take useful independent action by imposing heavy penalties on traffickers and addicts and by submitting seizure reports to the United Nations, for use by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

28. The past work of the United Nations with regard to human rights could be broadly divided into two periods, the first devoted mainly to the promotion of respect for human rights, and the second to the prevention of violations of those rights. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the United Nations, there were still large areas of the world where human rights were grossly violated. Hundreds of thousands of complaints had been received by the United Nations, yet the Commission on Human Rights, under Economic and Social Council resolution 75 (V), had been unable to do more than take note of them. Pending the entry into force of the draft International Covenants on Human Rights—which he hoped would soon be completed—the Council should take steps to enable the Commission to examine cases of obvious violations of human rights. Furthermore, Governments should report on actual cases in which violations of human rights had been prevented. Lastly, the Commission on Human Rights, in carrying out studies on specific subjects, should make recommendations which, while objective and constructive, should be formulated for a particular purpose and in specific terms, so as to be applicable to certain regions or groups of countries.

29. The United Nations was responsible under the Charter for promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. So far, it had failed to live up to the hopes and expectations of the world's peoples in that regard; it must do better in the years to come.

30. Mr. COX (Peru) said that when, as it did every year, the Third Committee considered the activities of UNICEF in connexion with the Economic and Social Council's report, it never failed to note an improvement in the work of UNICEF. In Peru, WHO and UNICEF were working together, and they

had the support of the Government, which would increase with time.

31. As was clear from the Council's report and the reports on the work of UNICEF, the economic and social aspects of the work of UNICEF were closely linked. There could be no real social progress without economic development; Peru therefore attached particular importance to United Nations efforts to assist the under-developed countries. Such efforts were a logical necessity, for the poverty of one section of mankind could not be without effect on other sections.

32. Such work as that of UNICEF knew no frontiers and was aimed at the achievement of universally acceptable ideals. Peru appreciated the past achievements of UNICEF and hoped they would be even surpassed in the future.

33. Mr. PANCHENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that United Nations aid to the world's children was one of the most humanitarian aspects of the Organization's activity. The Children's Fund was to be congratulated on the work it had done in that field, especially in the under-developed countries. His Government appreciated the achievements of UNICEF and had made a first modest contribution to its funds. It hoped that at least part

of that contribution would be used for direct assistance to sick and under-nourished children.

34. The gap between the under-developed and the advanced countries was still very great; millions of children in backward areas were suffering from diseases which had long ago been eradicated in Europe and North America, while millions of others faced hunger and poverty as their daily lot. Their need was so great that UNICEF could not possibly cope with it alone. All international agencies concerned with aid to children should be strengthened and expanded, and governments which could afford to do so should themselves make greater provision for child welfare.

35. The Byelorussian Government had enacted very liberal laws with regard to mothers and children. All medical aid was free, and large numbers of crèches, nurseries, sanatoria, summer camps and special schools for children had been set up.

36. Unfortunately the children of today were faced with a far worse danger than hunger and disease: ionizing radiations resulting from tests of nuclear weapons created hazards to which children were far more vulnerable than adults. It was the duty of the United Nations to protect the children—the world's future—from that threat as from all others.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.