



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Seventh Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 30 March 1953 at 3 p.m.

CONTENTS

Equal pay for equal work (E/CN.6/220, E/CN.6/L.112/Rev.1)

Economic opportunities for women:

(a) Reports on part-time work for women (E/CN.6/213, E/CN.6/222,
E/CN.6/L.116)

(b) Report on the number and employment status of older
women workers

Participation of women in the work of the United Nations and the
specialized agencies (E/CN.6/216, E/CN.6/L.115)

PRESENT:

Chairman:

Miss BERNARDINO

Dominican Republic

Rapporteur:

Begum ANWAR AHMED

Pakistan

PRESENT: (continued)

<u>Members:</u>	Daw OHN	Burma
	Mrs. NOVIKOVA	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
	Miss MISTRAL	} Chile
	Miss GALLO MULLER *	
	Miss TSENG	China
	Miss MANAS	Cuba
	Mrs. LEFAUCHEUK	France
	Mrs. GUERY	Haiti
	Mrs. TABET	Lebanon
	Miss PELETIER	Netherlands
	Miss YOUNG	New Zealand
	Mrs. WASILKOWSKA	Poland
	Mrs. POPOVA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mrs. WARDE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mrs. HAHN	United States of America
	Mrs. SANCHEZ de URDANETA	Venezuela

<u>Also Present:</u>	Mrs. de CASTILLO	Ecuador
	Mrs. KIEP	Germany
	Miss FUJITA	Japan
	Mrs. de CALVO	Inter-American Commission of Women

Representatives of Specialized Agencies:

Mrs. FAIRCHILD	International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Mrs. MYRDAL	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

* Alternate

PRESENT: (continued)

Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations:

Category A:

Miss SENDER	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)
Miss KAHN	World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)
Mrs. FOX	World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)

Category B and Register:

Mrs. VERGARA	Catholic International Union for Social Service
Mrs. MAHON)	International Alliance of Women
Mrs. WOODSMALL)	
Mr. LONGARZO	International Conference of Catholic Charities
Mrs. FREEMAN)	International Council of Women
Mrs. CARTER)	
Mrs. HYMER	International Federation of Business and Professional Women
Mrs. LAGEMANN	International Federation of Friends of Young Women
Miss ROBB	International Federation of University Women
Miss LALONDE)	International Federation of Women Lawyers
Miss SMITH)	
Mrs. WISHNER)	International League for the Rights of Men
Mrs. WOLLE-EGENOFF)	
Miss POSES)	
Mrs. EVANS	Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations
Mrs. MCGIVERN	Pax Romana
Mrs. WALSER	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

PRESENT: (continued)

Mrs. ANDERSON)
Miss FORSYTH)

World's Young Women's Christian
Associations

Secretariat:

Mrs. TENISON-WOODS
Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER

Chief of the Status of Women Section
Secretary of the Commission

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK (E/CN.6/220, E/CN.6/L.112/Rev.1)

Mrs. WARDE (United Kingdom) said that the United Kingdom had accepted the general principle of equal pay in relation to employees in government service and intended to give effect to it as soon as economic and financial circumstances permitted. The principle of equal pay already existed in the United Kingdom in many cases where the work and services rendered were the same, for example in law and in medicine. Women's organizations throughout the United Kingdom had done and were doing good work in that field and she hoped that in due course they would see the fruits of their labour.

Mrs. WASILKOWSKA (Poland) pointed out that the Commission was dealing with a matter in which discrimination against women was particularly pronounced and that strong measures were necessary. The draft resolution before the Commission (E/CN.6/L.112/Rev.1) contained no new features: the Commission confined itself to taking note of past achievements and recommending further studies.

Furthermore, she could not accept the terms of the text: its authors seemed to regard the matter primarily from a commercial point of view, which was a retrograde step in relation to the decisions already taken on the subject. At its sixth session, the Commission had adopted a draft resolution as a result of which the Commission on Human Rights at its eighth session had included in article 7 of the draft covenant on economic, social and cultural rights the general principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value.

She accordingly felt that it would be better to refer the draft resolution to the Committee on Resolutions.

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) was of the same opinion. It was time that the Commission passed from words to deeds. The Committee on Resolutions might succeed in producing a text which would be a step towards the solution of the problem.

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France), supported by Miss MANAS (Cuba), and Miss FELETIER (Netherlands), saw no purpose in referring to the Committee on Resolutions a question which had already been fully discussed in the Commission.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that, in view of the importance of the question of equal pay, it would be wiser for the Committee to study it. She reserved the right to present her comments on the draft to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN decided that the Committee on Resolutions would meet on Tuesday, 31 March, at 10 a.m., to examine draft resolution E/CN.6/L.112/Rev.1 and any other texts which might be submitted in the meantime.

The Committee on Communications would likewise meet at the same time.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN:

(a) REPORTS ON PART-TIME WORK FOR WOMEN (E/CN.6/213, E/CN.6/222, E/CN.6/L.116)

Begum ANWAR AHMED (Pakistan) announced that she had withdrawn her draft resolution E/CN.6/L.114 and had joined with the Netherlands representative in submitting draft resolution E/CN.6/L.116, which was now before the Commission.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that the question of economic opportunities for women could not be dissociated from the general question of the situation of workers and the granting of political and civil rights to women.

In many countries the workers' standard of living was declining in an alarming manner. The reason for that state of affairs was to be found in the armaments race, increasing military expenditure, the constantly rising price of food and other articles of primary necessity, and heavy rentals, which, according to the United Nations report on the world social situation, accounted for more than 20 per cent of wages in some countries of Western Europe and America; furthermore, free medical treatment was unknown in many countries.

It was therefore not surprising that women should be forced to work to help support their families; the number of women employed was about 18 million in the United States, more than 7 million in the United Kingdom, 7 million in

France, 9 million in Western Germany and 5 million in Italy. In most cases those women had nothing but their earnings to live on. According to a Marseilles newspaper of 27 November 1952, 3 million of the 7 million French women who were working were widows or heads of families. In Germany, the proportion was 75 per cent. An article reproduced in an annex to the Congressional Record of 11 July 1952 showed that, of the 17,795,000 women employed in the United States, 2 million were the sole support of their families. Such women had responsibilities equal to those of men, yet they were the victims of economic discrimination. The Commission, which was responsible for defending women's rights, should make a special effort to ensure to women equal pay for equal work, unemployment benefits and free medical assistance. Yet instead of that, some delegations were suggesting the adoption of a draft resolution on part-time work, which would be equivalent to a cut in wages because it would shorten the working day. She feared that those delegations were only trying to promote part-time work in order to divert attention from unemployment. No one could fail to be aware that unemployment was on the increase: in Belgium, for example, a large number of the textile and food factories were working only two days a week; in France the textile industry, which had had 120,000 part-time or full-time unemployed in the spring of 1952, had had 500,000 in the autumn of the same year.

It was clearly a matter of urgency that the Commission should take action to improve the difficult situation in which women in many countries were placed as a result of unemployment and the crisis; in particular, it should condemn the armaments race and speak out in favour of peace.

It was equally necessary, in the interests of working women, that the Commission should endeavour to obtain recognition of their rights to equal pay for equal work, old-age pensions and unemployment benefits, child welfare and free medical assistance, as also the elimination of the discriminatory measures to which they were so widely subjected.

In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, there was no discrimination against women; in law and in fact, women were equal to men in the economic field; they had the right to work, to leisure and to social insurance. Mothers and children were protected by the law and the Government spent considerable sums on the construction of housing, hospitals, schools and nurseries. To give only one example, 134 schools and 186 nurseries had been built in Moscow and its environs in the past two years.

Since the creation of the Soviet State, progress in techniques and the improvement in working conditions had opened up new opportunities for women. No branch of economic activity was closed to them and they were making an important contribution to the implementation of the Five-Year Plan.

In industry, where nearly half the labour force consisted of women, production in 1952 had increased by 11 per cent in relation to 1951. In agriculture, 40 per cent of the engineers were women. There were now 220,000 women doctors as against 2,000 in 1914; over a million women were employed as teachers; there were many women architects. Women played their full part in the political, cultural and scientific life of the country. 741 women had received the Stalin prize. Those few examples made it clear that in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, women had the right to choose their profession and to acquire the necessary training on an equal footing with men. Concluding, she stressed the fact that, contrary to the impression a certain representative might have given, Soviet women, like all other elements in the population, were employed on peaceful work and were inspired by the desire to contribute to the establishment of lasting peace.

Daw OEN (Burma) shared the opinion expressed by the Netherlands representative at the previous meeting that the question of part-time work for women could not, for the time being, form the subject of a resolution of an international body. It was a very complicated question, which required to be studied in detail with due regard to the economic and social conditions prevailing in the various countries. The economic situation of Burma was very different from that of other countries and the problem of part-time work for women was therefore not the same there.

Traditionally Burmese women had always been given important economic responsibilities. They were responsible for administering the family budget and running the household. That general rule applied to country areas and towns alike, in other words both to virtually uneducated women and to those at higher cultural level.

Burma's economy was based mainly on agriculture and small industries, and part-time work was still practically unknown. At the moment there was a trend towards industrialization and new problems would probably arise as it developed, including that of part-time work for women. There was, however, no such question for the time being.

Mrs. GUERY (Haiti) gave a brief outline of the part played by women in the economic life of her country. As Haiti was a fertile and mainly agricultural country, their part was particularly important in agriculture. That was so in the small holdings, where the peasant woman had always worked alongside her husband, and nowadays also in the large farms, which were becoming more numerous and which had women both in charge and as workers. In the country areas women had the practical monopoly of business. In the towns they were employed as full-time or part-time servants or children's nurses and also in certain handicraft industries (weaving, braiding, wood polishing).

The Haitian Government had recently embarked on large-scale land improvement, construction and development, which helped to increase the country's wealth considerably. That form of modernization, essential to the country, had been accompanied by migration to the towns and the capital, where women found new opportunities in offices, laboratories, the medical services and teaching. The Government had taken steps to prevent the migration from endangering the country's economic future.

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France), replying to a question asked by the Netherlands representative at the previous meeting, stated that a bill to regulate part-time work for women had been tabled in the French parliament several years earlier,

but that no action had as yet been taken on it. She was glad of that, because she was opposed to the regulation of part-time work. In her opinion that type of work prevented any chance of advancement and success in a career; if it were regulated, it would cast discredit on female labour.

She did not doubt that part-time work for women had its uses, but it came about as a result of circumstances that varied considerably from one country to another and from one period to another, and the Commission must not devote undue attention to studying particular situations; it should adopt a position of principle and try to achieve equality of rights in every field.

She thanked the Secretary-General and the International Labour Organisation for the interesting documents they had prepared on the subject but she felt that it would be dangerous for the Commission to proceed any further in the matter.

Mrs. HAHN (United States of America) recalled that, at the previous session, her delegation had drawn the Commission's attention to the opportunities of part-time work for men and women alike and especially for people with family responsibilities who wished to spend part of each day at home. Her delegation had therefore been glad to note the reports prepared by the ILO and the Secretary-General, and she hoped that additional material would be available to the Commission at its following session. She considered the proposal originally introduced by the Netherlands representative to be very useful in that respect and she was prepared to support it.

In the United States part-time work aroused great interest among women. She was glad to note that the ILO report carefully defined part-time work as regular employment for a part of the week or of the day which was considerably less than the ordinary period of employment. Such employment must not therefore be confused with the reduced weekly schedule imposed on full-time workers.

In the United States many individuals and non-governmental organizations had studied part-time work and the type of people interested in it. Those studies had resulted in publications, among which she would mention a booklet recently published by the Philadelphia University Women's Club, based on a

survey of part-time work, both paid and voluntary. Those publications would no doubt be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General. She hoped that the Commission would later be able to have at its disposal a list of the publications in that field which had been brought to the attention of the Secretary-General and the ILO. She did not know whether other countries had many commercial or private publications on the subject, but the Women's Bureau in the United States Department of Labor had noted a number of books and magazine articles devoted to the subject. It might be useful to have the Secretary-General's opinion on the possibility of providing the Commission with a partial listing of such material.

The Secretary-General's report mentioned the special bulletin of the Women's Bureau on part-time work for women. The bulletin dealt with the questions most frequently asked, such as the place of part-time work in business and community services, the possibilities of employment and recruitment, hours, earnings and fringe benefits; it also described the advantages and disadvantages of part-time work both for the employer and the employee and contained pertinent suggestions. The study on which the bulletin was based showed that the services of part-time workers were needed particularly where there were peak demands at certain hours, as in shops and restaurants, and in fields where there was a shortage of staff at the moment, as, for example, in teaching. Part-time work enabled mothers to stay with their children outside school hours, while allowing them to maintain their professional qualifications and skill and to add to the family income. Although the number of workers seeking part-time employment might be relatively small at any time, it was nevertheless true that, over a period of years, many men and women might prefer such employment at least temporarily, since it provided greater flexibility of hours or working conditions. In summarizing the situation, the bulletin of the Women's Bureau stated that part-time work enabled communities to use the skill of thousands of housewives or elderly people who wished to be at home a portion of the day. That skill, even used on a part-time basis, added to the productivity and welfare of the community. In emergencies, part-time workers could release full-time workers to more essential tasks, thus preventing the complete disruption of the community services.

In conclusion, she hoped that the Commission would not lose sight of the proposal framed the previous year by the United States delegation concerning the consideration of older women. While part-time work was often a source of satisfaction to a person who had retired from full-time activity, there were many other aspects of the situation of older women which might be of interest to countries where the average life-span was relatively long. She would be glad to know the view of the Secretary-General and the ILO on that matter. Information on whether the specialized agencies, such as the WHO, might be contemplating studies on the subject, would be valuable to the Commission in connexion with the problem of older women.

Mrs. FAIRCHILD (International Labour Organisation) stressed the fact that the ILO report was essentially provisional, since it had been drawn up on the basis of information received from twelve countries only.

She would not revert to the important questions that had already been raised in the Commission, in particular to the need for an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of part-time work, the expediency of formulating generalizations on the subject and the danger of such generalizations. She wished to repeat, however, that according to the communications received from the twelve countries in question it would appear to be essential to give a very specific definition of part-time work and to emphasize the close relation between the question and the economic conditions of the country concerned. Part-time work was work for less than the normal working day of a firm; it was distinguished from short-time work which the worker was compelled to accept, whether he wanted to or not by the fact that the individual concerned chose it deliberately.

Part-time employment was undoubtedly more common in such countries as Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States than in other countries. That was due partly to the fact that they were industrialized countries, where there was a shortage of manpower, and partly to the fact that the standard of living there was sufficiently high to allow numbers of women to feel it unnecessary to devote more than a few hours a day to work outside their homes. Reverting in that connexion to the question raised earlier by the Pakistan representative, Mrs. Fairchild said that the ILO was fully aware that in the

less industrialized countries handicrafts could be classified as part-time work, in that they did not entail a full working day and could generally be combined with housework. Such work was, however, different from the part-time employment available in the industrialized countries and the question of handicrafts must therefore be considered independently of part-time work in the strict sense of the term.

Part-time work was apparently more general in branches of industry in which the skill of the individual was required and machinery was not used. The information available, however, was not sufficient to allow of the formulation at present of any final conclusions regarding the types of activity best suited for part-time work.

In conclusion, she agreed with the French representative that the question of part-time work gave rise to a whole series of problems, including those of wages, holidays and social insurance, which the workers' organizations had themselves raised. It had to be considered whether part-time workers should enjoy the same advantages as full-time workers having regard to the fact that their services were generally less; there was also the fact that there was little protection for the interests of part-time workers who were not organized, either because they were employed in sectors where trade unions were weak or because they entered into individual contracts with their employers which did not regulate the questions she had mentioned. Furthermore, the employment of part-time workers could threaten the security of full-time workers by jeopardizing their wages and working conditions. All the information that could be collected on the subject should be carefully studied and the advantages and disadvantages of part-time work should be assessed in the case of all countries, whether or not industrialized.

Mrs. TENISON-WOODS (Secretariat), replying to the United States representative's question, said that the Secretary-General would be able to draw up a list of works and publications dealing with the question of part-time work for women if the Commission made a specific request to that effect. There was no need for the Commission to adopt a draft resolution but its request would have to appear in the report.

Mrs. HAHN (United States of America) made a formal proposal that in its report the Commission should request the Secretary-General to draw up a list of what were to his knowledge the chief works and publications on the subject of part-time work for women.

It was so decided.

Mrs. VERGARA (Catholic International Union for Social Service) said that her organization was deeply interested in the question of part-time work for women. It was of the opinion that the question should be studied with a view to improving living conditions for the family and for women and hence the general welfare, bearing in mind the countries where rapid industrialization was drawing an ever increasing number of women into work outside the home.

The few communications that the Catholic International Union for Social Service had so far received on the subject from the various social schools and social assistance groups in different countries indicated that when economic reasons obliged a mother to work, it should be possible to devise means which would leave her enough time to carry out her household and family duties.

The legal establishment of a system of part-time work required deep study. It had been advocated for many years as a way of partially remedying the inconveniences caused to the working wife and her family when she was obliged to work a full day, but it also had its disadvantages, particularly in certain branches of industry. The general application of such a system raised a number of problems which needed serious consideration. A woman who had a long journey to and from her work had the same travel expenses and endured the same fatigue as a full-time worker, often with additional difficulties since transport schedules were generally arranged for the hours of arrival and departure of the mass of workers. If a system of part-time work was to be generalized, it would be necessary to eliminate many of those inconveniences, which substantially reduced the potential advantages to women of part-time work.

It would seem that efforts should be directed towards a system of part-time work that would allow the wife and mother to carry on efficiently her role as manager of domestic consumption since domestic consumption represented a high percentage of the total consumption of the various countries and it was principally managed by housewives, that aspect of the question was of capital importance.

Social workers were well aware of the disastrous consequences that the mother's absence from home could have for the family in general and for the mental development of the children in particular. They therefore realized the need for measures that would make it possible for married women with children to remain at home. One of the Union's correspondents had requested that the United Nations, either through the Commission on the Status of Women or through a specialized agency, should study methods which would facilitate the presence in her home of the married woman with children.

Miss MISTRAL (Chile), referring to the closing remarks of the representative of the Catholic International Union for Social Service, felt that she too should draw the Commission's attention to the need for mothers to be at home as much as possible. Everyone was aware of the moral distress of children who were separated from their mothers, even though only for a few hours daily. Children needed affection even more than physical care. That fact would be realized by anyone who studied orphans in charitable institutions, whose staff took care of them but, however devoted and well-meaning, most often could not give them the fondness and understanding of which only a mother was capable. She herself had had an opportunity of very close acquaintance with some of those children, who, although decently fed and clad, yet suffered profoundly from moral loneliness. That important problem had aroused the feelings of many people in various countries, where women, and sometimes even whole families, constituted themselves as it were "godmothers" of some orphans. The children spent their free days and holidays with them, or the godmothers visited the children at the orphanage and thus made them feel that someone who cared was looking after them. It was greatly to be wished that that institution of godmothers should become general, not only for orphans but also for poor children whose parents, labouring under heavy material cares, were often unable to give them an atmosphere of affection and human warmth in which to grow up. In the modern world, where, despite what was customarily called progress, greed and selfishness were still all too common, children who could not find refuge with their mothers fell prey to bitter thoughts which might have the most serious effects on their psychological development.

She begged the Commission to bear in mind those considerations on work for women, whether full-time or part-time.

The CHAIRMAN assured the Chilean representative that the Commission would indeed bear in mind those important considerations.

Mrs. TABET (Lebanon) said that while part-time work existed in Lebanon it was not a regular practice and was not a recognized concept either in law or in jurisprudence. The Labour Code did not deal with it but only fixed the maximum hours for work. There was a recognition, however, that any reduction in the duration of work entailed a corresponding reduction in wages and might justify cancellation of a contract. Part-time work was practised particularly by women in rural areas, who themselves decided how long to work and what their work was worth. Such local craft workers were favoured by the women's organizations in the capital, whose custom it was to "adopt" a village and encourage and direct its production.

Miss YOUNG (New Zealand) said that her delegation had read with great interest the excellent reports on part-time work for women compiled by the Secretary-General and ILO. They were, however, only preliminary reports and did not lead to any statement of principles on which the Commission could base a decision on the substance of the problem. Consequently the New Zealand delegation supported the joint Netherlands and Pakistan draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.116), which merely requested continued study in that relatively unexplored field.

Although the non-governmental organizations seemed as a whole to favour part-time work for women, they attached many conditions to their recommendations. The probable risks of seeking to regulate part-time work seemed serious enough to induce the Commission to be wary. It seemed to be generally agreed that the exploitation of part-time women workers must be prevented and that the emergence of a system likely to be detrimental to family life and the welfare of the community must be obviated. Thought should also be given to the possibility of removing from part-time work women who could engage in it only at great sacrifice, mothers of very young children, for instance. Some economic means would have to

be found in such cases both to enable such women to fulfil their family obligations and to ensure adequate living conditions for them and their families.

In any event, the Commission could not take any decision before it had settled the extent to which part-time work should be encouraged or discouraged, as the case might be. It might well obtain further information on the value to the community and the employer of part-time work by women.

Miss KAHN (World Federation of Trade Unions) pointed out that it was difficult to reconcile two completely different ideas in one resolution, but that was precisely what the new joint draft resolution of the Netherlands and Pakistan delegations (E/CN.6/L.116) on part-time work for women set out to do. She preferred to the new text the original draft resolution of the Pakistan delegation (E/CN.6/L.114) on the general problem of economic opportunities for women in under-developed countries. The amalgamation of that draft resolution with the Netherlands draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.107) dealing with a totally different subject had entirely obscured the original idea. Furthermore, in the second paragraph of the new draft resolution the Secretary-General was asked to extend his study to seasonal agricultural work, although such work was not specifically excluded from the ILO definition of part-time work. The distinction drawn by ILO between part-time work on the one hand and seasonal work and under-employment or involuntary short-time work on the other must be observed.

The problem of part-time work was most involved and was one on which the WFTU felt that the Commission should not contemplate a decision of substance for the present. The members of the Commission who had spoken at the previous meeting had agreed that it was difficult to separate the problem from the general problem of levels of employment. The World Federation was opposed to any action aimed at regulating or systematically organizing part-time work. Although theoretically voluntary, part-time work could impair the position of full-time workers and unemployed alike; it had often contributed to a reduction in the general level of wages and encouraged employers and governments to evade their duty to provide social security, paid holidays, promotion and so on.

As a rule, women worked because they were obliged to do so for financial reasons and not to earn pin-money, as some people appeared to think; inquiries made by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor had fully established that fact. The statements on women's part-time work made in the previous year by the French and Chilean representatives were relevant. The French representative had then warned the Commission against the threat to the very principle of the equal right of men and women to work.

The World Federation's main concern was to safeguard that principle, particularly during the present period of increasing unemployment in many countries, more especially in industries producing consumer goods and in those employing a large number of women. The regulation of part-time work might be considered under conditions of full employment, although it would have even so to be accompanied by adequate safeguards for wage standards and social security for all workers; full employment, however, was far from being the general rule.

Regarding the studies to be undertaken by ILO, the World Federation considered that ILO should not confine itself to studying part-time work for women, but should deal with the whole question of part-time work in relation to the efforts being made to attain the goal of full employment laid down in Article 55 of the United Nations Charter. ILO could provide useful information by analysing the treatment of part-time workers in regard not only to wages but also to other conditions of employment such as holidays, social security and pensions.

Mrs. HYMER (International Federation of Business and Professional Women) said that at its last international congress the Federation she represented had adopted a resolution stressing the need for the use of all available manpower, both male and female, in order to derive the maximum benefit from the skill and experience of all workers. Part-time work had been considered as one way of enabling those not in a position to do full-time work to make their skill and experience available to the community.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Commission at its sixth session, the International Federation had sent a memorandum to its member federations containing the text of the resolution on part-time work adopted by the Economic and Social Council. It had received replies from the federations of Canada, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America which had corroborated generally the reports by ILO and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Those replies had been received too late for inclusion among the valuable documents prepared by the Secretariat, but would be transmitted to the Secretariat if any further reports on the subject were to be prepared.

The question of part-time work had aroused keen interest in some national federations, particularly in the United Kingdom; the federations of Finland, Italy and Switzerland, on the other hand, did not apparently attach much importance to it. Generally speaking, private employers were not interested in part-time work, and trade unions and civil service organizations were opposed to it. Part-time work was more prevalent in times of labour shortage and was of more interest to women, particularly to married and older women, than to men. In the United States, for example, the statistics of the American Federation of Business and Professional Women indicated that two-thirds of part-time workers were married, one-third were between 25 and 40 years of age, and 65 per cent were over 45 years of age. It was interesting to note that only 12 per cent of all young workers were employed part-time, the percentage being twice as high for the older group, i.e., workers over 25. Information relating to the United States indicated that one-third of the women working part-time had a secondary education, a quarter had had business or nursing training, and a quarter were college graduates; it followed that the part-time woman worker was often an educated person whose ability should be put to use.

The replies from national federations of the International Federation contained similar conclusions to those of the reports by the Secretary-General and ILO in regard to the advantages and drawbacks of part-time work. They emphasized, in particular, the need to find a way of enabling part-time workers to share the professional and social advantages of full-time workers without unduly increasing the burden of employers. The International Federation hoped

that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and ILO would continue to study the question. ILO was particularly well qualified to do so on account not only of its technical competence but also of its membership, which enabled it to ascertain the views both of employers and of employees.

The CHAIRMAN invited members to vote on the joint draft resolution of the Pakistan and Netherlands delegations (E/CN.6/L.116).

Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France) requested a vote paragraph by paragraph.

The first paragraph of the draft resolution was adopted by 12 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.

The second paragraph of the draft resolution was adopted by 10 votes to 4, with 2 abstentions.

The third paragraph of the draft resolution was adopted by 13 votes to 3.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 12 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.

Mrs. PCPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Commission had yet again decided not to deal with the very important problem of economic opportunities for women, but had attempted to divert attention from it by concentrating on a single aspect and one of the least importance, namely part-time work. Her delegation had voted against the palliative provisions of the joint draft resolution in order to disassociate itself from that policy of which it disapproved.

(b) REPORT ON THE NUMBER AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF OLDER WOMEN WORKERS (Economic and Social Council resolution 445 G (XIV))

Mrs. TENISON WOODS (Secretariat) informed the Commission that the Secretary-General had been unable to collect in time for the present session, all the relevant information on the number and employment status of older women workers. The question was a very complex one and called for both a statistical analysis and economic, psychological and sociological studies. Some aspects would be dealt with in the report to be prepared by ILO. The Secretary-General also hoped to be able to collect the data necessary to

complete the information already at his disposal, and to submit a general report which would fully meet the Commission's wishes at its next or a subsequent session.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission would note that statement, and expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would be in a position to submit the promised report at its next session.

Miss KAHN (World Federation of Trade Unions) said that her organization had expressed its concern on a number of occasions at the position of older workers in general. It had, in particular, submitted a memorandum on the subject to the Commission on Human Rights, when the provisions of the second draft covenant affecting the rights of the aged had been under discussion in the previous year. Clearly in many countries the problems affecting older workers were more serious for women than for men. She read out an article which had appeared in the New York World Telegram and Sun for 5 May 1952, and in which the counselling consultant of the New York City office of the New York State Employment Service had referred to the prejudice against age in New York State, where a saleswoman was considered too old at 35, a waitress at 40 and a bookkeeper at 45, and where 39 per cent of firms applied a very strict age policy in engaging employees.

Referring to the report on action taken in pursuance of decisions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixth session, (E/CN.6/207), Miss Kahn said that her organization welcomed ILO's announcement of its intention to comply with the Council's resolution 445 G (XIV) by co-operating in a report on the number and status of older women workers to be submitted to the Commission's eighth session. She did not, however, think that ILO should link the preparation of the report to the session of ILO's Advisory Committee on Salaried Employees and Professional Workers to be held early in 1954. The question of older workers affected all categories of workers, and the problems involved were far broader than the problems of salaried and professional workers alone. The World Federation would prefer ILO to undertake a study of the problem of older workers as a whole. Failing that, it would urge that the proposed study should also deal with the status of older women workers.

Mrs. FAIRCHILD (International Labour Organisation) expressed to the Commission the ILO's regret that it had been unable to submit a report on the problem of older women workers at the current session; but the Commission itself had drawn up an order of priorities for the studies it had assigned to the ILO. That order had been scrupulously observed; however the ILO hoped to be able to submit a report on the problem at the Commission's next session. She had noted with interest the WFTU representative's observation with regard to the desirability of extending the study of the problem to older women workers; that was entirely in accordance with the ILO's intentions.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES (E/CN.6/216; E/CN.6/L.115)

Mrs. GRINBERG-VANAUER (Secretariat) submitted to the Commission the Secretary-General's memorandum on the participation of women in the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies (E/CN.6/216). Unlike preceding reports, the memorandum contained in addition to information on the nature and proportion of the posts in the United Nations Secretariat occupied by women and their conditions of employment, information on the number and proportion of women who had been members of their countries' delegations since the San Francisco Conference.

The Secretary-General had decided not to limit the statistical tables of the number of women as compared with men in the Secretariat to Directors-General or Secretaries-General and the six top grades, feeling that that limitation would prevent an accurate picture being given of the employment of women in the Secretariat, and in particular of their opportunities for promotion. The tables contained in document E/CN.6/207 therefore covered all posts in the professional category.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of the Dominican Republic, said that her delegation was gratified to note that the Secretary-General had made some effort to assign women to more important functions in the

United Nations Secretariat, in accordance with Article 8 of the Charter, which provided that "The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs". Unfortunately she was compelled to note that the progress made in the application of Article 8 was regrettably slow. The number of women occupying senior posts in the United Nations Secretariat was still very small. That failure to comply with the explicit provisions of Article 8 was justified by the argument that women did not yet appear to be ready to accept the responsibilities inherent in any policy-making post; in some quarters it was even said that no woman possessed the training necessary for such posts, thereby proving once again that while extraordinary capacity was demanded of women, much more indulgence was shown to men in respect of training and ability.

The Dominican delegation hoped that the United Nations would in future unreservedly apply the principle of equality of men and women. It trusted that the authorities responsible for administering the Organization would not only do their best to give senior posts to qualified women already in the employ of the Secretariat, but would also try to appoint to the Secretariat other capable women who were prepared to place their abilities at the service of the Organization.

In submitting, jointly with the Venezuelan delegation, the draft resolution contained in document E/CN.6/L.115, the Dominican delegation was mindful of the fact that at San Francisco it had been one of the co-sponsors of the amendment which had led to the provisions of Article 8 of the Charter. Defence of the principle laid down in that Article was therefore considered by the Dominican delegation as a sacred duty.

Mrs. SANCHEZ de URDANETA (Venezuela) said that at San Francisco she had worked with Miss Bernardino to secure recognition of the principle of the equality of men and women in all fields. At the Commission's fourth session, in 1950, the Venezuelan delegation had submitted a draft resolution asking the Secretary-General to make greater use of qualified women in the Secretariat. Unfortunately that resolution had hitherto in practice remained a

dead-letter. She hoped that all members of the Commission would vote for the draft under discussion, in order to give the backing of their unanimous approval to a resolution whose importance could not be exaggerated.

Miss MISTRAL (Chile) associated herself fully with those remarks. The situation under consideration was not peculiar to the United Nations; but the Commission should be grateful to its Chairman for having had the courage to voice aloud a claim which affected women throughout the world.

Mrs. TABET (Lebanon) and Miss MANAS (Cuba) also supported the draft resolution.

Miss ROBB (International Federation of University Women) said that her organization had submitted to the Commission a statement on the participation of women in the work of the United Nations (E/CN.6/NGO.13), based on the Secretary-General's report on the same matter. The document contained three charts which illustrated more graphically than any extended remarks the fact that the proportion of women employed in the Secretariat in the professional category was higher in the lower than in the higher levels, and that only at the first level - i.e. the lowest - was the number of women higher than that of men. The information on the number and situation of women in the United Nations Secretariat must be read in conjunction with the other reports on the situation of women in political life and under private law that the Commission had studied to date. It was only too true that even in countries where women had long enjoyed full political rights, few women took part in the government of their State or occupied leading places in public life. It was to be hoped, however, that the development of professional training and the increasingly broad access of women to institutions of higher education would enable that situation to be remedied. Some appreciable progress had already been made: she cited two examples from the personal experience of the members of her organization.

The International Federation of University Women recognized that the selection of the United Nations staff was entirely a matter for the Secretary-General, and that there could be no interference in the constitution

of national delegations to the United Nations. However, non-governmental organizations could perform a useful function in that connexion firstly by drawing to the attention of expert and trained women openings in the United Nations Secretariat, and secondly by suggesting appropriate candidates to their own governments.

The International Federation of University Women did not consider it desirable that a quota of women to be employed in the United Nations Secretariat should be fixed, nor did it regard the very small number of women at present occupying senior posts in the Secretariat as evidence of discrimination; but it could not help noting with regret that no progress had been made in that connexion since 1950; that that applied not only to the United Nations Secretariat itself but also to the secretariats of the specialized agencies; that the figures given for promotions of women were hardly encouraging; that there were still some irregularities in the staff regulations in the application of the definition of dependency to men and women; that the number of women members of their government's delegations, while showing a slight increase, was still very low. Lastly, it would be noted that while it was commonly regretted that women in public service tended to be assigned exclusively to welfare and educational work the report under consideration did not appear to confirm that view; of the 79 representatives at the Economic and Social Council's fourteenth session, only 2 were women.

The International Federation of University Women therefore respectfully suggested that the Commission should express its disappointment at the fact that there had been little or no improvement in the situation as regards the participation of women in the work of the United Nations, urge the Secretary-General to do everything possible in the matter and ask him to continue to submit an annual report.

Mrs. FAIRCHILD (International Labour Organisation) wished to supplement the information given on page 27 of document E/C.6/216 with regard to the participation of women in the International Labour Conferences. While delegations to those conferences were officially composed of four members -

two government representatives, one employers' representative and one workers' representative - they also included a number of advisers who took an active part in the Conference's work, and, in particular, sat on sub-committees which did practical work such as studying problems under consideration, preparing recommendations etc. There were increasing numbers of women advisers. If that point was taken into account, the percentage of women who took part in the 1952 Labour Conference, for example, would rise from 1 to 3 per cent; 22 women took part in the Conference out of a total number of 600 participants.

Before closing the meeting, the CHAIRMAN reminded the Commission that the Convention on the Political Rights of Women would be open for signature next day, 31 March, at 5.00 p.m. According to the latest information received, the Governments of the Byelorussian SSR, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, France, Greece, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland, the Ukrainian SSR, the USSR, and Yugoslavia had given their representatives the credentials necessary to sign that historic document. She had herself been honoured with her Government's confidence and would sign the Convention on behalf of the Dominican Republic.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.