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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Eighth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDRED AND SEVENTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 6 April 1954, at 12.05 p.m.

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PRESENT:

<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
	Mr. ATTLEE	
	Mrs. HAHN	United States of America
	Mrs. SANCHEZ de URDANETA	Venezuela
	Mrs. MITROVIC	Yugoslavia

Also present:

Mrs. de CALVO	Inter-American Commission of Women
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Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mrs. FIGUEROA	International Labour Organisation
Mrs. CRUZ-SANTOS	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

PRESENT (cont'd.)Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

Category A: Miss KAHN World Federation of Trade Unions
Miss FOX World Federation of United Nations Associations

Category B and Register:

Mrs. ROBERTS Associated Country Women of the World
Mrs. MAHON International Alliance of Women
Mrs. REGISTER International Council of Women
Mrs. HYMER International Federation of Business and Professional Women
Miss LAGEMANN International Federation of Friends of Young Women
Miss ROBB International Federation of University Women
Mrs. WOLLE-EGENOLF International League for the Rights of Man
Miss DINGMAN International Union for Child Welfare
Mrs. FOWLER Pan-Pacific Women's Association
Miss ARNOLD World's Young Women's Christian Association

Secretariat:

Mrs. TENISON-WOODS Division of Human Rights
Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER Secretary of the Commission

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (continued)

(c) NOTE ON ACCESS OF WOMEN TO APPRENTICESHIP (E/CN.6/240)

Mrs. FIGUEROA (International Labour Organisation) reported on the progress of the study which the Economic and Social Council, on the initiative of the Commission on the Status of Women, had requested the ILO to undertake regarding the exclusion of women from apprenticeship. Her remarks were intended to supplement the information contained in the ILO note on the subject (E/CN.6/240).

As a result of his consultation with the various appropriate groups within the ILO Governing Body, the Director-General had concluded that there was a need for a comprehensive study of the general problem of the access of women and girls to apprenticeship in certain trades. He had submitted those conclusions to the 124th meeting of the Governing Body in February-March 1954 and the latter had approved a general plan for the study and agreed upon a definition of apprenticeship for purposes of the study. On the basis of further consultation with the Correspondence Committee on Women's Work and the International Organizations Committee, the meeting had also discussed the conditions to be complied with before an occupation could be qualified as an apprenticeship. The plan of study, the definition and the characteristics of apprenticeship had been approved by the Governing Body.

The Governing Body had then agreed that the plan, together with the description of the nature of apprenticeship, should be transmitted to all governments, members of the ILO, and to national employers' and employees' organizations, with a request for all available information on the subject. The ILO hoped to be in a position to communicate the results of that action to the Commission on the Status of Women, if possible at its ninth session, but in any case, in the near future.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES IN RELATION TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN: PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (E/CN.6/189/Add.2)

The CHAIRMAN reviewed the background of the question (E/CN.6/189/Add.2), emphasizing the terms of the two resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council and approved by the General Assembly (resolution 729 (VIII)) authorizing

the Secretary-General "to render, at the request of Member States, services which do not fall within the scope of existing technical assistance programmes, in order to assist these States in promoting and safeguarding the rights of women".

It was regrettable that, to date, no Member State had requested such services. All members of the Commission should urge their Governments to make appropriate requests in the course of the year 1954.

Begum Anwar AHMED (Pakistan) recalled with gratification that it was the Pakistan delegation which had submitted the resolution in question. Its implementation would constitute an outstanding achievement for the Commission, but that success was contingent upon the reaction of Member Governments. Accordingly, women everywhere and women's organizations must be made aware of the wider scope for service provided by the resolution. In that respect, they might follow the example of the All-Pakistan Women's Association which had adopted a resolution, at its recent meeting, requesting the Pakistan Government to secure an expert through the Technical Assistance Programme to train a team of women for leadership in educating women regarding their rights and responsibilities. It was to be hoped that the Secretary-General would be able to report to the ninth session of the Commission that Member States had decided to utilize the wider services offered under the Programme.

Mrs. MAHON (International Alliance of Women) said that the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the Commission's initiative had among other things provided for technical assistance to improve the status of women outside the existing programmes. Such assistance might include expert advice on legislation affecting women and on methods of putting such legislation into effect and help in organizing civic and leadership training programmes. Unfortunately no government requests for such assistance had been received so far, and probably would not be received unless the women, and particularly women's organizations, brought pressure to bear on their governments. It was important that governments should submit such requests as otherwise the Economic and Social Council resolution providing for assistance in that field would remain meaningless. For its part, the International Alliance of Women would do everything it could, through its national branches, to secure such requests from governments.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (E/CN.6/246, E/CN.6/L.142)

At the Chairman's invitation, Mrs. Warde (United Kingdom), first Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) said that her delegation took a deep interest in the item under discussion. The Commission would always remember with profound appreciation the assurances, given by the Secretary-General at the opening day of its eighth session, that he would appoint staff members on the basis of their qualifications without regard to sex. The Commission could feel confident, therefore, that under the new administration, an increasing number of women would be appointed to senior posts in the Secretariat, in accordance with the principles of Article 8 of the Charter. Accordingly, the Dominican delegation commended its draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.142) to the Commission.

Mr. ATTLEE (United Kingdom) expressed his delegation's deep appreciation of the statement made by the Secretary-General at the opening of the eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. It had been made clear that there were many cogent reasons for the figures appearing in the Secretary-General's memorandum on the participation of women in the work of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies and it was natural that in any great organization there would be human factors to be taken into account, but the Secretary-General's statement gave his delegation confidence that those factors would not be allowed to operate in a discriminatory manner. The United Kingdom delegation therefore warmly supported the draft resolution submitted by the Dominican Republic.

Mrs. HAHN (United States of America) agreed with the United Kingdom representative in supporting the draft resolution submitted by the Dominican Republic. Her delegation had entire confidence that the Secretary-General would give effect to his assurance that there would be no discrimination against women in the Secretariat. The number of women in higher posts could be expected to increase as qualified candidates became available. She welcomed the new section

in the Secretary-General's memorandum showing the number and proportion of women in fellowship and internship programmes of the United Nations. It was encouraging to note that selection was based on qualifications, without distinction as to sex.

There had been a notable increase in the number of women acting as government representatives and in other capacities at the previous session of the General Assembly. She felt that some informal account of women in positions of leadership in the United Nations would be useful perhaps in the form of an annual article in the United Nations Bulletin, which would thus be available to the Commission on the Status of Women and the non-governmental organizations.

Mrs. de URDANETA (Venezuela), recalling that her delegation had in the previous year submitted a resolution on the subject under discussion, expressed her delegation's support for draft resolution E/CN.6/L.142, on which the Dominican Republic was to be congratulated.

Miss MAÑAS (Cuba) joined with the previous speaker in congratulating the representative of the Dominican Republic on the draft resolution before the Commission. The Secretary-General's statement had made it clear that he intended to implement the principles for which the Commission had always stood. In future, as the draft resolution so aptly expressed it, the Commission could look forward with confidence to a constantly increasing number of women in policy-making or senior positions in the Secretariat. She was also fully in support of the final paragraph of the draft resolution, since the non-governmental agencies could play a useful part at the national level in encouraging the participation of women in international civil service.

Mrs. TABET (Lebanon) expressed her delegation's approval of the draft resolution, in particular of the final paragraph with its suggestion on the valuable work which might be done by the non-governmental organizations.

Mrs. FIROUZ (Iran) and DAW NGWE KHIN (Burma) announced their support for the draft resolution submitted by the Dominican Republic.

Mrs. ROSSEL (Sweden) felt that the Commission could indeed look forward with confidence to increased participation of women in the work of the United Nations. She wished to know whether the figures given in the Secretary-General's memorandum on the numbers of women employed in the United Nations Secretariat referred also to the secretariat of UNICEF.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER (Secretary of the Commission) explained that the Commission's original resolution requesting the Secretary-General to make an annual report on the subject under discussion had referred only to meetings of UNICEF, without specifically including the secretariat of that body.

Miss ROBB (International Federation of University Women) commenting briefly on document E/CN.6/246, said that information on the proportion of women in policy-making or senior positions in the Secretariats of the United Nations, WHO and UNESCO was also supplied in document E/CN.6/NGO.13, submitted to the Commission's seventh session. Although the present report showed little change, there were some encouraging signs, such as the Secretary-General's statement at the opening of the Commission's current session, the slight increase in the number of women in the six top grades of the Secretariat at headquarters and in policy-making or senior positions in the UNESCO secretariat, and the appearance of women members on the Statistical Commission, the Narcotics Commission and the Economic Commissions for Europe and for Asia and the Far East.

Her organization had always pointed out that the falling of barriers to women's employment nearly everywhere must be followed by a certain lapse of time before their entry into public life, that women would probably enter the professions or their national public service before proceeding to international service, that geographical or regional considerations existed in respect of certain Secretariat positions and that a fixed quota of women for Secretariat positions or on national delegations was neither reasonable, feasible nor desirable.

The annual reports on the subject under discussion had been partly the result of the initiative of non-governmental organizations, and her organization felt that those organizations had a special responsibility to encourage their members to prepare themselves for public life, both national and international, and that their national organizations should make joint efforts to suggest properly qualified women as members of national delegations to the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.