

**1703 (LIII). Annual report of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut**

*The Economic and Social Council*

Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut covering the period 15 April 1971 to 14 April 1972.<sup>7</sup>

1830th plenary meeting  
11 July 1972

**1707 (LIII). Agrarian reform**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

Having considered the note by the Secretary-General on land reform<sup>8</sup> and the summary of the report of the Special Committee on Agrarian Reform of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,<sup>9</sup>

Noting with concern the Special Committee's conclusion in paragraph 5 of its report that the record of implementation of agrarian reform in the 1960s was inferior to that of the previous two decades,

Recalling its resolution 1495 (XLVIII) of 26 May 1970 on land reform and the policy measures in this field included in paragraph (75) of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 2626 (XXV) of 24 October 1970,

Mindful that in almost all developing countries agriculture is still the basic sector of the national economy affecting, in particular, employment and national income and is still a crucially important source of export earnings,

Mindful also that one of the main causes of the state of stagnation and slow progress is to be traced to this sector of the economy and that socio-economic systems based on outmoded forms of land tenure, other agrarian structures and related institutions impede indispensable programmes of modernization of agriculture and the elimination of hunger and malnutrition and the full participation of the rural population in economic, social, cultural and political activities,

Considering that the natural increase of population could aggravate in some of these countries development problems already existing,

Considering that organizations of peasants and rural workers, such as trade unions, constitute a form of social participation in the effective realization and administration of agrarian reform,

Emphasizing the importance of ensuring that agrarian reform programmes are planned and implemented in ways which will help to bring new technology within the

reach of peasants, small farmers and agricultural workers and facilitate their participation in the implementation of these programmes,

Considering also that the necessity of the implementation of agrarian reform has become even more urgent because of the rapid progress in technology and agricultural science, the results of which, if not applied in parallel with structural changes, will lead to an aggravation of social tensions,

Recognizing that in many countries comprehensive agrarian reform measures, including land tenure reform and effective socio-economic supporting services, should be considered as one of the principal instruments to achieve social progress and justice and as a basic element of the economic and social development strategy of individual countries within the context of their development plans and/or priorities,

Believing that the success of agrarian reform policies depends basically on the political will and determination of Governments to create conditions in which outmoded agrarian structures can be reformed and an equitable distribution of productive resources and national income can take place,

Conscious that, as indicated in the report of the Special Committee, agrarian reform constitutes a prerequisite for economic and social progress and development in many developing countries,

Recognizing that effective agrarian reform is not only a condition for increasing agricultural production, but also a basic means for the fulfilment, by Member States, of relevant provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Declaration on Social Progress and Development,

Bearing in mind that agrarian reform is in many countries a precondition for the implementation and achievement of the goals of the Second United Nations Development Decade and that without such reform in the countries concerned a further widening of the gap between various groups of the population is likely to occur,

1. Endorses the major conclusions and recommendations of the report of the Special Committee on Agrarian Reform of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and resolution 3/71 adopted by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations at its sixteenth session;<sup>10</sup>

2. Urges Governments to consider agrarian reform as an important and integral part of national strategies for the attainment of the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade and to undertake, where required, vigorous measures to initiate and implement effective agrarian reform programmes;

3. Recommends Governments of countries in need of agrarian reform to avail themselves of the advice and assistance of appropriate United Nations agencies in

<sup>7</sup> E/5137.

<sup>8</sup> E/5100.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, annex I.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, annex II.