



Chairman: Mr. Walter GUEVARA ARZE (Bolivia).

AGENDA ITEM 12

**Report of the Economic and Social Council (continued)
(A/8003 and Corr.1, chaps. I to VI, VII (sect. A,
paras. 234 to 239), VIII, X (sects. A to C), XI (sects. B to
D, F to J and L) and XIII (sects. A to C and E);
A/8003/Add.1)**

1. Mr. ALI (Iraq) said that he feared that changing the names of the regional economic commissions, as was proposed in draft resolution A/C.2/L.1125/Rev.1, could only create difficulties and confusion. The only reason that the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut had that title was that it was controlled and directed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in New York, whereas the regional economic commissions were independently controlled and managed. He would refer again to that point when draft resolution A/C.2/L.1121 on the role of those commissions in the Second United Nations Development Decade was discussed.

2. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) said he, too, feared that renaming the regional economic commissions would introduce confusion; he appreciated the intentions of the sponsors of the draft resolution, but his delegation would have difficulty in supporting it. When the Economic and Social Council had established the regional economic commissions, it had been well aware that their functions would extend to social as well as economic affairs, because the economic and social aspects of development were closely linked. The names of the regional economic commissions were widely familiar, and it would not help their activities to change them. It was implicitly understood that their activities were both social and economic, since economic development was inseparable from social factors. If circumstances should arise which made it appropriate to change the names of the regional economic commissions, the necessary decision could be made by the Economic and Social Council, in consultation with the Executive Secretaries of the commissions.

3. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) reiterated the firm belief of the sponsors that the names of the regional economic commissions should reflect the true nature of their activities. He did not accept that the fact that the names of the regional economic commissions had become familiar was a good reason for not changing them.

4. In response to the comments of some speakers, the sponsors had decided to insert the following after the word "Council" in the operative paragraph: "in consultation with the Secretary-General and the regional economic

commissions, and taking into account the views expressed on the subject at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly."

5. Mr. DUBEY (India) said that the views of the member Governments of the regional economic commissions should be paramount. He therefore proposed that the further revision proposed by the Philippine representative should be amended to read: "in consultation with the Secretary-General and taking into account the views of the regional economic commissions and those expressed . . .".

6. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that the sponsors accepted the Indian subamendment.

7. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that, since the Economic Commission for Europe had not adopted the socio-economic approach referred to in the fourth preambular paragraph, the words "the regional economic commissions" in that paragraph should be replaced by the words "the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Economic Commission for Africa".

8. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that, although ECE had not formally adopted the approach, it was involved in many social activities. To refer specifically to the other regional economic commissions would upset the balance of the draft resolution. He therefore suggested that the point raised by the Soviet Union representative might be met by inserting the word "concerned" after the word "commissions" in the fourth preambular paragraph.

9. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that the words "Economic and Social Commission for Europe" should be deleted from the operative paragraph. If that proposal was adopted, he could agree to the Philippine suggestion concerning the fourth preambular paragraph.

10. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that he could not accept that amendment, as it ran counter to the very purpose of the draft resolution, which was to introduce uniformity. Moreover, the operative paragraph was merely a recommendation to the Economic and Social Council; the views of the regional economic commissions and Government representatives in the Second Committee and the General Assembly would be given full consideration.

11. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the oral amendment of the Soviet Union to the fourth preambular paragraph and on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1125/Rev.1, as orally revised by the sponsors.

The oral amendment to the fourth preambular paragraph was rejected by 34 votes to 12, with 34 abstentions.

The draft resolution, as orally revised by the sponsors, was adopted by 52 votes to 1, with 33 abstentions.

12. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to draft resolution A/C.2/L.1121 on the role of the regional economic commissions in the Second United Nations Development Decade and announced that Iraq, Nigeria, Southern Yemen and Yemen had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

13. Mr. DUBEY (India), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, said that, as stated in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV)), the primary responsibility for the development of developing countries rested upon those countries themselves. Co-operation among those countries was essential to accelerating their economic and social progress. They had recognized the immense potentialities of such co-operation and one of the most important trends in international economic co-operation during the past decade had been the adoption of numerous schemes of regional, interregional and subregional co-operation among developing countries themselves. It was in consideration of those trends and their importance for the implementation of the Strategy for the Decade that the draft resolution emphasized in the first preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2 and 3 the important role of the regional economic commissions.

14. Operative paragraph 1 expressed the appreciation of the General Assembly for the contributions made by the regional economic commissions towards the formulation of the Strategy for the Decade. In that connexion he recalled the ECAFE econometric model and the studies prepared by ECA and ECLA which had helped considerably in the formulation of the Strategy.

15. Another important factor brought out in the draft resolution was the importance of decentralization and the strengthening of the role of the regional economic commissions in view of the contributions of the activities at the regional and national levels to the attainment of the over-all objectives of the Strategy. That was why paragraph 5 urged that the regional economic commissions should be provided with the means and resources necessary to fulfil their role for the benefit of their member countries.

16. The sponsors had decided to add after the word "Beirut" in operative paragraph 4 the following words: "in co-operation, where appropriate, with regional development banks and subregional groupings, and with the assistance of other organizations of the United Nations system,".

17. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Committee) pointed out that operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution would have financial implications and said that the Secretary-General intended to use, for the purpose of the proposed appraisals and evaluation, funds made available through voluntary contributions by the Netherlands Government.

18. Mr. ALI (Iraq) said that his delegation was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, which recognized the important role of the regional economic commissions and

the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut in the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade.

19. When the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut had been established in 1963, it had been intended, in part, to take the place of a regional economic commission in the Middle East and, in part, to serve the objectives of General Assembly resolution 1823 (XVII) on decentralization of the economic and social activities of the United Nations and strengthening of the regional economic commissions. The terms of reference of the Office in Beirut were, indeed, similar to those of the regional economic commissions, but its organization and structure were different. However, the funds allocated to it in the 1971 budget were only one tenth to one twentieth of the individual appropriations for the regional economic commissions. Its activities, which concerned ten countries in the region, were directly controlled by Headquarters. None of the Governments concerned had any say in the appointment of the Director of the Beirut Office or of the regional advisers, or any control over the activities of the Office. Those activities had expanded considerably, since the Office was serving many United Nations bodies, including specialized agencies, UNIDO, UNCTAD and UNDP; the Government of Iraq therefore believed that the Beirut Office should not be controlled solely and directly by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at Headquarters. The Governments of the region should be consulted on the appointment of a new Director, and the same procedure followed as in the case of the appointment of a resident representative, which had to be approved by the Government concerned. He suggested that the draft resolution should recommend that the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut should be strengthened in order to permit it to carry out its important role in implementing the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade; it should be allocated a volume of funds in keeping with its activities and responsibilities and given a measure of independence equal to that of the regional economic commissions. The number of regional advisers should be increased, and their functions extended to include studies on the marketing of the products of member States and trade co-operation. The Office should also have a governing board or an advisory board to which it would be responsible, and should be given appropriate rights and privileges.

20. Mr. AL-ATRACHE (Syria) said he endorsed the views expressed by the representative of Iraq and agreed, in particular, that the Director of the Beirut Office should be appointed in consultation with the Governments concerned.

21. He proposed that in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, the words "further intensify their efforts to promote trade expansion" should be replaced by "further intensify their efforts, in helping to promote, on a regional, subregional or interregional basis, trade expansion", and the words "integration among the countries of the region" replaced by "integration among their member countries". He proposed a similar amendment to operative paragraph 5, to the effect that the final phrase should read "for the benefit of their member countries".

22. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) said that the amendments proposed by Syria were acceptable to his delegation, and were in line with his intentions in sponsoring the draft resolution. He believed that the other sponsors would also accept them.
23. Mr. DUBEY (India) said that he, too, was prepared to accept the amendments proposed by Syria, since he believed they made the draft resolution clearer without introducing any substantive change.
24. Mr. GOBBA (United Arab Republic) said that the principles and concepts underlying the draft resolution closely corresponded to his delegation's beliefs. There should be co-operation between those countries of a given region which upheld the same philosophy and principles, and, consequently, he could support the draft resolution with the amendments proposed by Syria and Iraq, which reflected the facts of the situation. It was through the free consent of the member countries of the commissions to programmes of co-operation that the goals of the Second Development Decade would be attained; it was not the commissions, but the participating Governments which would make the intensified efforts referred to in operative paragraph 2. The proposed reference to "member countries" would indicate that the regional economic commission and the Office in Beirut, and not any geographical region, were meant. The amendment proposed by Iraq would also improve the text.
25. Mr. HILLEL (Israel) said that he wished to place on record his reservations on the implications of various paragraphs in the draft resolution, which attempted to equate the Office in Beirut with the regional economic commissions. That Office was an outpost of the United Nations Secretariat, not an intergovernmental regional body. It was not permitted to serve all the countries of the region and reflected the failure of the United Nations to face its responsibilities under the Charter to all Member States. The Beirut Office had no policy-making function, which could only be held by intergovernmental bodies. Nothing in the resolution could change the fact that any request to that Office was a call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
26. Mr. KASATKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that, in the third preambular paragraph, the phrase "under the authority of the Economic and Social Council," should be added before the words "be called upon" in order to reflect the fact that it was the Council which was responsible for the work of the regional economic commissions. He further proposed that the words "and, particularly, of the developed countries" should be deleted from operative paragraph 3, since considerable problems did arise in relations between the various regions, and it seemed out of place to stress the role of the developed countries. Operative paragraph 4 should be amended in the same way as the third preambular paragraph, the additional words appearing after "appropriate action". Since operative paragraph 5 might give the erroneous impression that the regional economic commissions were without funds and totally unable to act, his delegation urged that it should be deleted.
27. Mr. RUTTEN (Netherlands) proposed that, since the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut had no members, the wording used in the Syrian amendment to operative paragraphs 2 and 4 should be amended to read "the member countries of the region".
28. Mr. DUBEY (India) said that his delegation and, he believed, the other sponsors, could accept that proposal if it found favour with the delegation which had proposed the amendment.
29. The points made by the representative of the Soviet Union affected fundamental issues involving the stance of different countries on important problems which were currently being debated within the United Nations system. His delegation saw little point in recent attempts to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council artificially, by such means as inserting references to it in all draft resolutions. The real strength of the Council had to lie in the policies of Governments with regard to the issues before it. Although it was self-evident that the regional economic commissions did, in a sense, work under the authority of the Council, a reference to that fact did not give the whole picture, since they also operated under representative authority at the regional level. The proposed USSR amendment to operative paragraph 3 would detract from the purpose of the paragraph, since there were a number of issues on which no progress could be made—such as payments and claims arrangements, regional development banks and the expansion of trade at the regional level, all of which were dependent on external aid which was not yet forthcoming. To delete the last words of the paragraph would make it virtually meaningless. His delegation and the remaining co-sponsors all believed that the wording of paragraph 5 was a considerable understatement, since the work of the regional economic commissions was being crippled for lack of funds. In short, the co-sponsors could accept none of the amendments proposed by the representative of the Soviet Union.
30. Mr. ALI (Iraq) said he wished to remind the representative of Israel that the purpose of establishing the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut had been to advance the policy of decentralizing the economic and social activities of the United Nations, the interests of States which were not members of any regional commission being taken into consideration in that process by adopting such measures as might be necessary to ensure that they received the same benefits as they would receive through membership in the regional commissions.
31. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) proposed that the words "to take appropriate action for making suitable arrangements" in operative paragraph 4 should be replaced by "to make suitable arrangements".
32. Mr. KUTB (Southern Yemen) said his delegation fully supported the draft resolution, as amended by the representative of Syria, and was glad to have become a co-sponsor.
33. Mr. CUBILLOS (Chile) said that the regional economic commissions would have a very important role to play in the regional review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy, as the preliminary phase of the global review to be conducted by the General Assembly. His delegation would therefore support the draft resolution.

34. Mr. DUBEY (India) said that the sponsors accepted the amendment proposed by the representative of the United Kingdom.

35. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1121, as orally revised.

36. Mr. KASATKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested separate votes on the third preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4 and 5.

The third preambular paragraph was adopted by 83 votes to 10, with 3 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 4, as amended, was adopted by 84 votes to 10, with 1 abstention.

Operative paragraph 5, as amended, was adopted by 84 votes to 10, with 1 abstention.

37. Mr. GOBBA (United Arab Republic) requested that the text of operative paragraph 2 be read out before the vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

38. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Committee) read out the text as amended by the representative of Syria and pointed out that the representative of the Netherlands had also submitted an amendment which was acceptable to the sponsors on condition that it was accepted by the representative of Syria.

39. Mr. AL-ATRACHE (Syria) said he had not accepted that amendment. However, he was prepared to revise his amendment to take it into account. The text, in that case, would read "... their member countries and the countries they serve ...".

40. The CHAIRMAN said that unless the representative of the Netherlands maintained his amendment and the repre-

sentative of Syria his latest proposal, the Committee would vote on the text read out by the Secretary.

The draft resolution, as a whole, as amended, was approved by 85 votes to 2, with 11 abstentions.

41. Mr. RUTTEN (Netherlands), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the Committee had voted in extraordinary circumstances, since it had not been clear precisely what it was voting on. He hoped that that situation would not arise again. He had voted for the draft resolution and had been unable to correct his vote in the light of the peculiar situation which had arisen.

42. Mr. DUNN (United States of America) said that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution because it believed it to be redundant in the light of the separate draft resolution recommended by the Committee concerning the machinery for review and appraisal of the objectives and policies of the International Development Strategy (General Assembly resolution 2641 (XXV)). It believed that the question of regional review and appraisal was adequately covered in paragraph 81 of the International Development Strategy. The question of the roles of the various members of the United Nations system in the review and appraisal process was for the Economic and Social Council to decide. In particular, his delegation had had doubts with regard to operative paragraphs 4 and 5, which, taken together, were so vague that they could be interpreted as a mandate for large staff increases in the regional economic commissions, which might not be justified.

43. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had voted for operative paragraph 5 in spite of its serious reservations with regard to the Committee's increasingly common practice of adding to all resolutions on specific subjects a recommendation that more money and resources were required. The practice seemed to his delegation to be entirely self-defeating.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.