

1878th meeting

Thursday, 9 August 1973, at 3.35 p.m.

President: Mr. S. A. FRAZÃO (Brazil)

E/SR.1878

AGENDA ITEM 5

The problem of mass poverty and unemployment in developing countries

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/5411)

1. The President said that the Economic Committee had unanimously adopted the draft resolution in paragraph 10 of its report (E/5411). He invited the Council to take a decision on that draft resolution.

The draft resolution was adopted.

2. Mr. WANG Tzu-chuan (China), explaining his delegation's position, reiterated the observations which he had made in the Economic Committee and said that if the draft resolution had been put to the vote at the present meeting he would have been obliged to abstain. He requested that his delegation's position should be reflected in the summary record.

3. The PRESIDENT assured the Chinese representative that his position would be recorded.

4. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), explaining his delegation's position, said that the Soviet Union delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in the Economic Committee solely in a spirit of compromise. It considered that there were a number of gaps in the draft resolution, which made no reference to fundamental problems inseparable from poverty and unemployment, such as the need for a unified concept of development planning, an equitable distribution of the national income, the raising of the standard of living of the population, fiscal reform, investment growth and the responsibilities of Governments for social progress and the well-being of their populations.

5. His delegation had particular reservations on operative paragraphs 5 and 7. With regard to operative paragraph 5, the Soviet Union representative at the International Labour Conference and in the Economic Committee of the Council had emphasized that the World Employment Programme failed to take account of a series of economic and social problems which were connected with it. The definitive solution of the problem of mass poverty and unemployment depended on fundamental economic and social changes, and particularly on agrarian reform; it presupposed economic growth, scientific and technological development and increased investment. His delegation considered that such problems could not be solved by measures taken from outside but that each Government had to solve its own internal problems. With regard to operative paragraph 7, he reminded the Council of the Joint statement made by the

Socialist States at the time when the International Development Strategy had been drawn up.¹ In his view, the Second Development Decade could succeed only if the developed countries changed their position in trade matters and only if the developing countries utilized their resources in a more rational way and increased their investments.

6. Mr. ODERO-JOWI (Kenya) said that in general, his delegation supported the Council's decision, which was a step forward since it might be hoped that the ILO's action would make it possible to improve planning and economic growth in the developing countries. He was somewhat disappointed, however, that the draft resolution merely defined the problem without suggesting any specific measures for meeting it. In operative paragraph 8, for example, the Council urged the ILO to pursue its catalysing action as far as the entire United Nations system was concerned, but did not make it clear what that meant. The developing world was at grips with specific problems such as investment requirements and the application of science and technology to development; those problems could not be solved by words, but by practical measures which would undoubtedly entail sacrifices and inflows of capital. He hoped that the Council would in future face responsibilities placed upon it by the Charter of the United Nations with greater courage.

AGENDA ITEM 9

Regional co-operation

- (a) Reports of the regional economic commissions and the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut
 - (i) Economic Commission for Europe
 - (ii) Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
 - (iii) Economic Commission for Latin America
 - (iv) Economic Commission for Africa
 - (v) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut
- (b) Report on the meetings of the Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions
- (c) Establishment of an economic commission for Western Asia
- (d) United Nations export promotion and development efforts

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/5407)

7. The PRESIDENT said that the Economic Committee had recommended that the Council adopt the eleven draft

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 42, document A/8074.

resolutions and three draft decisions set out in paragraph 56 of document E/5407.

Draft resolutions I to IX

8. The President invited the Council to take a decision on draft resolutions I to IX.

Draft resolutions I to IX were adopted.

Draft resolution X

9. The PRESIDENT said that since the position of delegations on draft resolution X had been clearly stated in the Economic Committee, he wondered whether the Council could not adopt it without a vote on the understanding that delegations might still make comments and outline their position.

Draft resolution X was adopted.

10. Mr. FERGUSON (United States of America) said that his delegation maintained its position and considered the Council's decision regrettable and a danger to the existence of certain United Nations organs. He had already emphasized the discriminatory nature of that resolution in the Economic Committee, in particular paragraph 1 (b) which was incompatible with the provisions of Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Charter of the United Nations and with the principles followed in establishing the other regional economic commissions. He regretted that his delegation's proposal that an advisory opinion should be requested of the ICJ had not been followed, since the Court alone was competent to reconcile the divergent views on the question. In its present form, the decision adopted by the Council, despite the opposition of the States Members of the United Nations which paid the highest contributions, might in the future create difficulties of such a nature as to compromise the aims of the Organization and even its spirit. By that decision, the Council confirmed the present unhealthy situation in the Middle East and contributed to perpetuating the hostility, based on ethnic reasons, of the countries of that region.

11. In the light of the serious consequences which the resolution might have the United States Government considered it its duty to re-open the debate on the question in other forums.

12. Mr. FACK (Netherlands) said that in a spirit of conciliation, he had accepted the adoption of draft resolution X, without a vote in the Council, since it had already been adopted by a majority vote in the Economic Committee. He wished, however, to remind the Council that he had voted against the draft resolution in the Committee and asked that his position should be stated in the summary record.

13. Mr. DENOT MEDEIROS (Brazil), Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), Mr. DUMAS (France) and Mr. YAMADA (Japan) said that they had abstained from the vote at the 660th meeting of the Economic Committee and that they maintained their position.

14. Mr. GATES (New Zealand) said that his delegation had also voted against the draft resolution and would have done the same had a vote been taken at the present meeting.

15. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland) recalled the explanations given by the representative of Finland on behalf of his own delegation and those of Denmark and Sweden, after the vote at the 660th meeting of the Economic Committee, and said that the position of his delegation with regard to the resolution had not changed.

16. Mr. HILLEL (Observer for Israel), speaking at the invitation of the President, reiterated the comments made by the Israeli delegation at the 646th and 660th meetings of the Economic Committee. His delegation recognized the need to establish a regional committee which took account of the legitimate interests of all States in the region with a view to establishing economic, social and cultural co-operation between them, but could not accept a resolution which was contrary to the principles of universality and non-discrimination. The Commission thus established in fact constituted an ethnic group of countries united by their hostility towards Israel, in flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter and the practices of the United Nations, and that illegal resolution would contribute to perpetuating discord in the Middle East. In that connexion he reminded the Council of the reservations he had made in the Economic Committee and thanked those delegations that had refused to vote against legality and the principles of the United Nations.

17. He was, moreover, surprised that the Economic Committee's report did not indicate the position of States not members of that Committee, which had been invited to participate in the consideration of the draft resolution. He hoped that the omission would be rectified in the Council's report to the General Assembly.

18. Mr. GIORRA (Lebanon) wished to comment on some of the reservations made; in particular, the commission was not an ethnic group and had not been established in a spirit of hostility.

19. In the original version of the draft resolution,² Lebanon had proposed the establishment of an economic commission for the Arab States, but it had withdrawn that restriction in the revised version, and all friendly countries in the region could belong to the commission with a view to fruitful collaboration.

20. He pointed out to the delegations that wished to raise the question before other bodies that the Charter of the United Nations gave the Council wide powers of interpretation of the questions submitted to it. The General Assembly had still wider powers. When the Charter was being drafted in 1945, the question had arisen as to whether the ICJ should be the body competent to interpret the Charter. A proposal made to that effect had not been approved, mainly because of the objections of some major Powers on the grounds that its adoption constituted an acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court.

² E/L.1497.

The technical committee which had been dealing with that question (Committee IV/2) had failed to reach agreement on the inclusion in the Charter of a provision concerning its interpretation. The Committee had, however, proposed a statement, which had been approved by the Conference, in which the following had been clearly stated: "In the course of operations from day to day of the various organs of the Organization, it is inevitable that each organ will interpret such parts of the Charter as are applicable to its particular functions. This process is inherent in the functioning of any body which operates under an instrument defining its functions and powers . . . Accordingly, it is not necessary to include in the Charter a provision either authorizing or approving the normal operation of this principle".³ It had later been recognized that an interpretation by the majority in any one organ according to its practices was authoritative enough to be an acceptable solution.

21. It was on the basis of that principle that the Lebanese delegation had invited the delegations which still entertained some juridical doubts to vote for its proposal. The opinion of the majority was that there was nothing in the Charter which constituted a bar to the establishment of the commission as proposed. The principles of equal rights and universality would not suffer from the Council's decision. If anyone had suffered, it was the 12 Arab States interested in the creation of the commission, who had been deprived for 25 years of the enjoyment of their rights under those two principles.

22. Lebanon had constantly adhered to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and had supported all measures designed to enhance the Organization's role in world affairs. That had been one of the mainstays of Lebanese foreign policy. Accordingly the Lebanese Government intended to construct a building on the outskirts of Beirut to house the regional offices of the United Nations and its agencies. Consultations were proceeding to that effect with the competent department of the United Nations Secretariat. The Lebanese Government would provide the new regional economic commission with the facilities it needed.

23. He thanked the Chairman of the Economic Committee for the understanding and patience he had shown when the Committee had been considering the question, also the delegations which had supported the draft resolution in the Economic Committee, and finally those which, like the United States and Netherlands delegations, although they had voted against the draft resolution in the Economic Committee, had not insisted that it should be put to the vote in the Council itself.

24. Mr. ALHADDAD (Yemen) thanked all the delegations that had demonstrated their interest in the economic and social development of the 12 countries covered by the new regional economic commission. Yemen was on good terms with the powers that had not favoured the creation of the new body. It therefore refused to believe that their attitude, which some saw as a sign of

neo-colonialism and systematic hostility toward the region, could be caused by anything other than difficulties of interpretation. He was sure that those powers, which he considered as friends, would do nothing to thwart the operation of the new economic commission, but that on the contrary, they would seek all means of promoting the economic and social development of a region which was indeniably of exceptional importance as regards energy, and whose resources and the earnings derived therefrom were of particular benefit to those powers.

Draft resolution XI

25. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take a decision on draft resolution XI, on United Nations export promotion programmes, which the Economic Committee had adopted without opposition.

Draft resolution XI was adopted.

Draft decisions A, B and C

26. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should adopt draft decisions A, B and C without a vote, as the Economic Committee had done.

27. Mrs. TALLAWY (Egypt) said that concerning draft decision C, her delegation maintained the reservations it had made in the Economic Committee regarding the comments of the Executive Secretary of ECA and the opinion of the Legal Counsel.

Draft decisions A, B and C were adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Mobilization of financial resources

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/5410)

28. The PRESIDENT recalled that the draft decision submitted by the Economic Committee (E/5410, para. 4) had been adopted unanimously, and suggested that the Council should adopt it without a vote.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 15

International environment co-operation

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/5409)

29. The PRESIDENT said the Economic Committee's draft resolution (E/5409, para. 6) had been adopted without opposition, and suggested that the Council should adopt it without a vote.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 4.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.05 p.m.

³ *Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, 1945* vol. XIII, p. 709 (document 933 IV/2/42(2)).

AGENDA ITEM 8

Operational activities for development:

- (a) United Nations Development Programme
- (b) United Nations Capital Development Fund
- (c) Technical co-operation activities undertaken by the Secretary-General
- (d) United Nations Volunteers programme
- (e) United Nations Fund for Population Activities
- (f) United Nations Children's Fund
- (g) World Food Programme

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/5412)

Draft resolution

30. The PRESIDENT said that the Economic Committee had adopted without opposition the draft resolution on the United Nations Children's Fund (E/5412, para. 13) and invited the Council to take a decision on the draft.

The draft resolution was adopted.

31. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation maintained the reservations it had made when the draft resolution had been discussed by the Economic Committee.

Draft decisions A, B and C

32. The PRESIDENT said that the Economic Committee had adopted without opposition draft decisions A, B and C (E/5412, para. 13) and asked the Council to take action on them.

Draft decisions A, B and C were adopted.

33. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation maintained the reservations it had made when draft decision C had been discussed by the Economic Committee.

Date and agenda of the resumed fifty-fifth session of the Council

34. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that the agenda for the resumed fifty-fifth session of the Council, which would be held from 15 to 18 October 1973, would contain seven items: items 1-7 on the provisional agenda (E/5357, p. 5), the question of aid to the Sudan-Sahelian populations threatened with famine, concerning which it would have before it a report by the Secretary-General under resolution 1797 (LV), and the question of the projections of natural resources reserves, supply and demand, on which the Secretary-General was to submit several reports under resolution 1761 B (LIV). The Secretary-General would submit to the Council at the resumed fifty-fifth session a programme of activities to be undertaken in implementation of that resolution, together with an estimate of the resources necessary to carry it out.

35. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should approve the list of items read out by the Secretary of the Council.

The list of items was approved.

36. Mr. ZEGERS (International Monetary Fund), referring to item 2 on the list, said that as the new Managing Director of the Fund had only recently taken office, the date for the submission of IMF's report to the Economic and Social Council had not yet been set.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.