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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Eighth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 2 April 1954, at 3.35 p.m.

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<u>Chairman:</u>	Miss BERNARDINO	Dominican Republic
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mrs. FIROUZ	Iran
<u>Members:</u>	DAW NGWE KHIN	Burma
	Mrs. NOVIKOVA	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
	Miss GONZALEZ	Chile
	Miss YANG	China
	Miss MAÑAS	Cuba
	Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX	France
	Mrs. GUERY	Haiti
	Mrs. TABET	Lebanon
	Begum ANWAR AHMED	Pakistan
	Mrs. DEMBINSKA	Poland
	Mrs. ROSSEL	Sweden
	Mrs. FOMINA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mrs. WARDE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mrs. HAHN	United States of America
	Mrs. SANCHEZ de URDANEJA	Venezuela
	Mrs. MITROVIC)	Yugoslavia
	Mr. BIZOVIC)	
<u>Also present:</u>	Mrs. de CALVO	Inter-American Commission on Women
<u>Representatives of specialized agencies:</u>		
	Mrs. FIGUEROA	International Labour Organisation
	Mrs. CRUZ SANTOS	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<u>Representatives of non-governmental organizations:</u>		
<u>Category B and Register:</u>		
	Mrs. ROBERTS	Associated Country Women of the World
	Mrs. VERGARA	Catholic International Union for Social Service
	Mrs. MAHON)	
	Miss WOODSMALL)	International Alliance of Women

Representatives of non-governmental organizations:Category B and Register: (continued)

Miss RANDALL	International Federation of Business and Professional Women
Mrs. SCHWARTZENBACH	International Federation of Friends of Young Women
Miss McGILLICUDDY) Miss ROBB)	International Federation of University Women
Mrs. RUIZ OVELAR) Miss SMITH)	International Federation of Women Lawyers
Mrs. WOLLE-EGENOLF	International League for the Rights of Man
Miss McGILLICUDDY) Mrs. ROBERTS)	Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations
Mrs. RUSSELL	Women's International Democratic Federation
Miss SCHAEFER) Miss WZBER) Miss ZIZZAMIA)	World Union of Catholic Women's Organization
Dr. ARNOLD	World's Young Women's Christian Association
Miss PEZZULLO	Young Christian Workers
<u>Secretariat:</u> Mrs. TENNISON-WOODS	Chief of the Status of Women Section
Mrs. GRINGERG-VINAVER	Secretary of the Commission

STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW (E/CN.6/L.133/Rev.1, L.134/Rev.1, L.135 and L.138)
(continued)

Mrs. HAHN (United States of America) proposed certain amendments to the joint draft resolution on the status of women in private law (E/CN.6/L.134/Rev.1). All States had laws providing for the recording of marriages. However, in order to safeguard the rights of children certain States in her country still recognized common law marriages. As such common law marriages were not recorded, she would prefer to delete the word "all" in the phrase: "to establish a civil register in which all marriages and divorces will be recorded". She also proposed that the second paragraph of the operative part should be amended to read: "... to inform public opinion in all areas including certain Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories concerning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and existing decrees and legislation which affect the status of women". The change would place proper emphasis on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and make the operative part consistent with the preamble.

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France) said that civil registers had already been introduced in most of the territories under French control, though they were, of course, as yet incomplete. The problem was to ensure that all marriages, including customary marriages, were recorded. She therefore preferred the original wording of the draft resolution and would abstain on the first United States amendment.

She could not vote for the text as a whole, however, unless it referred consistently throughout to "ancient laws and customs".

Mrs. WARDE (United Kingdom) explained before the vote that she would abstain on the resolution. She said she agreed with the aims sought by the proposal. In fact, Administering Authorities were taking measures towards improving the position of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. However, many of the problems involved were being dealt with by the Economic and Social Council under the item on slavery, and she did not think it appropriate for the Commission to send another resolution to the Council on the subject.

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France) doubted whether the Commission could address its request to take measures to abolish the practices described to the General Assembly and the Trusteeship Council, as such action was clearly within the province of the Administering Powers. Besides, the operative paragraph requesting that measures be taken referred exclusively to Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. It should be made consistent with the preamble, which spoke of "areas of the world, including certain Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories".

After a brief exchange of views, Mr. BIZOVIC (Yugoslavia) proposed that the beginning of the first operative paragraph should be redrafted as follows: "... in collaboration with States, including States administering Trust or Non-Self-Governing Territories where such ancient customs, laws and practices exist, to take all appropriate measures...".

It was so agreed.

Mrs. FOMINA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) objected that the text of the second operative paragraph, as amended by the United States, was also inconsistent with the preamble. Moreover, it was not applicable to the USSR, where the practices which the Commission wished to eliminate were unlawful.

Mrs. WARDE (United Kingdom), in order to meet that objection, proposed that the text should read: "... to inform public opinion in all areas mentioned in the first paragraph above concerning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and...".

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN called for a vote on the deletion of the word "all" before "marriages and divorces" in the first operative paragraph, as suggested by the United States.

The word "all" was retained by 6 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions.

The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 14 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document E/CN.6/L.133/Rev.1.

The draft resolution was adopted by 15 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

The CHAIRMAN then asked the Commission to vote on the draft resolution submitted jointly by France and Haiti (E/CN.6/L.135).

The draft resolution was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 2 abstentions, the United States representative not taking part in the vote.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to consider the draft resolution submitted jointly by Sweden and Yugoslavia (E/CN.6/L.138).

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) asked for more time to study the proposal as a number of legal questions were involved. She proposed that debate and voting on the draft should be deferred until a subsequent meeting.

It was so decided.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN: (a) PROGRESS REPORT ON ACCESS OF WOMEN TO EDUCATION INCLUDING INFORMATION CONCERNING TRUST AND NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (E/CN.6/250)

Mrs. CRUZ SANTOS (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) introduced her agency's annual report to the Commission (E/CN.6/250) which had been prepared in the light of the views expressed by the Commission at its previous session.

The annual reports were intended to provide a general picture of the education of women throughout the world, taking into account statistical data and reports submitted by Member States to UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education. Because of lack of space, it had been decided to take up three aspects of the problem separately, each to be dealt with in turn at three-year intervals. The first aspect, covered in the present report, was illiteracy and primary education; the second - to be discussed at the following session - vocational and secondary education; and the third - to be reported on the year after - higher education.

In addition to information on illiteracy and primary education, the report contained a brief summary of measures taken by governments for education at the other levels, and a review of relevant UNESCO activities during the past year, including its fellowship programme. While all UNESCO activities related to men and women alike, account was taken of the special educational problem of women. No information was given on the scholarships issued to women within the various countries in view of the difficulty of obtaining such data.

Miss ROBB (International Federation of University Women) praised UNESCO's decision to concentrate on a given aspect of the problem each year.

Believing that a healthy and strong system of higher education required an equally healthy and strong educational system at lower levels, her organization took a special interest in the problems of teacher shortages and fundamental or adult education for women. In under-developed areas, the teacher shortage was both cause and result of general lack of education, while in advanced countries, it was primarily due to the relatively low remuneration and lack of prestige of the teaching profession. Women were in some cases discriminated against as regards salaries, retirement benefits and marriage bars. At the Conference on Public Education, held at Geneva in 1952, it had been reported that while there was a high proportion of women teachers at the lower levels where salaries were generally low, the proportion dropped sharply at the higher levels.

The teacher-training courses seemed to be generally the same for men and women, with the exception of some specialized courses. The training opportunities offered to women in some countries and the women's response to them were very heartening and, she hoped, would soon be equalled in other countries.

As regards fundamental and adult education, while illiteracy seemed to be generally on the decline, the decline appeared in most cases to be slower for women who in some countries constituted over 50 per cent of the illiterate population. Fundamental education for women was particularly important in the under-developed areas. The UNESCO fundamental education projects in Mexico and Egypt, and the United Nations technical assistance programmes, such as that carried out in the Andean highlands region, could be of great help in that connexion. The projects might benefit considerably from the experience of earlier successful adult education movements in various parts of the world.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.