

**United Nations**  
**GENERAL**  
**ASSEMBLY**

**FORTY-SECOND SESSION**

**Official Records\***



**THIRD COMMITTEE**  
**30th meeting**  
**held on**  
**Friday, 30 October 1987**  
**at 3 p.m.**  
**New York**

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING**

Chairman: Mr. RITTER (Panama)

**CONTENTS**

AGENDA ITEM 95: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 96: FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2000 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 97: INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

\*This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

**Distr. GENERAL**  
**A/C.3/42/SR.30**  
**4 November 1987**

87-56611 7238S (E)

**ORIGINAL: ENGLISH**

/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 95: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN  
(continued) (A/42/3, A/42/38, A/42/383, A/42/627)

AGENDA ITEM 96: FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2000 (continued) (A/42/3, A/42/516, A/42/528, A/42/597/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 97: INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/42/3, A/42/444)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the representative of the Department of Public Information (DPI) to respond to the question asked by the representative of Australia the previous day regarding the status of radio programmes on women.

.. Mr. LECIERE (Director, Radio and Visual Services, Department of Public Information) said that the radio programmes on women had definitely not been eliminated. In the past, those programmes had been administered by the North American Unit; under the restructuring plan currently being implemented within DPI, the women's programmes would come under the activities of the Central Programme Section and would continue to be distributed on a world-wide basis. The Central Programme Section would work with such entities as the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Woman (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to improve planning of the women's programmes, as well as conferences, seminars, studies, etc. Under the new structure, the women's programmes were being strengthened, and there were no plans to eliminate them.

3. Mr. QUINN (Australia) thanked the DPI representative for his explanation and said he welcomed the strengthening of the women's programmes, as well as the restructuring being undertaken within the Department. His impression had been that the women's programmes had been temporarily discontinued and would be resumed at a later date. He understood that an existing programme had in fact been discontinued that day, and asked for clarification as to when that particular programme would be resumed, albeit in a modified form.

4. Mr. LECLERE (Department of Public Information) said that the women's radio programmes had not been discontinued. The Department of Public Information was confronting a difficult staffing situation, but was endeavouring to resolve it without discontinuing the programmes. He hoped that it would never become necessary to do so, because it would be very difficult to recapture the audience that would be lost.

5. Ms. NIEMANN (Canada) asked the representative of DPI to clarify whether the mandate for the women's radio programmes, as contained in General Assembly resolution 40/108, was reflected in the programme activities and the draft programme budget for 1988-1989.

6. Mr. LECLERE (Department of Public Information) said that the Department of Public Information was currently undergoing a restructuring which would take time to accomplish. However, in the mean time the Department would continue to work normally. Implementation of the mandate mentioned by the representative from Canada would depend solely on whether there was an audience for a programme; if so, that programme would be continued. In fact, the 1988-1989 budget might contain even more allocations specifically for women's programmes than in the past.
7. Ms. NIEMANN (Canada) said that she had specifically wanted to know what activities DPI had included in the programme budget for 1988-1989 to meet the mandate for women's radio programmes as set out in General Assembly resolution 40/163.
8. Mr. LECLERE (Department of Public Information) said that women's programmes had already been included in the budget for 1988-1989 under the former DPI structure, according to which the women's programmes were within the province of the North American Unit. There were approximately 45-50 programmes per year, and those would continue to be produced. The restructuring of DPI would be implemented gradually and might involve some changes in the names of the personnel involved in production or the names under which the programmes were broadcast, but there had been no change in the 1988-1989 budget with regard to the women's programmes. He emphasized that as long as the United Nations continued its activities for women, and as long as there was interest in and audiences for the women's programmes, DPI would continue to produce them.
9. The CHAIRMAN thanked the representative of DPI and invited the Committee to resume its consideration of agenda items 95, 96 and 97.
10. Ms. BARUTCU (Turkey) reiterated her Government's continued commitment to the principles contained in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, and the importance her country attached to their effective implementation at the national and international levels. In that connection her delegation welcomed with satisfaction the Secretary-General's report (A/42/528).
11. As a newly elected member of the Commission on the Status of Women, Turkey looked forward to actively contributing to the work of the Commission in promoting and monitoring the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Her delegation also particularly welcomed Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/24 endorsing the long-term programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women to the year 2000, and reiterated its support for Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21 on the annualization of the Commission's meetings. Her delegation looked forward to participating in the substantive discussions at the thirty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 1988 on the three priority themes: national machinery for monitoring and improving the status of women, problems of rural women and efforts to eradicate violence against women.
12. Her delegation was pleased to note that an increasing number of States had ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination

(Ms. Barutcu, Turkey)

against Women, which was responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, should be furnished with the modalities effectively to discharge its mandate. She was aware of the difficulties facing the Committee due to the large number of periodic reports submitted by the States Parties to the Convention and the time constraints involved in their consideration. Her delegation was prepared to lend its support to the Committee's request, on an exceptional basis, for additional meeting time at its next session in 1988. However, Turkey questioned the Committee's competence to adopt decisions regarding matters that fell outside the parameters of its mandate and to decide on the validity of reservations made by States Parties to the Convention. Her country's position on that subject was contained in document A/41/608.

13. Her delegation extended its congratulations to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on its success in fostering recognition of the role of women in development and facilitating their involvement in mainstream development activities. It supported the continuation of those efforts and hoped to see UNIFEM's financial resources strengthened. Prevailing financial difficulties in the United Nations made effective co-ordination and avoidance of duplication of efforts essential. Turkey therefore welcomed the preparation of a set of guidelines to regulate the functional relationship between UNIFEM and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

14. She reiterated her delegation's support for the research, training and information activities being carried out by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). The work of UNIFEM and INSTRAW in many ways complemented one another, and increased co-operation and co-ordination between them would be most beneficial. Turkey would continue its support of both UNIFEM and INSTRAW at the upcoming United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

15. Miss AL-GHUNEIM (Kuwait) said that Kuwaiti women participated on an equal footing with men in political, economic and social life in order to achieve societal progress inspired by the principles of the Islamic religion and the Constitution. The spirit of equality, solidarity and co-operation had been characteristics of Kuwaiti society since its founding. In addition, customs and traditional values such as respect for family helped to bind the society. Kuwait promoted the welfare of its citizens by providing free education to all persons of school age regardless of sex, with emphasis on the education of women in order to encourage their advancement.

16. Women had assumed senior positions of leadership in such capacities as deputy minister, assistant director in both the public and private sectors, and as deans of various university faculties. Kuwaiti women enjoyed equality with men in the economic, social, educational and health fields. In accordance with the Labour Code, women received equal pay for equal work, and could not be employed at night or in dangerous jobs. The Civil Service Act accorded women equality with men in pay and promotion and provided for liberal maternity and child-rearing leave with pay. To demonstrate its concern for women's issues, Kuwait had ratified numerous United Nations Conventions.

(Miss Al-Ghuneim, Kuwait)

17. Justice and a peaceful life could not be achieved in southern Africa except by eliminating the arbitrary apartheid régime and according men, women and children their inalienable rights. Similarly in the Middle East, Palestinian women and children faced arduous living conditions in occupied Arab territories. The women were forcibly separated from their homeland and denied their inalienable rights to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian State.

18. The Israeli representative at the previous meeting described the situation of Palestinian women in the occupied Arab territories using statistics that could only have been invented. She cited references contained in document A/CONF.116/6 describing the situation of Palestinian women, which had been aggravated under the Defence Emergency Laws resulting in mass arrests, collective punishment, detentions without trial, deportations and restrictions of freedom of association. Israeli settlements hampered the economic, social and cultural development of the Palestinians, and reduced the possibility of improving the status of women. Those descriptions of hardship and oppression had not been drafted by the delegation of Kuwait or any other Arab delegation; they were contained in the report submitted by the Secretary-General after a comprehensive detailed study of the situation of women and children living under foreign occupation.

19. Equality, development and peace were the objectives that all peoples aspired to in order to achieve security and well-being. Kuwait assisted developing countries through its participation in various conferences with a view to achieving an effective role for women at the local and international levels, and by direct and indirect contributions to assist women and children.

20. Mrs. VARGAS (Nicaragua) said that her delegation welcomed the positive steps taken by some States to improve the status of women through adoption of legal instruments and constitutional provisions intended to guarantee equal rights for women. However, she noted with concern that in other regions of the world, as a result of intense poverty, exploitation, and the unjust international economic order, women continued to be the victims of human rights violations. Nicaraguan women, who had suffered poverty and exploitation during the forty-five years of the Somoza dictatorship, supported the women of Namibia, who were the victims of the abhorrent system of apartheid, which denied them all opportunity to true equality in their society. She also expressed her delegation's solidarity with Palestinian women living in refugee camps and women in the Western Sahara who were suffering under foreign occupation. Women in some developed countries were also still suffering from discrimination. Advances in education, health and housing had unfortunately not benefited a large portion of the traditionally marginal sectors of the female population in those countries. Moreover, in many social systems the socio-political participation of women was treated with contempt and they were utilized as sexual objects or commercial instruments, or were relegated to passive roles as wives and mothers.

(Mrs. Vargas, Nicaragua)

21. Since the triumph of the Nicaraguan Revolution, her Government had initiated a process of social change which was entirely compatible with the orientation of the United Nations Decade for Women. Efforts were under way to overcome discrimination against women and to improve their access to education and technical and professional training both in urban and rural areas. Laws had been adopted to ensure equal pay for equal work and to improve working conditions for women. The agrarian reform in Nicaragua was the first in Latin America to recognize women as the direct beneficiaries of agrarian policies, regardless of their position in the family. Additionally, a law had been passed to ensure the equality of rights and responsibilities of men and women as parents in the raising of their children.

22. The social welfare and development projects planned by the Nicaraguan Government had been obstructed by the war and by the trade and financial blockade imposed upon Nicaragua. The solution to problems specific to women, the struggle against discriminatory political ideas and the development of socio-economic conditions which would ensure effective equality of opportunities for women were not exclusively women's issues, but concerned all of society. Society as a whole should therefore endeavour to eliminate those problems. The establishment of peace was essential, and Nicaraguan women, like women in other regions of the world, were committed to that cause.

23. Mrs. MATVEEVA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that in 1987 the All-Union Conference of Soviet Women had been held at Moscow, followed by the World Congress of Women attended by representatives from more than 150 countries of all continents. It was symbolic that women were simultaneously discussing their own problems and the problems of women throughout the world, since, in an interdependent world, in no country could women be happy when women in other countries were suffering from poverty and the denial of rights. The children of the world would either survive together or perish together, and they must be taught love and respect for others, rather than hatred. That view was a supremely feminine manifestation of the new political thinking in international relations.

24. The situation of women could be improved only in the context of peace and solid international co-operation on the basis of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and related decisions of the World Conferences in Mexico City and Copenhagen, and of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation.

25. In spite of the immense efforts that had been made by the international community, the situation of women had remained unchanged in many countries, or even deteriorated. Obsolete traditions and customs which kept women in a subordinate position persisted, as well as discrimination against women in various spheres of life leading to merciless exploitation in the workplace and blocking their participation in decision-making and in public and political life. Her delegation was firmly convinced that special attention should be paid to the poorest and most oppressed women and those who were the victims of armed conflict and oppression.

(Mrs. Matveeva, Ukrainian SSR)

26. At the same time, attempts to limit the problems of women to exclusively feminine questions artificially isolated from the overall development process were misguided. Her delegation shared the view that improving the situation of women meant improving the well-being of all society and that where women were unable to express their opinions and share their experience, the political process was incomplete. The development process was inconceivable without favourable conditions for the equal and effective involvement of women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was an important international legal instrument in that respect.

27. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women played a very important role in mobilizing efforts to ensure the advancement of women at the national, regional and international levels; however, it should not undertake functions which went beyond its mandate and were within the terms of reference of functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, since that practice led to a duplication of work and diverted attention from the tasks falling within the Committee's mandate.

28. Non-governmental organizations played an important role in improving the situation of women, and had become particularly active during the Decade. Her delegation appreciated the work of UNIFEM and the United Nations Branch for the Advancement of Women. The establishment of a voluntary fund for the advancement of women would help developing countries in implementing various projects to improve the situation of women and children.

29. Soviet women could hardly consider themselves to be victims of discrimination. For 70 years the State had consistently followed Lenin's directive that women should participate actively in all spheres of public life, on an equal footing with men, and that approach was particularly relevant during the complex and far-reaching process of restructuring. In the Ukrainian SSR the Republican Women's Council brought together over 52,000 women's councils established in practically every labour collective. Women influenced all aspects of social and moral life; however, only under glasnost had a somewhat different view been taken of the specific problems facing women, and a nation-wide discussion was taking place about overcoming the negative aspects of women's emancipation.

30. Women's professional achievements should not deprive them of their role as mothers; in the Ukrainian SSR, everything possible was being done to help women to combine employment and public activity with motherhood. Great importance was attached to the family, and to enhancing its moral and educational role. The exchange of national experience in resolving problems relating to the family was of considerable interest. Her delegation supported the initiative of the Polish People's Republic to proclaim an international year of the family.

31. International co-operation at the various levels helped in finding effective solutions to national problems facing women and promoting their greater involvement in solving the most acute problems. An exchange of views and experience on a broad range of questions contributed to overall progress, better mutual understanding and

(Mrs. Matveeva, Ukrainian SSR)

trust. There must be continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Since the composition of the Commission on the Status of Women was limited, and its time was restricted it would be advisable to convene the World Forum at regular intervals, drawing on the experience of the United Nations Decade for Women. All countries would then be able to exchange views on an equal basis.

32. Mrs. CASTRO de LAURENCICH (Costa Rica) said that Costa Rica was determined to give higher priority to all actions aimed at implementing the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies as soon as possible. In those efforts, the research and training being done by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) was essential.

33. Women in Costa Rica had been integrated into all fields of endeavour. For example, one of the vice-presidencies was currently held by a woman, and another woman was Minister of Exports and Foreign Trade. In the university sector, and in the scientific, artistic, economic, executive and other fields, women were co-operating on an equal footing with men in the development of all activities in Costa Rica. The First Lady of Costa Rica was directing child abuse and drug abuse programmes.

34. One of the objectives of the National Development Plan, was to modify the conditions for women's participation in the productive, social, political and cultural process and to achieve shared responsibility between men and women, with equal rights and responsibilities, in order to eliminate the causes of discrimination and the subordination of women. There were still, however, many women who suffered from discrimination, and the process of changing attitudes could take generations. Costa Rica did not have enough economic resources to initiate a communications plan to educate and train all women, especially those living in isolated areas, to make use of the laws which protected them. In order to accelerate de facto equality between men and women, a bill had been submitted to the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly providing for equal representation for women in popular elections as well as equal rights in respect of bank loans, access to ownership of property and public assistance, and protection under the Civil Code and Family Code. Under that bill, a special monitoring body would be established to ensure equal pay for equal work.

35. Ms. CHEE (Singapore) said that Singapore, being a small State, had long recognized the important contribution women could make in the development of the nation. Women in Singapore enjoyed full political and legal rights. Under an enlightened education policy, there was equal opportunity for both sexes in primary, secondary and tertiary education, resulting in sexual parity at all levels. More women were entering the work force and enjoyed financial independence. As Singapore faced a labour shortage, women of all ages were being urged to take up full-time or part-time employment. Moreover, the proportion of women holding administrative, managerial and executive positions had increased from 6.8 per cent in 1977 to 21.9 per cent in 1987.



(Ms. Chee, Singapore)

36. However, since women in Singapore were still leaving their jobs after marriage, better support and incentive schemes were needed. The Government provided financial support to approved organizations for the development of child-care centres, and offered subsidies to working mothers. In addition, the Government had initiated several special schemes to encourage women's participation in the civil service, including tax incentives for child care and unrecorded child-care leave for mothers to care for their children when they were sick.

37. While the participation of women in public life had also increased, there was room for improvement in their participation in the political sphere. Moreover, the advancement of women to top positions in their respective professions was still relatively rare. Although there were legislative provisions for their advancement, Singapore women must now strive to do away with the lingering vestiges of traditional beliefs about their role in society. It was the task of the next phase of development to attack and change the deeper layers of societal attitudes in both men and women.

38. Mrs. GORBUNOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that since the Great October Socialist Revolution, 70 years ago, Byelorussian women had progressed from possessing no rights at all, as compared to men, to equal status in the family and full participation in all aspects of social life, guaranteed by legislative and other measures. The continued improvement of women's social and economic status was part of State policy; it was the Government's responsibility to deal with the further obstacles to women's advancement which were bound to arise. Her country was interested in the experience of others with such problems and was ready to share its own experience. That experience showed that social and economic development, including the advancement of women, was closely interwoven with peaceful development in conditions of international security. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies had emphasized the inseparability of the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace - objectives which her country unswervingly pursued. The women of her country, enjoying equal rights with men, contributed actively to the nation's economic and social development and to national and international action, including measures taken within the United Nations system, aimed at maintaining peace.

39. The Secretary-General had received regrettably few replies, one of which from her Government, to his invitation to provide information on activities to implement the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation. Reports such as that contained in document A/42/516 should include analyses of activities by the world community and the United Nations system to strengthen peace and co-operation pursuant to the provisions of the Declaration. It could hardly be viewed as normal that, according to a survey, reported in document A/41/623, out of 86 meetings on the advancement of women envisaged for 1986, meetings on equality, peace and areas of special interest had accounted for only 6 per cent and 2 per cent respectively of the total. The proposed total programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 and the approved medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, as amended, had been cited as a reason for the imbalance; a similar imbalance must be avoided, at least in the future medium-term plan for 1990-1995.

(Mrs. Gorbunova, Byelorussian SSR)

40. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its session held earlier in the year, had discussed the system-wide medium-term plan on women and development for the period 1990-1995 (A/42/273). According to a resolution adopted by consensus on participation of women and promoting international peace and co-operation and preparation of the United Nations medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995, all appropriate United Nations bodies had been invited to develop and implement comprehensive relevant policies, and the inclusion of a specific subprogramme on women and peace had been recommended. The bodies of the United Nations system should take that resolution into account and include, in their medium-term plans for 1990-1995, measures aimed at achieving all the goals and sub-themes of the United Nations Decade for Women - referring back, if necessary, to the proposal made during the Commission's recent session regarding the development of system-wide medium-term plans for women, peace and equality. In no circumstances should the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development be deemed the same as relevant sections of the Organization's medium-term plan currently being drafted for submission to the Commission for consideration. The former should be viewed only as a first step towards creating a system-wide plan for the advancement of women, promoting new ways of enhancing co-ordination of United Nations activities in that field and indicating the most effective methods of co-operation on specific issues.

41. Target-oriented activities to give effect to the Forward-looking Strategies were among the best ways to mobilize efforts at national and international levels. Her delegation therefore fully supported the decisions taken by the Commission and endorsed by the Council to strengthen the Commission's effectiveness as the central monitoring body for the Strategies' implementation in accordance with the long-term programme put forward during the Commission's 1987 session. Her delegation shared the Commission's opinion, supported by the Council, on the holding of a world conference during the 1990s and another in the year 2000; the dates of the first should be finalized as soon as possible in view of the many organizational tasks to be faced.

42. The activity of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was useful for the exchange of national experience in carrying out policies for the advancement of women. Despite the growing number of States parties to the Convention, some Member States had not yet acceded to that instrument, including States where cases of discrimination against women were not infrequent.

43. Mrs. MAKNOON (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that one of the major economic rights of Muslim women was independent ownership of property, earnings and other assets, including inheritance. Women in Western societies, on the other hand, were often treated as sex objects and exploited by multinational firms to promote sales and make greater profits. Holding an outside job and enjoying an equal position with men had become so important for women in Western cultures that in some cases they preferred simple clerical jobs to staying at home and taking care of their families. The commercialization of women reduced them to mere commodities and had pushed the society into an over-consumption of resources that could otherwise have been used for basic necessities such as food, housing and clothing.

(Mrs. Maknoon, Islamic Republic of Iran)

44. The term "equality" had different connotations in Islam than in Western culture. In the Western political arena, men took advantage of women, using them to promote men's political candidacies. In contrast, a Muslim woman had a distinct role in taking political decisions directly or indirectly while preserving her dignity and values. In an Islamic society, a child learned all his moral, ethical and cultural values at home, and mothers had a cardinal role to play. For example, if a Muslim child had not learned to respect and love martyrdom from early childhood, young boys would not be so eager to run to the war fronts and defend their Islamic land.

45. Ms. AL-TURAIHI (Iraq), speaking on a point of order, said that the representative of Iran was using the rostrum for cheap political ends and claiming to speak in the name of Islam. If Iran felt so strongly, it could accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

46. Mrs. MAKNOON (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that in Iran, employment was open to women in Iran under the part-time official employment law and their retirement and insurance benefits were protected. Maternity leave and child-care assistance was available to them.

47. She deplored the superficiality of the emancipation of Western women, the empty rhetoric of the women's "movement" which did nothing to change societal prejudices and the tendency of unqualified persons to make judgements on the social status of women in Muslim countries. Paragraphs 510-513, 516-517, 520, 525, 530 and 538-540 of the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (A/42/38) constituted an insult to the beliefs of a large population by so-called experts who had no knowledge about Islamic ideology.

48. Mr. MADEIRO (Brazil) said that his delegation welcomed the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995 because of the importance of integrating programme activities for the advancement of women into the overall work of the United Nations system. The recommendations of the Commission on the Status of Women concerning the medium-term plan would play a pivotal role in the Organization's initiatives for the advancement of women. The Commission had achieved positive results in seeking to translate the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies into the planning, programming and budgeting systems, fostering a co-ordinated implementation of the Strategies and developing the appropriate policies and making decisions and recommendations. His delegation also welcomed the fact that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was reassessing its own procedures. In that regard, the question of the duration of its meetings deserved serious consideration.

49. In Brazil, numerous policy measures had been adopted for the advancement of women. The National Council for the Rights of Women had worked closely with other governmental agencies to improve legislation affecting women and to establish programmes in labour, education, health and protection against violence. Brazil had hosted a conference of members of CEDAW at São Paulo and Brasília on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

(Mr. Madeiros, Brazil)

against Women. The meeting had provided the opportunity for an exchange of ideas among the Committee's experts and for the reassessment of policies in consultation with politicians, trade union leaders and representatives of public and private organizations.

50. Mr. AL-KALBASH (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the United Nations Decade for Women had made a positive contribution to increasing public awareness of the difficulties encountered by women in achieving equality and integration in development. Public awareness had brought to light the ever-increasing importance of implementing the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

51. The activities being undertaken by the United Nations and the specialized agencies and other organizations affiliated with the United Nations system in implementation of the Strategies confirmed the importance of integrating women into the various development sectors and activities, whether as beneficiaries or participants, in accordance with their needs and aspirations.

52. While discussing the principle of equality between men and women, it was also necessary to discuss the deteriorating conditions, sufferings, destitution and oppression to which African women in southern Africa and Arab women in occupied Palestine were being subjected because they were necessarily of concern to all women.

53. Libya considered that women's participation in the development process was crucial to building a progressive society capable of confronting the challenges of the age.

54. From ancient times, Libyan society had been pervaded by a spirit of co-operation and solidarity based on the principles of the Islamic religion, which guaranteed the rights of women and accorded them an exalted position. The Constitution stipulated that everyone was equal in human dignity and had equal rights and duties before the law without distinction on grounds of sex, language or creed.

55. Legislation conferred full rights upon women in education and work. The Social Security Act paid particular attention to the situation of mothers. The Labour Code established women's right to work and prohibited the employment of women in arduous or dangerous jobs. Women had begun to exercise full political rights through membership in the General People's Congresses and People's Committees. They were involved in decision-making in all sectors, including that of development. They assumed senior positions of leadership on an equal footing with men and shared with them the duty to defend the homeland.

56. He reaffirmed his country's absolute rejection of decision 4 contained in the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. That decision constituted a challenge to millions of Muslims, and exceeded the mandate of the Committee.

57. Miss EFFANGE (Cameroon) said that her country was a signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and was in the process of ratifying that instrument. Women's potential in influencing the nation's political and economic destiny had been recognized long before independence. Women had not only always had the right to vote and to free and full education but also the opportunity, through the women's wing of the National Party, to participate in policy planning and implementation. There were currently five female government ministers dealing with matters relating to health, education, social affairs and trade, in addition to women's affairs.

58. The Ministry of Women's Affairs provided guidelines to strengthen women's participation in the country's political, social and cultural life not only through the National Party but also by monitoring women's associations and by close contact and collaboration with religious associations, which traditionally played a significant role in young women's education and moral upbringing. Women had equal access to education and received equal pay for equal work. The country's adherence to the Convention was motivated by Cameroonian women's desire to see the rights they freely enjoyed extended to women the world over.

59. Her delegation agreed that the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies embodied the aspirations of women everywhere; it was pleased that those aspirations had been embraced by the United Nations. The Commission on the Status of Women was rightly called upon to play the central role in implementing the Strategies. Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21 would allow the Commission to meet annually until the year 2000, and the decision to introduce a medium-term plan, leading to a cross-organizational programme analysis, was a means of monitoring implementation of the Strategies.

60. With regard to institutional matters, it was hoped that due emphasis would be placed on the transfer of energy-saving technology to women in developing countries and on efforts to secure a place for their products in world markets. Those were the aspirations underlying the Strategies which had come out of the Nairobi Conference; her country wholeheartedly supported their implementation.

61. The fact that a Cameroonian former Minister of Social Affairs had been president of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) testified to her country's interest in INSTRAW's programmes. Her delegation appreciated the extent to which the activities continued to relate to planning and programming for women's increased integration in development. It also appreciated the progress made by the United Nations Development Programme for Women (UNIFEM) after a modest beginning; it hoped that the Fund would be increased and its activities given wider publicity.

62. Mrs. BANGJOURA (Guinea) said that recognition of women's rights and action to integrate women in economic and social development had for years been among the world community's major concerns. Even before the promulgation of international instruments relating to women, the Guinean Government had been implementing policies for the advancement of women through the State Secretariat for Social Affairs. Those policies provided social services such as maternal and child care,

(Mrs. Bangoura, Guinea)

help for the disabled; and social and vocational training for women lacking formal education. They established development priorities having an immediate bearing on the family livelihood.

63. Guinea, as a signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, attached great importance to that instrument's implementation. There was no discrimination in law against Guinean women; they had equal rights with men to education, employment, ownership and security, and enjoyed equality of opportunity in all types of professions and occupations at all levels. Schooling was co-educational, with no discrimination in syllabus. Women also played an active role in all rural occupations. The Government, in collaboration with several organizations, was making great efforts to improve women's living conditions, and seed was being distributed, with FAO technical and financial assistance, to improve crop yields. Women were also involved in techniques to guard against the threats posed by deforestation and especially desertification, for example, by organizing seminars to raise awareness of the need to protect the environment; intense efforts were also being made in rural areas to develop and protect water resources.

64. Her delegation fully supported the programme of INSTRAW. Despite the Government's efforts, illiteracy and lack of vocational training were still more prevalent among women, who constituted 52 per cent of the population. Women's training centres had been established throughout the country in order to provide theoretical and practical instruction in all wage-earning activities. The Government department in charge of those centres had the task of formulating and operating a training policy for women. In addition to providing vocational training, classes were also held in functional literacy, child care, housekeeping, hygiene and sanitation. Courses lasted 18 months, and completion of each stage was marked by the awarding of a diploma. Those completing the courses were given the opportunity to join co-operatives in order to consolidate and benefit from their training. The activities of non-governmental organizations for women likewise testified to women's wish to participate actively in national development. Guinean women also took part in all regional and subregional organizations, including membership of the Women's International Committee for Development (CIFAD) and the Association of West African Women (AWAO).

65. Despite all efforts, however, Guinean women were not yet playing a full role in society owing to a number of social, technical and especially financial obstacles.

66. Her delegation greatly appreciated the efforts of UNIFEM and INSTRAW. It hoped that the welcome co-operation established between those bodies and Guinean women would assist the country in its efforts to integrate women in development. Some developing countries seemed unaware of the role played by those institutions; measures should be taken, therefore, at national, regional and international levels, to make them better known.

(Mrs. Bangoura, Guinea)

67. Her delegation expressed appreciation of the efforts by the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and donor countries to promote women's integration in development, and appealed for international support for increased assistance to the developing countries designed to improve socio-economic conditions to the point where women would be freed of the restrictions which prevented them from participating fully in the development process.

68. Mr. ALI (Niger) said that the disastrous economic situation of the developing countries, including Niger, was aggravating the already precarious status of women. The women of Niger occupied an important place in all sectors of production: they were omnipresent at all levels of agriculture and were in almost exclusive control of the handicrafts sector which was a major source of income for them. With regard to the social context, their role in the education of children was paramount and they were therefore deeply concerned about the breakdown of the traditional family, the decline in moral values and accompanying social ills; young rural women, most of whom were illiterate, were particularly vulnerable. For social and historical reasons the women of Niger suffered under an unfavourable social system and an adverse matrimonial régime. The stereotyped ideas held about women were an impediment to change in attitudes. Women continued to be relegated to drudgery and were denied a full part in the decision-making process. Rural women often had to labour more than 12 hours a day in the field and at home, which led to premature aging.

69. The Government of Niger was determined to ensure greater integration of women in the development process and had decided to do everything possible to implement the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. The National Charter accorded a special place to women and assigned to them increasing responsibilities in the development process and the advancement of women as agents of progress. The five-year plan 1987-1991 was designed to promote the education and training of women in all fields, establish infrastructures so as to free them from menial domestic work, particularly water-carrying, improve civic services and programmes in the media, and help women to develop specific projects, particularly in the rural sector where they could be a powerful force for modernization.

70. In order to ensure widespread mobilization and enlist the voluntary participation of women in the national development effort, the Association of Women of Niger and the Directorate for the Advancement of Women were co-operating closely and enjoyed the support of the public authorities. The women of Niger were contributing on a large scale to the formulation and implementation of national development strategies and participating in all activities for developing food self-sufficiency and combating desertification. Their efforts were being supported through international co-operation. Co-operation between UNIFEM and the Association of Women of Niger had recently led to the formulation of special women's projects for the five-year development plan.

71. The structural adjustments imposed by the economic crisis had aggravated the plight of many women in developing countries; greater efforts must be made by the international community to ensure the progressive implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies.

72. Mrs. MNUMZANA (Observer, African National Congress) said that there had been no change in the plight of women and children under the cruel system of apartheid; whatever changes occurred were for the worse, contrary to the claims of the Pretoria Fascists and their supporters. Little progress, if any, was being made, despite the commendable efforts of the United Nations and its agencies, towards implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. It was indeed puzzling that some Member States, notably the United States and its allies, which prided themselves on being champions of human rights, not only failed to take action against the perpetrators of apartheid but also found fault with the victims, characterizing ANC as terrorist and communist-inspired, while the oppression and exploitation against which ANC was struggling continued unabated.

73. Nor could Israel's links with Pretoria be seen as pragmatism; it was blatant racism against the blacks of southern Africa in general, and South Africa and Namibia in particular, which Israel, after the horrors of the holocaust, should be the last to engage in. The atrocities facilitated by Israeli weapons and training were continuing, and States neighbouring on South Africa continued to suffer from the Fascists' destabilization campaign, particularly in Angola; the casualties were mainly women and children.

74. The question arose as to whether the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies could be implemented in southern Africa in such conditions. Only comprehensive and mandatory sanctions could prevent a major catastrophe.

75. The first 40 of ANC's 75 years of existence had been marked by peaceful resistance, but the reaction had always been brutal and violent. The people of South Africa had no option but to combat reactionary violence with revolutionary violence. ANC's demands were simple and reasonable: unconditional release of all political prisoners, removal of the ban on it and other organizations, cessation of violence by the racists, the lifting of the state of emergency and the return of all exiles in safety. ANC thanked the Soviet Union, the entire socialist community and the democratic forces of the West, especially in Scandinavia, for their support.

76. Mr. NAVON (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, recalled that in an earlier statement he had provided the Committee with data from UNESCO and ILO on the situation of Palestinian women in the occupied Arab territories; if the representative of Kuwait chose to do so, she could challenge those two organizations. It was nothing short of audacity for the representative of a country like Kuwait to talk about the human rights of women. According to a 1987 UNESCO report, 56 per cent of Kuwaiti women were illiterate; according to a 1983 ILO report, only 10.7 per cent of Kuwaiti women were gainfully employed. It had been reported in The Economist in 1986 that Kuwaiti women had no social or economic equality, no equality in employment, and no voting rights, and few Kuwaiti women held posts in public life. Kuwaiti women would not be helped by futile rhetoric in the Committee. Similarly, women in Judea, Samaria and Gaza would not progress so long as the infamous Yassir Arafat referred to them as "biological time-bombs". All women deserved the right to social and economic equality, to elect and be elected, and freely to choose and divorce their spouses. He challenged Kuwait to measure up to those yardsticks.



(Mr. Navon, Israel)

77. Libya, a bastion of democracy, equality, respect for human rights, freedom and love of peace, was hardly well-placed to preach lofty principles to the Committee; according to The Economist, there was no social, legal or political equality for Libyan women; they required permission from their husbands to travel abroad; and female circumcision was still practised in remote areas of southern Libya. According to UNESCO 85.2 per cent of Libyan women were illiterate; according to the ILO, only 3 per cent were employed.

78. The advancement of women was too serious a subject to be demeaned by political bickering; history would pass harsh judgement on the Committee if it politicized that important, human and apolitical topic.

79. Mr. AL-KALBASH (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the representative of the Zionist, racist régime was trying to poison the atmosphere with slanderous rhetoric and lies. He had given false figures and statistics about Libyan women and had tried to divert attention from the oppressive practices applied against the Palestinian people, including women and children. The policy of that representative's terrorist, abhorrent régime had been demonstrated in acts of oppression and repression against women and children in Palestinian and Arab occupied territories, as described in the report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women.

80. Miss AL-GHUNEIM (Kuwait) said that the representative of Israel was still spreading misinformation about Kuwait. The Israeli strategy was based on Zionist doctrine derived from Jewish intolerance. Israeli policy was aimed at the Judaization of Palestine, and oppressive practices were being used to force Palestinians to leave their country and thus to bring about genocide of the Palestinian population.

81. However, the Palestinian Arab people would triumph over injustice and intolerance, achieve self-determination and establish their own State in Palestine. News reports in the United States press concerning collective punishment and acts of oppression and repression perpetrated by the Israeli forces against Palestinians had become routine. Those facts were well known throughout the world. Israel's actions were violations of elementary human rights and the principles of human morality.

82. Mr. NAVON (Israel) said that calling names would get the Committee nowhere; the sources he had presented awaited refutation. Moreover, Libya and Kuwait had failed to measure up to the yardsticks he had mentioned.

83. Miss AL-GHUNEIM (Kuwait) said that she would not attempt to refute mere lies. It had been reported in the New York Times Magazine in July 1987 that a process of "rhinocerization" was taking place in Israel as Israelis became immune to the racist practices and atrocities perpetrated against an entire nation, namely the Palestinians.

84. Mr. AL-KALBASH (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, as usual, the representative of the Zionist entity had tried to use righteous rhetoric in order to mask his intolerable racist discourse.

#### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

85. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.3/42/L.26 containing a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee on the subject of programme planning. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) had recommended that the General Assembly, through its Main Committees, should consider at its forty-second session the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s", included in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512), as part of the process of ensuring the full participation of Member States in the preparation of the introduction to the next medium-term plan, as mandated under General Assembly resolution 41/213. The paper by the Secretary-General included sections entitled "Human rights and social progress" and "Development: the continuing priority" which were relevant to the Committee's work; the last section, entitled "The United Nations in the 1990s", was also worthy of study.

86. The Chairman of the Fifth Committee had asked for the views of the Third Committee no later than the first week of November 1987. He suggested that members of the Committee should hold informal consultations on the documents.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.