



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Ninth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 29 March 1955, at 3.10 p.m.

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Educational opportunities for women: (a) Progress report on access of women to education (E/CN.6/266; E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1 and L.180); (b) Report on access of women to apprenticeship (E/CN.6/264); (c) Report on the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/CN.6/260 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/255)

Economic opportunities for women: (a) Report on employment of older women workers (E/CN.6/251, E/CN.6/262); (b) Report on part-time employment of women including cottage industries, handicrafts and seasonal agricultural work (E/CN.6/236, 238, 245, 265, 267; E/CN.6/L.172, L.179, L.182); (c) Reports on the status of women in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/CN.6/260 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/255)

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Miss BERNARDINO	Dominican Republic
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mrs. RÖSSEL	Sweden
<u>Members:</u>	Miss CHAMORRO-ALAMAN	Argentina
	Mrs. DALY	Australia
	Mrs. NOVIKOVA	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
	Miss TSENG	China
	Miss MAÑAS	Cuba
	Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX	France
	Mrs. GUERY	Haiti
	Miss ROESAD	Indonesia
	Begum ANWAR AHMED	Pakistan
	Mrs. DEMBINSKA	Poland
	Mrs. FOMINA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mrs. SAYERS	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mrs. HAHN	United States of America
	Mrs. SANCHEZ de URDANETA	Venezuela
	Mrs. MITROVIC	Yugoslavia
<u>Also present:</u>	Mrs. FUJITA	Japan
	Mrs. de TEJEIRA	Panama

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mrs. FIGUEROA	International Labour Organisation
Miss SALAS	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Representative of an inter-governmental organization:

Mrs. de CALVO	Inter-American Commission of Women
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Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

<u>Category A:</u>	Miss SENDER	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
	Mr. THORMANN	International Federation of Christian Trade Unions
	Mr. DESSAU	World Federation of Trade Unions
	Mrs. EREN	World Federation of United Nations Associations

Category B and Register:

Mrs. GIROUX	Catholic International Union for Social Service
Miss STRAUSS	International Alliance of Women
Mr. LONGARZO	International Conference of Catholic Charities
Mrs. CARTER) Mrs. FREEMAN)	International Council of Women
Mrs. MEINANDER) Miss POLLITZ)	International Federation of Business and Professional Women
Miss ROBB	International Federation of University Women
Miss LALONDE) Miss DONOVAN)	International Federation of Women Lawyers
Mrs. WOLLE-EGENOLF	International League for the Rights of Man
Mrs. ROBERTS	Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations; Associated Countrywomen of the World

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

Category B and Registrar (cont'd):

Mrs. ANDRAS	<u>Nouvelles équipes</u> <u>internationales</u>
Mrs. MADDEN	<u>Pax Romana</u>
Mrs. WALSER	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Mrs. ANDERSON	World's Young Women's Christian Association
Miss ZIZZAMIA	World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations
Miss PEZZULLO	Young Christian Workers

Secretariat:

Mr. McCAW	Senior Director, Technical Assistance Board
Mrs. TENISON-WOODS	Chief of the Status of Women Section
Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER	Secretary of the Commission

The CHAIRMAN announced that the Economic and Social Council at its morning meeting had elected the representative of Australia as President, the representative of Venezuela as first Vice-President and the representative of Yugoslavia as second Vice-President. She expressed the hope that under their skilful guidance the Council would continue to afford the Commission the same support as in the past.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN: (a) PROGRESS REPORT ON ACCESS OF WOMEN TO EDUCATION (E/CN.6/266; E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1 and L.180); (b) REPORT ON ACCESS OF WOMEN TO APPRENTICESHIP (E/CN.6/264); (c) REPORT ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN TRUST AND NON-SELF GOVERNING TERRITORIES (E/CN.6/260 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/255)

Mrs. RÖSSEL (Sweden) asked the sponsors of the draft resolution in document E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1 whether they would be prepared to delete operative paragraph 1 and to amend paragraph 2 to read:

"Requests Governments when making their requests for technical assistance funds to under-developed areas to give due attention to increased opportunities of education for women."

She thought that the request should be addressed to Governments as it was the Governments which indicated the fields in which they needed assistance.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the word "requests" should be replaced by "invites", the word usually used in addressing Governments.

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France) pointed out that a request for technical assistance was not necessarily a request for "funds". The problem did not arise in the French text (E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1) in which the words "au titre de l'assistance technique" were used.

The CHAIRMAN said that the problem did not arise in the Spanish text either. She asked the Pakistan representative if she would agree to delete the word "funds" from the English text.

Begum ANWAR AHMED (Pakistan) agreed to that amendment.

Miss ROESAD (Indonesia) was afraid that the proposed new text would not achieve the purpose intended by the Pakistan representative. The original text, which had requested UNESCO, in making allocations on the basis of Government requests for technical assistance funds, to give due attention to providing increased opportunities of education for women, seemed to her much better.

Begum ANWAR AHMED (Pakistan) said that it had in fact been her intention to make such a request to UNESCO on the understanding, as the representative of that agency had pointed out, that Governments drew up their lists of projects and indicated the order of priority.

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France) inquired whether the Economic and Social Council was competent to deal directly with the specialized agencies or whether it was obliged to do so through the intermediary of Governments; if that were the case, the Swedish amendment would be necessary.

The CHAIRMAN read out Articles 62 and 63 of the United Nations Charter from which it was clear that the Council was competent to deal directly with the specialized agencies. She requested the representative of UNESCO to give some details on the subject of technical assistance.

Miss SALAS (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that UNESCO's position with regard to technical assistance was subject to the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolutions 222 (IX) and 542 (XVIII), which provided that technical assistance funds should be distributed on the basis of the requests submitted by Governments and the priorities established by them. She had already informed the Commission (E/CN.6/SR.196) that the Director-General of UNESCO, in a circular letter dated 18 January 1955 (T/1165), had invited Member States to submit requests for and, particularly in the field of education, to UNESCO. That circular, which indicated the fields in which assistance could be given and the procedure for requests, had been in the hands of Governments for more than two months.

The CHAIRMAN asked the UNESCO representative whether paragraph 2 of the operative part appeared to her to be in keeping with the UNESCO procedure.

Miss SALAS (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) replied that it did.

Begum ANWAR AHMED (Pakistan) found it difficult to believe that UNESCO did not have some say in the matter independent of requests by Governments. She asked what, for instance, had led UNESCO to open training centres for rural school teachers in Mexico.

Miss SALAS (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) replied that UNESCO did not act on its own initiative except in the case of regional projects. The project to which the Pakistan representative had referred was a regional project and Mexico had been chosen because it had offered advantages from the point of view of financing and premises. The project was of interest to all the Latin American countries.

Mrs. MITROVIC (Yugoslavia) thought that the draft resolution in document E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1, even without the Swedish amendment, was completely consistent with UNESCO's present procedure.

Mrs. HAHN (United States of America) could not accept the sub-paragraph of the preamble beginning with the word "Noting", as it implied an unfounded criticism of UNESCO. She suggested that it should be deleted.

Mrs. GUERY (Haiti) requested that under those circumstances the vote should be taken paragraph by paragraph.

Mrs. DEMBINSKA (Poland) also wished to comment on the preamble of the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1) and on the order of the various paragraphs.

The paragraph beginning "Having noted with satisfaction" should be followed by the first paragraph of her amendment (E/CN.6/L.180) which amplified the corresponding paragraph of document E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1, in order to show that the main work in that field must be done by the Governments. The paragraph beginning "Noting with concern", which was concerned primarily with the work of Governments, should follow. The second paragraph of her amendment (E/CN.6/L.180) which referred both to Governments and to UNESCO would provide an excellent transition to the paragraph beginning "Considering that the results" and would make its meaning clearer. At present it was not certain whether the paragraph referred to the work of Governments or of UNESCO.

The CHAIRMAN asked whether the representatives of Pakistan and Haiti accepted the Polish amendments.

Mrs. GUERY (Haiti) and Begum ANWAR AHMED (Pakistan) replied that they did.

The CHAIRMAN announced that Mr. McCaw, Senior Director of the Technical Assistance Board, had agreed to explain a number of points.

Mr. McCaw (Senior Director, Technical Assistance Board) felt that it might be useful to explain how the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance operated, as paragraph 2 of the operative part of the draft resolution appeared to be based on a misconception.

The technical assistance programmes now being prepared were for 1956. The allocation of funds under the Expanded Programme was approved by the Technical Assistance Committee, composed of representatives of the eighteen States Members of the Economic and Social Council. TAC, not UNESCO or the Technical Assistance Board (TAB), had the final say in approving the technical assistance programme.

(Mr. McCaw, Senior Director, TAB)

Its decision was based on the programme laid before it by TAB and drawn up by TAB on the basis of the requests submitted by Governments.

Consequently, unless a Government assigned high priority to a project for women's education in its request for technical assistance, there was little chance that such a project would be included in the programme recommended by TAB or the final programme approved by TAC.

In accordance with the resolutions recently adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, it was for the Governments to indicate the order of priority of the technical assistance projects they wished to be carried out in their countries. While it was true that the technical assistance services and the specialized agencies helped Governments to formulate requests that were technically sound, it was for the Governments to decide which projects were most important for them; as the funds available for the implementation of the Expanded Programme were not sufficient to carry out all projects.

He therefore thought that the Commission should first of all draw the attention of the Governments of under-developed countries to the need to increase the educational opportunities for women and urge them to attach greater importance to the education of women in their requests for technical assistance. The specialized agencies could do nothing if Governments did not assign high priority to projects dealing with the problem.

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) wished to know how the Commission should proceed. Should it act through the Economic and Social Council or approach the Technical Assistance Committee directly?

Mrs. DEMBINSKA (Poland) said that as she understood it, there were two sources available to Governments - UNESCO, which had some funds from the contributions of Member Governments, and technical assistance.

(Mrs. Dembinska, Poland)

According to the replies given by the UNESCO representative and the representative of the Technical Assistance Board, it appeared that programmes for the current year were already drawn up. The same question, however, would arise the following year. She thought that it would be useful to mention both sources in the resolution, so that Governments wishing to obtain technical assistance would know where to apply.

Mrs. RÖSSEL (Sweden) said that the statement by the representative of the Technical Assistance Board confirmed her view that paragraph 2 of the operative part should be amended, as Governments should apply to TAC, not to UNESCO. She asked the representative of the Technical Assistance Board whether he thought it would be more satisfactory if paragraph 2 of the operative part were amended to read: "Invites Governments, when making their requests for technical assistance, to be provided by the Technical Committee...".

Mrs. DALY (Australia) said that as she understood it, UNESCO would be unable to provide technical assistance for women's education in 1955 and 1956 since the allocation of funds for that period had already been made.

Mr. McCaw (Senior Director, Technical Assistance Board) replied that while Governments could still submit requests for 1955, it was unlikely that the projects could actually be put into effect during the current year as the 1955 programme had been approved in December. Moreover, a number of Governments had not yet announced their contributions for 1955 and only two-thirds of the programme could be implemented with the funds at present available. Consequently, unless it had high priority, any new project for 1955 would have to compete with projects in the remaining third of the approved programme which had not yet been put into effect.

On the other hand, Governments would have greater latitude for 1956, as they had until July to submit their requests to the Technical Assistance Board, indicating the priority of the various projects they wished to be carried out.

(Mr. McCaw, Senior Director, TAB)

As regards the Swedish amendment, he thought it more satisfactory than the existing text of paragraph 2. It would, however, be better to say, "to be provided under the Expanded Technical Assistance Programme" or "to be provided under the regular UNESCO programme" instead of "to be provided by the Technical Assistance Committee". Although TAC approved the technical assistance programme, it did not provide the technical assistance.

It was difficult for him to reply to the Byelorussian representative's question as he was not competent to tell the Commission how it should proceed. He felt, however, that the Swedish amendment dealt satisfactorily with the point raised.

Mrs. RÖSSEL (Sweden) asked whether the following wording might be adopted: "provided under the Expanded Technical Assistance Programme or under the regular UNESCO programme".

Mr. McCAW (Senior Director, Technical Assistance Board) replied that the two forms of technical assistance were not mutually exclusive and that the wording would cover all possible types of assistance.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER (Secretary of the Commission) read out the Swedish amendment to paragraph 2 of the draft resolution in E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1:

"Invites Governments, when making their requests for technical assistance to under-developed areas, under the expanded technical assistance programme or under the regular programme of UNESCO, to give due attention to increased opportunities of education for women."

Mrs. RÖSSEL (Sweden) felt that the new paragraph should replace operative paragraphs 1 and 2.

Begum ANWAR AHMED (Pakistan) said that the replacement of operative paragraph 2 by the Swedish text was acceptable. She wished, however, to retain paragraph 1.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to vote on draft resolution E/CN.6/L.177/Rev.1, as amended by Poland and Sweden.

Mrs. HAHN (United States of America) requested that the three operative paragraphs and the fifth paragraph of the preamble beginning with the word "Considering" should be put to the vote separately.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the fifth paragraph of the preamble.
The paragraph was adopted by 13 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the preamble as a whole, as amended.
The preamble was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote operative paragraph 1.
The paragraph was adopted by 12 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote operative paragraph 2 as amended.
The paragraph was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote operative paragraph 3.
The paragraph was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote draft resolution, as a whole, as amended.
The draft resolution was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN: (a) REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WOMEN WORKERS (E/CN.6/251, E/CN.6/262); (b) REPORT ON PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN INCLUDING COTTAGE INDUSTRIES, HANDICRAFTS AND SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORK (E/CN.6/236, 238, 245, 265, 267; E/CN.6/L.172, L.179 and L.182); (c) REPORTS ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN TRUST AND NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (E/CN.6/260 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.6/255)

Mrs. RÖSSEL (Sweden) wished to comment on the question of employment of older women workers.

She felt that the term "older women workers" was rather unfortunate. It was sometimes used of women over 40, but was also used of women of about 40 who were considered old because of conditions in the labour market. From that point of view, a woman of 40 with a good education and vocational training, who had had

(Mrs. Rössel, Sweden)

a job before devoting herself to her family, was not as old as a woman who did not have the same background. The problem was extremely important, more particularly perhaps in the economically advanced countries where older women with vocational training often found it difficult to find work. Society must recognize the fact that it could only function smoothly if women, both married and single, were employed in all branches of economic life. Parents must ensure that their daughters received the necessary vocational training and employers must offer them employment opportunities.

Employment services should be organized in terms of labour supply and demand and not cater to men and women separately. Only then would employers be able to recruit the best qualified workers and both men and women be informed of suitable vacancies.

Similarly, vocational training should not be conceived in terms of two separate categories of occupations, one reserved for women and the other for men; applicants for employment should obtain information regarding the occupation which attracted them most.

There should be more flexibility in employment itself. Women should be enabled to resume their employment after more or less prolonged absence, and the State should set an example in the matter. Sweden had taken a step in that direction by allowing women civil servants to resume their service after two years of absence. Moreover, women who returned to work after looking after their families for several years should be helped to adjust themselves to employment, whether they wished to resume their previous occupation or selected another occupation better suited to their changed situation. Steps should be taken to facilitate the entry of women to technical schools and training courses, care being taken not to lay down unduly rigid age limits for the admission of candidates. Material assistance should be provided for women who were unable to support themselves or their families while attending courses. The Swedish Parliament had recently appropriated funds for a pilot project for the vocational re-training of persons, particularly older women, who found it difficult to find employment.

(Mrs. Rössel, Sweden)

With respect to retirement ages, Sweden made no distinction between men and women, but in lower posts where women outnumbered men, the age of retirement was lower than in other types of employment. Opinion, even among women, was extremely divided on the question, but the majority felt that the age of retirement should be determined not on the basis of sex but on the basis of the type of work. She agreed with the French representative that it would be unfortunate if the ILO recommended a lower age of retirement for women than for men. She also thought that workers should also be able to retain their pension rights when they changed their employer and that pension schemes should be made more flexible so that older women who resumed work could benefit from them.

Part-time employment of women was a partial solution in the case of married women who could not take full-time jobs. In Sweden both employers and workers were hesitant to extend that type of employment which had drawbacks for both parties; however that was a question for study.

She did not propose any solution but emphasized the necessity of making the public and employers realize the importance of the vocational readjustment of women.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.