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Chairman: Mr. Blasco LANZA D'AJETA (Italy).

AGENDA ITEMS 22 AND 33

Assistance to Africa (*continued*):

- (b) Economic development of Africa (A/4899, A/C.2/L.622/Rev.1 and Add.1 and 2);
- (c) African educational development (A/4820 and Corr.2, chapter VIII, paragraph 648; A/4903 and Add.1, A/4928, A/C.2/L.619 and Add.1)

Assistance to newly independent States: report of the Economic and Social Council (A/4820 and Corr.2, chapter III, section V) (*continued*)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited Mr. Adiseshiah, Assistant Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to make a statement.
2. Mr. ADISESHIAH (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the draft resolution on African educational development (A/C.2/L.619 and Add.1) which was before the Committee was based on the recommendations and the plan for the development of primary, secondary, higher and adult education in Africa elaborated by the Conference of African States jointly called by UNESCO and the Economic Commission for Africa.^{1/}
3. In its second and third preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution rightly reiterated the main theme of that Conference, namely, that education was the key to and the pre-condition for economic and social development. Both the General Conference of UNESCO and the African States assembled at Addis Ababa had recognized that investment in education could be a gainful economic activity, because it provided the human resources and skills that society required for a continuous increase in the gross national product. Its value was, however, conditioned by three important factors: first, such

investment must be concentrated on priorities aimed at removing educational bottle-necks to development programmes; secondly, it must therefore be carefully planned over a long period of time; thirdly, such plans must be part of over-all national development programmes.

4. The African countries had drawn attention to the seriousness of the educational problem in Africa from the quantitative point of view: only 16 per cent of African children of primary and secondary school age were in schools, compared to the world percentage of 48. Within that educational system, there was a catastrophic imbalance: the world percentage for primary education was 76, whereas the African percentage was 94; the world percentage for secondary education was 21, whereas the African percentage was 94; the world percentage for secondary education was 21, whereas the African percentage was a mere 0.09. As regards the quality of education, the representatives at Addis Ababa had declared that the character and content of present-day teaching in African institutions corresponded neither to the postulates of political independence nor to the dominant factors of an essentially technological age. The Conference had also stressed the unviable division of Africa, which called for regional and sub-regional agreements to make education, with its heavy investment, a worthwhile enterprise. All the African countries felt that they had to make up several centuries of history in the course of the next twenty years.

5. The Conference had established the following system of priorities: first, development of secondary and higher education; secondly, reform of curricula and teaching techniques; and thirdly, training of teachers for all levels of education. The educational targets had been fixed for a twenty-year period, as follows: by 1980, primary education was to reach 100 per cent, secondary education 23 per cent, and higher education 2 per cent. In addition, 100 million adults would be taught to read and write within the next five years. Those targets took into consideration the expected increase in population.

6. The Conference had estimated, on the basis of data provided by African experts, the recent costing studies undertaken by the Government of Nigeria and UNESCO's comparative experience in Asian and Latin American regional projects, that the cost of reaching those targets would range from \$590 million in 1961 to \$2,600 million in 1980.

7. In 1961, the national income of the countries of Central Africa had been computed at \$15,000 million; the per caput income was variable, ranging from \$30 in one country to \$194 in another. It had been estimated that the growth rate of national income, which was currently 4 per cent, would

^{1/} Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa, Addis Ababa, 15-25 May 1961, Outline of a Plan for African Educational Development (transmitted to members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/4903)).

increase to 6 per cent between 1965 and 1980, and that the national income would thus reach the figure of \$36,700 million in 1980. The African countries currently spent 3 per cent of their national income on public and private education. The ministers who had attended the Conference had decided that that figure should be increased to 4 per cent from 1961 to 1965 and to 6 per cent from 1970 to 1980. It was on that basis that the African countries had pledged themselves to allocate \$450 million to education in 1961, rising to \$700 million in 1965, \$870 million in 1970 and \$2,200 million in 1980. Large annual deficits would result from the implementation of that plan until 1980, but it was estimated that African education would stand on its own after that date, provided that all States Members of the United Nations had helped the African countries to meet their annual deficits, if the parallel economic and social development programmes had been functioning effectively, if new methods of education had been adopted, and if the educational system and structure had been Africanized. Those figures had been obtained with the assistance of financial and planning specialists from all the delegations represented at the Conference, the economic services of ECA, and twelve well-known economists who had specialized in educational planning and the economics of education.

8. The governing organs of UNESCO had endorsed the plan, and a programme of action had been launched to help in carrying it out, with the co-operation of other members of the United Nations family. The Economic and Social Council had called upon all the resources of the United Nations system, including IBRD and IDA, to help African countries in every possible way (resolution 837 (XXXII)).

9. Four major programmes were now being undertaken to follow up the Addis Ababa plan. The first consisted in assistance in educational planning, as part of national development programmes; UNESCO, with the help of ECA, FAO and the ILO, was at work in nineteen countries setting up planning institutions and helping them over a period of two years to gather data on which to base national educational plans. The second programme was one of assistance in the development of secondary education; Special Fund aid was being used to create thirteen higher teacher-training colleges and a network of technical education institutes; 150 teachers and professors were being made available under the OPEX programme; the ILO, in co-operation with other agencies, was undertaking manpower studies; the African Educational Bureau in Ghana and the Textbook Production Centre in Cameroun were assisting African countries in reforming curricula and textbooks, and making studies of the use of African languages in educational institutions; a school building planning group was at work at Khartoum, helping countries to prepare plans for the construction of secondary educational establishments; lastly, three development and research centres were being established for the use of modern techniques and media for teaching and learning. The third programme related to higher education; preparatory work was being done for a conference on the development of universities and higher education to be held in Madagascar in September 1962. The aim of the conference would be to reach agreement among the African countries on a rational development of universities in that continent, based on the financial targets es-

tablished by the Addis Ababa Conference. The fourth programme concerned adult education. With the postponement of full primary education for the next twenty years, adult education programmes were essential to provide instruction for the existing 100 million illiterates, whose numbers would increase.

10. Furthermore, UNESCO, in association with the Economic Commission for Africa, was establishing a commission of Ministers of Education to carry out the recommendations of the Conference and help countries to harmonize their programmes; the commission would meet for the first time in March 1962, to review the national education plans and budgets for the year 1962 and to determine the deficits that each country would face. That was a minimum plan for the development of African education; it was modest and realistic. UNESCO had accepted the recommendation of the Addis Ababa Conference that another conference of African States should be convened in 1963, as mentioned in operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.2/L.619.

11. He expressed the hope that the Committee would adopt the draft resolution unanimously, in the same spirit in which the African countries, the legislative organs of UNESCO and the Economic and Social Council had arrived at their decisions.

12. Mr. TOURE (Mali) drew the Committee's attention to the fact that the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution on the economic development of Africa (A/C.2/L.622/Rev.1 and Add.1 and 2), which was co-sponsored by his delegation, affirmed that the primary responsibility for rapid economic development and social progress rested with the African States themselves, and he added that that idea was in practice inherent in every national development plan. His delegation also drew attention to the valuable suggestion put forward by the United States (788th meeting), which would make it possible to improve the wording of the fourth preambular paragraph. It was quite natural for the main effort of the African countries at the present stage to be concentrated on the development of an advanced agriculture. First of all they had firmly to establish their independence in respect of food and increase their exports in order to eliminate their adverse balance of trade as rapidly as possible. In that connexion, the seventh preambular paragraph also stressed the necessity of improving the terms of trade in favour of African exporters of primary commodities and of eliminating the excessive fluctuations of the prices of those products. Only thus could the African countries ensure their economic independence, an essential condition of political independence. But independence did not mean withdrawing into a shell. Mali favoured regional economic interdependence, even an African common market. Such an institution would guarantee the new independent States of Africa the investments that were necessary for their growth, and would facilitate, under the auspices of the Standing Committee on Trade of ECA, joint solutions concerning the marketing of those countries' leading products. Finally, the regional development banks would look upon them as a definite guarantee, at the same time as an assurance of rapid progress.

13. The draft resolution on African educational development (A/C.2/L.619 and Add.1) related to the social aspect of a programme for Africa. The

two draft resolutions were complementary, for, economically speaking, education was the most valuable long-term investment. The Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa had enabled those States to take stock of their needs and to formulate a programme of action for meeting them. For Africa as a whole, the school attendance rate or percentage of the total school-age population enrolled in primary or secondary schools, did not exceed 16 per cent. It varied from country to country between 2 and almost 60 per cent, but in most cases it was below 20 per cent. Hence, education must be developed and, above all, developed *pari passu* with economic development. In order to accelerate that process, some African Governments were currently devoting as much as 23 per cent of their budgets to education, but since they also had to provide for the other sectors of their economy, they were compelled to have recourse to financial assistance, especially for constructing school buildings, paying foreign teachers and financing fellowships. Those were the reasons for Africa's appeal in the draft resolution.

14. He was happy that two draft resolutions that were so important for Africa should be before a Committee renowned for its constructive work. The two texts, which would be the starting point of the United Nations Development Decade, were certain of unanimous adoption by the Committee.

15. Mr. DANGEARD (France) congratulated the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/L.622/Rev.1 for having undertaken so difficult a task, for they had attempted to combine a joint international programme with a programme of purely African content. His delegation found it easier to give its view on the aspects relating to the first of those ideas than on the strictly African measures; thus it emphasized the importance of the ideas set forth in the preamble as a whole, especially in the third and seventh paragraphs, as well as the appropriateness of recalling General Assembly resolution 1527 (XV), to which France, incidentally, had responded, and the necessity of increasing the volume of domestic savings and attracting foreign capital, mentioned in operative paragraph 4 (c).

16. In relation to the second aspect of the question, the French delegation desired to make two remarks, one procedural, the other substantive. So far as procedure was concerned, the sponsors of the draft resolution had not been able to avoid the pitfall of asking a world organization to deal with a problem that was more specifically within the competence of the Economic Commission for Africa. At the present stage, it would be difficult for France to take a stand on the substance of the questions raised by operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 5. The sponsors might perhaps find wording that would reserve the rights of ECA, such as, for instance, a provision whereby "the General Assembly urges the Economic Commission for Africa to include this question in its agenda". In the last analysis, it was for the General Assembly to decide on the matters of principle, while the questions bearing on execution fell within the purview of ECA.

17. His comment on the substance related to the draft resolution as a whole, which noted the difficult situation of the African countries. It should not be forgotten that Africa was a very diversified continent and it would be an arbitrary way of pro-

ceeding to place the problems of different regions on the same basis. Any formula emphasizing the fact that sub-regional problems existed in Africa would have the support of France.

18. Draft resolution A/C.2/L.619 had the merit of stressing that educational problems in the underdeveloped countries should be considered in the context of an over-all policy of economic and social development. The needs were urgent but the means were very small. Current expenditure on education was woefully inadequate. Moreover, the accession of numerous African countries to independence had substantially increased the administrative and technical staff requirements for their development. There was obviously a close connexion between education, social change and economic growth. The present time was thus particularly opportune for a close study of those problems. The second merit of the draft resolution was its reference to the fact that, owing to the inadequacy of the resources available, the educational objectives could be attained only through increased international co-operation. France, which was already devoting large amounts to the development of education in Africa, was in complete accord with that point of view.

19. Finally, he made several remarks on the drafting. The place for operative paragraphs 2 and 3 was in the preamble. It should also be noted that the deficits mentioned were estimates, and they might vary very considerably. For that reason too it would be preferable to replace the last phrase of operative paragraph 4 by the words "taking into account the Conference's estimates for the years 1961-1965". In operative paragraph 5, the expression "in every way" was too vague, and the sponsors would be more precise if they deleted those words and, at the end of the paragraph, added the words "by the means that it has contemplated". France whole-heartedly supported that draft resolution.

20. Mr. LINGAM (India) said that Africa deserved to be given very special attention, because that continent, so long neglected, was today in full course of transformation, and because poverty and need could not be prolonged anywhere without creating a threatening situation for the rest of the world. India was happy to note that priority had been given to education in the African development programme. More importance was usually attached to capital, and there was a tendency to neglect all forms of investment that were not immediately productive, especially when the resources were limited. But to act in that way in Africa would be to compromise the foundations that were essential for development. It was a vicious circle that must be broken by simultaneous attacks on those two aspects of development. Otherwise, any prosperity that might result from economic development would only be temporary; only education would ensure its permanence.

21. In spite of its limited resources, India was endeavouring to assist the African countries, and was offering fellowships for study and advanced training, especially to Commonwealth students. It had also offered fellowships as part of the emergency programmes of UNESCO. The recipient countries were urging it to increase the number of those fellowships, especially for teacher training. India would be very happy if it were able to meet all those requests on a bilateral basis, but the magnitude of its own needs reduced its possibil-

ities. Nevertheless, it fully subscribed to the conclusions adopted at the Addis Ababa Conference.

22. Economic planning should not, of course, cover only education. Development was possible only on sound bases, and, especially, only if all vestiges of colonialism were eliminated. As had been emphasized at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, in order for the African States to be able to develop, the international community would have to protect them against external pressures and ensure their security; it would have to devote for their benefit part of the resources it currently spent on armament; the United Nations would have to help them to draw up long-term programmes; the resources of the Special Fund and of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance would have to amount to \$150 million; the OPEX programme would have to be made permanent; IBRD and IMF would have to grant them more assistance; and, finally the development of education would have to be encouraged. The two draft resolutions were the logical consequence of those recommendations.

23. The United Nations had a great part to play in ensuring that, through the complete liberation of the African continent and the establishment of political stability in that region, the African countries were able to make rapid progress. It would be wrong to wait until those conditions were fulfilled before laying great stress on education; but, if they were fulfilled, the task would be simplified. It was a complex and large-scale undertaking, involving the mobilization of all local resources and the establishment of an order of priority after thorough studies. Since that work would require highly specialized labour, it was important to be able to call upon qualified staff to survey resources and to help prepare national plans for economic development, taking into account local wealth and the prevailing world situation. Hence, the programming institution to be established under operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.2/L.622/Rev.1 would be extremely useful. The Indian delegation was in favour of that draft resolution, but it thought that the drafting of operative paragraph 5 might perhaps be more explicit. As the United States representative had pointed out, the Economic Commission for Africa was still studying the possibility of establishing regional development banks. Although there was no doubt that such banks would be useful, the specific details of their establishment were not yet clear. It would probably be better to amend the wording of the paragraph in way suggested by the United States representative at the previous meeting.

24. Since the causes of the African situation were known, and since the remedies were equally obvious, mere expressions of sympathy were not enough. It was important to act. If it were possible to awaken in the international community not only intellectual interest, but a feeling that the great backwardness of one region might endanger world peace, it would

be easier to overcome the political obstacles and even to settle domestic disputes. That was why the resumption of disarmament negotiations was a favourable portent; the solution of that question would eventually make available resources adequate to the needs of the under-developed countries. It would be unwise to increase assistance to one region by decreasing the assistance given to others, since that might check the rate of development which they had already achieved at great pains. Certainly the only course was to mobilize all the resources of the international community and to strengthen the assistance organs of the United Nations. He hoped that those organs would receive further material and moral support, in order that they might expedite the progress of the African continent in the interest of world peace.

25. Mr. GHAFAR (United Arab Republic) said that it was important to translate into action the kind words which had been voiced at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, when many African States had been admitted to membership in the United Nations. He would not retrace the history of the African continent or repeat the reasons for the present gap separating the African and Western countries, which had not existed when those countries had first come into contact. However, the programme proposed in draft resolution A/C.2/L.662/Rev.1 was the least that could be done in order eventually to close that gap. There was no lack of theoretical information about African resources, but so far it had all been gathered on behalf of businessmen. That was why the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, which called attention to the urgent necessity to take measures to strengthen and consolidate the economic independence of the States of Africa, was particularly wise. There was no question of adopting isolationist policies, and he agreed with the United States representative that development and prosperity would probably be promoted by co-operation. However, economic independence, in the commonly accepted sense, was essential, and the delegation of the United Arab Republic did not think that the word "independence" could be replaced by "viability". The sponsors would try, so far as possible, to take into account the various suggestions which had been made.

26. He hoped that all nations would spare no effort to give financial and technical assistance to the African countries, in order to help them meet their own educational needs. The United Arab Republic had offered to take part in the execution of a programme drawn up at the Conference of Addis Ababa by providing the services of thirteen educational specialists and by granting twenty-five fellowships to African students. Those fellowships would include substantial monthly allowances and half of the total for travel expenses. He hoped that all countries would unite in that joint effort.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.