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Chairman: Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil)

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The meeting was called to order at 6.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 91: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE
(continued)

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/37/3 (Part I), A/37/381, A/37/458 and Add.1, A/37/551)
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- (c) DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND FOR THE SOLUTION OF OTHER VITAL NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/37/144 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 92: STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
(A/37/349 and Add.1, A/37/540)

1. Mr. LILLO (Chile), speaking on agenda item 91, observed that the United Nations Decade for Women had been of unquestionable value in increasing the awareness of both peoples and Governments about the need to ensure the effective integration of women in economic and social development, on an equal footing with men. The World Plan of Action and the Programme of Action adopted, respectively, at Mexico City in 1975 and at Copenhagen in 1980 had also made an important contribution to international efforts to improve the status of women. The time to examine the progress made in implementing those instruments was rapidly approaching, and his delegation was aware of the importance the Conference to be held in 1985 would have in that respect. In fact, the Conference would provide an opportunity to make an in-depth appraisal of both the results achieved and the failures experienced in the context of the Decade. Governments should take into account the conclusions resulting from the discussions at the Conference so as to correct any mistakes and close any loopholes and to focus future action on practical measures that would have a real impact on the well-being, living conditions and equality of women.

2. The international community's task in that connection should be placed in the context of the establishment of a more just and equitable new international economic order. In that regard, his delegation wished to mention its concern about the burden borne by women in developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, where access to work was either denied to them or they were obliged to perform extremely arduous and poorly paid tasks and were generally the first to suffer from the effects of world economic crises such as the current one.

(Mr. Lillo, Chile)

3. AS to the efforts made by the United Nations and by the specialized agencies to facilitate attainment of the Decade's objectives, his delegation noted with particular satisfaction that administrative measures had been adopted to ensure the effective execution of programmes. Moreover, his delegation attached particular importance to the work of the specialized agencies in the field of technical co-operation in helping Governments to implement plans of action and to complete preparations for the 1985 Conference at the national and regional levels. His delegation was also interested in the work of the United Nations regional commissions in that regard. He welcomed the fact that the Commission on the Status of Women and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had been entrusted with the task of preparing the Conference, since that would avoid the need to set up new bodies which would only duplicate their activities.

4. He regretted that the report of the Secretary-General on the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women had not been circulated early enough for his delegation to be able to study it thoroughly. However, his delegation was convinced of the importance of the Fund's work and realized that the objectives of the Decade could be attained only if the necessary resources were available. He therefore, expressed the hope that Governments would contribute generously to the Fund and said that his Government would continue to co-operate both with the Fund and with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

5. AS to the draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and for the Solution of Other Vital National and International Problems, his delegation felt that its current wording was not sufficiently pragmatic to attain the objectives that had been set. The draft should therefore be re-examined with a view to making it an effective document that supplemented and improved upon existing instruments.

6. Chile, like many other countries, wished to improve the status of women, and the Chilean Constitution embodied the principle of equality of men and women. As a result, women could participate at a high level in nation-wide activities in such areas as employment, administration, education, health, culture and the elimination of dire poverty. The government department responsible for women's questions also participated actively in a number of important programmes designed to enable a growing number of women to develop their skills and to be employed in productive work that was consistent with their own interests. His Government planned to pursue and intensify its efforts with a view to improving the status of Chilean women.

7. Mr. RUIZ CABAÑAS (Mexico), speaking on agenda items 91 and 92, said that the world economic crisis had not only hindered social progress but seemed to have caused a regression in many countries. Moreover, the deterioration of the economic situation affected women more seriously than men in many societies and thus hampered their integration in the development progress. That was diametrically opposed to the main objective of the Decade, namely, to ensure the integration of women in the development process in all sectors and at all levels, on an equal

(Mr. Ruiz Cabañas, Mexico)

footing with men and as both agents and beneficiaries. The progress achieved in that connection in the past 20 years left a great deal to be desired, and his delegation was firmly convinced that only the implementation of all the recommendations of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, at the international, regional and national levels, would make it possible to attain the objective set. Accordingly, he reiterated his delegation's commitment to those provisions.

8. Since the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held at Mexico City in 1975, everyone was aware that the condition of women could not be isolated from the development process as a whole, including not only the economic situation but also the quality of life generally. The struggle waged by women to gain recognition of their rights was thus an integral part of the struggle for justice and freedom which women and men were waging on an equal footing in order to achieve self-determination and receive fair and equitable treatment in a world free of hegemony. His delegation therefore welcomed the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/37/458 and was particularly pleased to learn from it that almost all the specialized agencies and other competent organizations of the United Nations system had initiated activities specially designed to promote the objectives of the Decade.

9. His Government had already stressed the high priority it placed on the question of the condition of women when it had sought a seat in the Commission on the Status of Women, to which Mexico had been elected unanimously. His Government was firmly convinced that the Commission would prove equal to the extremely difficult task of making preparations for the 1985 Conference.

10. Lastly, his delegation noted with satisfaction that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women was expanding its range of operations: his Government would continue to make annual contributions to the Fund.

11. Mrs. JAKTI (Indonesia), referring to agenda items 91 and 92, said that Indonesian women had always played an important role in the life of the country; they had participated actively in the struggle for independence against the colonial Power and were currently contributing to national development efforts. The Indonesian Constitution, adopted when independence was proclaimed in 1945, stipulated clearly that all citizens, men and women, shared equal rights and responsibilities. All national laws and regulations enacted subsequently contained clauses which were in accordance with that constitutional provision. Furthermore, the role of women was defined clearly in the guidelines for state policies adopted by the Peoples Consultative Assembly for each five-year period. The guidelines currently in force stipulated that women had the same rights, obligations and opportunities as men to participate fully in all development activities, without diminishing their role within the family and with regard to the younger generation.

12. In order to emphasize the participation of women in development, the President of the Indonesian Republic had appointed Mrs. Lasiah Sutano Minister for Women's Affairs and had entrusted her with the overall co-ordination of the programmes in

(Mrs. Jakti, Indonesia)

that field carried out by other ministries and government institutions. Currently 10 out of 16 ministries and five government institutions had their own programmes for women. In almost all the provinces of the country the Government had implemented programmes aimed at enhancing the role of women in the efforts to foster the family. Those programmes were part of the National Development Plan.

13. At the regional level, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) had developed a women's programme which formed part of their co-operative activities and had been designed in conformity with the national programmes of the various member countries and the activities carried out by the United Nations. The activities undertaken by Indonesia in that regard included a pilot project to establish a clearing-house for documentation on women's activities. Furthermore, the establishment of the ASEAN Confederation of Women's Organizations gave interested non-governmental organizations the opportunity to contribute jointly to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. Her Government felt that those regional initiatives could significantly enhance the role played by women's organizations and their participation in the development process.

14. Her delegation welcomed the convening of the 1985 World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women and considered that the preparations for the Conference should begin as soon as possible. Her delegation therefore fully supported the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/26 in that subject.

15. The Indonesian Government had signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in July 1980 during the Copenhagen Conference. In order to publicize the Convention as widely as possible the National Commission on the Status of Indonesian Women had convened in 1981 a seminar which had drawn the attention of various women's organizations, as well as a number of universities and governmental and non-governmental institutions. The participants in the seminar had recognized the importance of the Convention in bringing about equality between men and women and had recommended that the Indonesian Government should ratify it as soon as possible.

16. Lastly, she said that her Government intended to increase the amount of its pledges to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women before the end of the year.

17. Mrs. AL-SOSOWAH (Yemen) said that the new role of women in Yemen reflected the general evolution of Yemeni society. The life of Yemeni women, which had previously been simple, had become more complex and was currently part of the continuing struggle to improve the level of living. Women were no longer content to look after children and work in the fields; thanks to the measures taken to promote literacy, women could now continue their education to an advanced level and work while studying. The significant and effective contribution made by Yemeni women to the national development effort proved that the exclusion of women from paid work would not be in the national interest.

(Mrs. Al-Sosowah, Yemen)

18. The Yemeni Constitution stipulated that women had the same rights and duties as men, and that equality was enshrined in Islamic law and in other laws. Furthermore, the National Charter, which reflected the aspirations of the different population groups in Yemen, provided that all citizens, men and women, had the right to improve themselves, express their points of view, stand for election, vote and participate in the political life of the country. It was therefore clear that the role of Yemeni women was not limited to economic life, but also included the social and political aspects of development. For example, women had recently stood as candidates in municipal elections for the first time.

19. Furthermore, the Association of Yemeni Women, established at the outset of the revolution in 1962, was designed to foster the Yemeni family and improving the economic and social situation of women, particularly by taking measures to combat illiteracy. The various centres which the Association had established in the country had helped many Yemeni women to complete their education. There was also a Family Planning Association in Yemen, which sought to improve the health of families and in particular to promote maternal and child welfare.

20. She emphasized that the general availability of free education had contributed greatly to efforts to improve the lives of Yemeni women, and observed, in conclusion, that Yemen was one of the few countries in which women were treated on the basis of their abilities, not their sex.

21. Miss ABU LUGHOD (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization), referring to agenda item 91, said that Palestinian women, both as mothers and as participants in the struggle for the freedom and existence of their people, were a living example of the old Arabic saying that the woman who rocked her baby with her right hand shook the world with her left. Palestinian women rarely expended their energy in a debate on equal rights between men and women, for they were fighting for recognition of a fundamental right: the right to be human beings. At the time of its establishment in 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had recognized the importance of the role of women and had urged them to participate in PLO meetings. The Palestine National Charter called for the participation of Arab Palestinian women in the activities and the struggle of the organization and for their equality with men in all rights and privileges for the purpose of liberating the homeland. The problem of Palestinian women was therefore a national problem and they would not accept that it should be viewed as otherwise.

22. In 1982 several delegations had again expressed their opposition to the inclusion in the agenda of items which they considered controversial because of their political nature. Those delegations were very much mistaken if they thought that the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women - equality, development and peace - could be achieved without addressing the basic political problem which had brought about the plight of Palestinian women. Opposition to the inclusion in the agenda of the question of Palestinian women, whose situation was attributable solely to the brutality and inhumanity of Zionist policy, was collaboration with the criminal régime which, unable to break the spirit of an entire people, sought to disperse and eliminate that people.

(Miss Abu Lughod, Observer, PLO)

23. Far from being of any benefit to Palestinian women, the Israeli presence in Palestine had impeded their advancement; there was no place for the Palestinians within the colonial settler society established by the Israelis. Referring to the active role played by Palestinian women in the struggle against colonialism and foreign domination since the beginning of the century, in particular during the demonstrations against the Balfour Declaration and in 1933 against the United Kingdom Government's betrayal she reminded the Committee that hundreds of Palestinian women were currently arbitrarily detained in Israeli prisons.
24. Robbed of their land, Palestinian women living in the occupied territories were forced to work in Israeli factories for one third of the wages paid to Israeli workers and were denied union and other workers' rights. Having been deprived of their property, they saw education as a way to better their condition but the Zionists deemed educated people dangerous and deported them. Thus in the past two months, half the teaching staff of Najah University had been deported. Being deprived of the right to their national resources, the Palestinians lacked the funds needed for the proper maintenance of the few existing clinics and hospitals, so that Palestinian women and children suffered endemically from inadequate health care.
25. Although the delegations which had supported resolution 1982/18 on the situation of women and children in the occupied Arab territories adopted by the Economic and Social Council in the spring of 1982, could have imagined that state of affairs, they could not foresee at that time that another Arab country would be suffering under Zionist occupation or imagine the horrors that were to befall Palestinian and Lebanese women during the summer. Scores of women and children had been burned alive in shelters by phosphorus bombs, young girls had lost their entire family under Israeli and United States bombs, and most women had been left alone, without water, food, shelter or security, while their brothers and husbands were held with thousands of others in the eight detention camps set up recently in southern Lebanon and northern Israel. Hundreds of women had been taken prisoner, interrogated and tortured by the Israelis. One woman had been so badly burned under torture that she had lost the use of both her hands. Another, well known for her education and her extensive library, had found her books and personal belongings covered with excrement after the passage of Israeli troops.
26. The sufferings of Palestinian women had only intensified over the years. That was why the inclusion of the question in the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women was certainly not a political manoeuvre but rather evidence of the sincere desire of peace-loving people and nations to seek a solution for that unprecedented situation.
27. The General Union of Palestinian Women had appealed to all women's organizations and democratic forces for solidarity in the struggle waged by their Palestinian sisters for self-determination, the right to return to their homeland and the establishment of a democratic State in Palestine. A delegation from the Women's International Democratic Federation, which had 131 branches in 116 countries, had associated itself with that appeal.

(Miss Abu Lughod, Observer, PLO)

28. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was also making an urgent appeal to the delegations present in the Committee as well as to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women to help Palestinian women in accordance with the relevant recommendation of the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women held in Copenhagen in 1980. The Fund, which was to have facilitated projects proposed by the General Union of Palestinian Women, had approved proposals for the establishment of vocational training and child care centres, but as of 30 June 1982, no money from the Fund had been made available. It was now essential that the Union should be given the promised funds in order to provide emergency relief to the women who, with the approach of winter, were in urgent need of housing, medical care, supplies and food. In that connection, it had been reported in October that the flour sent to the Palestinian refugees as a gift from the European Economic Community had been sold commercially in Israel. It was imperative that UNRWA and the other United Nations agencies should be permitted to perform their humanitarian tasks without Israeli interference.

29. She expressed regret that in the current year the PLO should again have to defend the Palestinian people's right to existence and the relevance of their situation to the activities of the United Nations. She urged the few countries which had refused to do so to realize the unmistakably political nature of the oppression of the Palestinian people and to consider the problem of women within that context.

30. Mr. BALOG (Czechoslovakia), speaking on agenda items 91 and 92, said that modern women were no longer satisfied with the role of mother and housewife which had so long been their lot, and that they now participated actively in the activities undertaken in all sectors of society. Their aspirations were best expressed in the three objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: equality, development and peace.

31. With regard to the first of those objectives, only the countries that had created institutional and administrative mechanisms for incorporating women in community life had been successful in advancing the economic and spiritual emancipation of women. Czechoslovakia was one of those countries: the participation of women in economic life and machinery for taking care of women, particularly mothers, formed a well-balanced system which reconciled the interests of women as individuals and those of society.

32. Although Czechoslovakia had achieved certain successes in that field, it was not indifferent to the situation in those countries where women were only beginning their struggle for liberation and emancipation. That was why it had become a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and trusted that further countries would accede to it in the near future.

33. With respect to development, in many countries women were still not given the opportunity to participate in the development of society, either in an active or a passive sense. They still suffered from starvation, malnutrition, illiteracy and social oppression and even from political or racial oppression in many parts of the world.

(Mr. Balog, Czechoslovakia)

34. As to peace, that was essential for the implementation of all the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic had therefore actively associated itself with the proposal by the German Democratic Republic relating to the participation of women in the struggle for peace, which it saw as a means of supporting and encouraging efforts by women for the elimination of all the evils of modern times, and which it would like to see adopted as soon as possible.

35. The 1985 Conference should provide a new impetus for the activities undertaken to attain the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women, and Czechoslovakia, which was a member of the Commission on the Status of Women, welcomed the decision that the Commission should be the preparatory committee for the Conference. His delegation also wished to state that it was necessary to devote increased attention to the situation of women in southern Africa, in the Arab territories occupied by Israel, and in countries with ultra-reactionary régimes.

36. Mr. LIGAIRI (Fiji), speaking on item 91, said that the objective of achieving full equality for women should be seen in the context of specific cultures and traditions. His Government had realized that a sudden breakdown of cultural ties could create difficult social problems; it therefore scrutinized any demand for a change in the traditional pattern of life with a view to ascertaining its real impact, even though such a change might appear to promise social justice. It had, nevertheless, maintained and, when appropriate, intensified its efforts to ensure that the women of Fiji enjoyed equal opportunities in all fields, including education, employment, leisure and social and political responsibility.

37. The equal treatment of women was safeguarded by the Constitution and legislation of Fiji. Those safeguards had greatly contributed to the liberalization of traditional attitudes about the role and status of women in Fijian society, but the pace at which that process had developed had to a large extent been influenced by traditional and cultural perceptions. The problem Fiji faced, therefore, was one of adaptation.

38. Another major problem in the development of full equality for women was the competing claims of national development priorities. In many developing countries where resources were often limited and social amenities often non-existent, development must make it possible to meet the basic needs of the community at large. Fiji was one of those countries in which available resources had to be directed first toward the provision of universal education, better public health and sanitation, rural electrification and improved infrastructures before any consideration could be given to the development of programmes for a single social sector.

39. That did not mean that the traditional, cultural and economic constraints which the Government of Fiji faced had prevented it from promoting the rights and full equality of women or from supporting efforts aimed at the fulfilment of those goals. In addition to the fact that equal opportunities were constitutionally and

(Mr. Ligairi, Fiji)

legally guaranteed to women in all fields, their participation in the economy, in both the public and the private sector, was encouraged.

40. With regard to the Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference held at Copenhagen, his delegation noted with satisfaction the emphasis given to some practical and realistic proposals that were of direct relevance to women. It attached particular importance to paragraph 46 (m) of the Plan of Action adopted in Mexico City which advocated the development of modern rural technology, cottage industry, pre-school day centres and time- and energy-saving devices so as to reduce the heavy workload of women, particularly those living in rural sectors and for the urban poor. Fiji had made moderate but commendable progress in those areas through the efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organizations. His delegation nevertheless had reservations with regard to some of the targets set for development and on the priority given to them. For example, paragraph 46 (n) of the Plan stipulated that one of the objectives to be reached before 1980 was the "establishment of interdisciplinary and multisectoral machinery within the government for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration into national life". Fiji recognized that in order to ensure that the commitment to integrate women into national life was translated into action it was vital to have institutional and organizational structures to identify problems, formulate the requisite policies, monitor the implementation of those policies and co-ordinate all national efforts undertaken in that field. The relevant national machinery had been gradually evolving through consultations between the Government and the Fiji National Council of Women.

41. His delegation had always firmly believed that the problems of women must be examined in the larger context of national development and could not be isolated from the process of economic and social development as a whole.

42. Miss CAMPBELL (Canada), speaking on items 91 and 92, said that as a member of the Commission on the Status of Women her delegation was pleased that the Economic and Social Council had decided at its first regular session of 1982 that the Commission should be the preparatory body for the 1985 World Conference and that the Advancement of Women Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should serve as the secretariat of the preparatory body as well as of the Conference. It was unfortunate that the document setting forth her delegation's views on the preparations for the Conference, as well as other documents relating to items 91 and 92, had not been made available earlier to enable delegations to study them thoroughly.

43. The United Nations Decade for Women would end in two years, and while her delegation recognized that important steps had been taken to ensure that women occupied a meaningful position in society, it felt that a great deal remained to be done at both the national and international levels before women could be said to be participating on an equal basis with men in shaping the modern world. It therefore wished to propose that Member States, the Secretary-General and the heads of all the organs and agencies of the United Nations should make every effort to nominate as many women as men to decision-making posts in all national and international bodies from the present true to the end of the Decade.

(Miss Campbell, Canada)

44. Since the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, Canada had taken two important steps to promote equality. Firstly, a Charter of Rights and Freedoms had been included in its new Constitution; section 15 of that charter guaranteed, inter alia, that every individual was equal before and under the law, without discrimination based on sex, and allowed for any law or activity that had had as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals. Secondly, Canada had ratified, nearly a year ago, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and a Canadian expert had just participated in the first meeting of the committee responsible for overseeing the implementation of that Convention. Her delegation expected that the Committee would be given all the necessary means to perform its functions.

45. At the national level, her Government had nearly completed important changes in the Criminal Code which would have a significant impact on women who were victims of physical assault. Sexual assault would be dealt with in a manner consistent with the way in which other types of assault were treated. The recommendations that a committee of the House of Commons had formulated after making a study on battered women were now being reviewed with a view to their implementation. Despite Canada's current fiscal constraints, her Government believed that the goal of equality could not be set aside and it was attempting to ensure that women were not adversely affected by the application of the economic restraint policies.

46. Since its establishment by Parliament in 1977, Canada's Federal Human Rights Commission had processed thousands of complaints of discrimination, particularly sex discrimination, and had had encouraging success in its efforts to apply the concept of equal pay for work of equal value.

47. Three other activities of general interest were currently being carried out in Canada. The first was the preparation of a revised plan of action on the status of women, which would become the third such plan adopted since 1970. Second, working with an independent research institute, the Canadian Government had undertaken a research project on the special problems and opportunities of women of developing countries and Canada in relation to trade, immigration, investment and overall political, social and economic development. Finally, Canada was preparing its initial report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In the belief that the use of statistics was one way of showing the degree of its compliance with the Convention, it had instructed the federal departments responsible for the status of women and for statistics, respectively, to develop a statistical digest which would indicate the existing degree of equality between Canadian men and women, both in general and in relation to each article of the Convention.

48. In conclusion, she said that Canada, which had long played an active role in the Third Committee and the Commission on the Status of Women, had amply demonstrated, both nationally and internationally, its commitment to the equality of women and intended to maintain those standards.

49. Mrs. KI KIM TINE (Democratic Kampuchea), speaking on items 91 and 92, said that it was because the women of Kampuchea believed the United Nations Decade for Women would be a landmark in the annals of women's emancipation that they had sent a large delegation to take part in the New Delhi Regional Conference in 1979 and the Copenhagen World Conference in 1980, despite the Vietnamese war of aggression. For Kampuchean women, who had achieved their emancipation in the course of decades of bitter struggle for national liberation, the attention paid by the United Nations to the status of women was a valued source of encouragement. In the present dark days of Vietnamese occupation, the support of the international community for their struggle against the occupier was heartening.

50. Fighting since 25 December 1978 - the date of the Vietnamese invasion - against an enemy infinitely superior in numbers and arms, who was continuing to defy the international community and to persecute the Kampuchean people not only with conventional weapons but also with chemical and biological ones, the sons and daughters of Kampuchea were not hesitating to make the supreme sacrifice to keep the aggressors in check. If a quarter of a million Vietnamese soldiers were currently bogged down on the battlefields of Kampuchea, that was thanks to the active participation of women in the national liberation struggle, a participation which was all the more decisive because women were today more numerous than men as a result of decades of war. Serving at the front in guerrilla units defending their villages and in the armed forces' transport and supply units, where they had become the guerrillas' indispensable auxiliaries, serving likewise as doctors and nurses in field hospitals, serving at the rear in diplomacy, administration, the economy, health and education, the women of Kampuchea were braving all obstacles and giving of their best so that their land might survive as an independent, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned State maintaining relations of peace, friendship and co-operation with all countries near and far. It was they who were imbuing children with patriotism, the will to defend Khmer civilization and the virtues of brotherhood, justice and a love of independence and peace. Those who had been forced to flee abroad were waiting to return to their motherland to take part in the struggle and in national reconstruction. She therefore wished to thank the Economic and Social Council on their behalf for having adopted resolution 1982/25, in which it asked the international community to continue sharing the burden of aid to refugees and displaced persons from Kampuchea.

51. Aspiring only to live in peace, like the whole Khmer people, Kampuchean women were being forced by Viet Nam's war of aggression and genocide to continue the struggle alongside their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. In areas temporarily occupied by the Vietnamese army, Kampuchean women were enduring great suffering, where the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, in the vast areas under its control, attached great importance to their situation. At the instance of the responsible social services and the Red Cross of Democratic Kampuchea, it was striving to solve the problems encountered by women in their dual role as mothers and combatants. The women of Kampuchea, conscious of the immensity and complexity of their current task of ensuring national survival, and of their future task of reconstructing a country devastated by the Vietnamese war of invasion, were deeply grateful to the international community and to all their sisters who loved peace and justice for the many kinds of aid and support which they were providing.

(Mrs. Ki Kim Tine, Democratic Kampuchea)

52. Appealing to the international community and to women throughout the world for support in putting an end to Vietnamese aggression, which was the source of all the Kampuchean people's misfortunes, she demanded that Vietnamese forces should withdraw immediately and unconditionally from Kampuchean territory in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 34/22, 35/6, 36/5 and 37/6 so that the country's peace and independence might be restored and Kampuchean women could play their full part in the political, economic, social and cultural development of the nation, in close co-operation with all the women and peoples of the world, and make their contribution to strengthening peace and security in South-East Asia and everywhere else.

53. Ms. RADIC (Yugoslavia), speaking on items 91 and 92, was pleased to note that further practical steps had been taken to promote activities relating to the status of women, including in particular, the preparations for the 1985 World Conference undertaken pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/26.

54. The Conference would offer the opportunity to evaluate the results already obtained and to recommend further measures for the realization of the objectives of the Decade, which should be reflected not only in an improvement in the status of women but also in the creation of the conditions necessary to enable mankind as a whole to live in peace, in a world in which development would be more balanced and just and the inalienable right of every people to independence and to a freely chosen road to development would be respected. There were close links between the efforts aimed at realizing the objectives of the Decade and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, the establishment of a new international economic order, measures for disarmament, the elimination of hotbeds of war and action to promote peace and security in the world, as was evidenced by the provisions adopted at the World Conferences in Mexico and Copenhagen and the Conference on the Role of Women in the Development of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries in Baghdad in 1979 and in the Programme of Action worked out at the meeting of high-level experts of non-aligned and other developing countries on the role of women held at Havana in 1981.

55. The Conference should assess the extent to which the recommendations of the World Plan of Action and of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, together with the recommendations of the non-aligned and developing countries and of specialized agencies and other relevant bodies, had become an integral part of the activities and documents of the United Nations. The Conference should also reaffirm that the promotion of the status of women was inseparable from the development strategy as defined in paragraph 4 of the Programme of Action. In that regard, her country advocated the establishment of new international economic relations, primarily through global negotiations in the United Nations, with a view to solving the major international development problems in accordance with the principles of a new international economic order.

56. The Conference should also endorse the conclusions reached by the International Seminar on Popular Participation on the status of women, according to which they were often excluded from the management of formal economic structures,

(Ms. Radić, Yugoslavia)

management duties, public offices and politic life such practices were wasteful and disadvantageous not only to women but to society as a whole. The economic participation of women in national life should be consciously planned and included in the planning systems of national economies and in long-term economic and social development programmes.

57. Her delegation welcomed the holding of the first meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and of the meeting of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to solve procedural questions. It wished to stress the importance it attached to universal ratification of the Convention and to strict implementation of its provisions. Her delegation also noted with satisfaction the progress made with regard to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

58. Mrs. KOZAKOU-MARCOULLIS (Cyprus), speaking on items 91 and 92, said that after evaluating the progress achieved in the implementation of the Mexico City World Plan of Action and the Copenhagen Programme of Action, the 1985 World Conference should establish the basis for a new post-Decade strategy by undertaking to formulate the steps to be taken and objectives to be achieved in the future.

59. Millions of women were still regarded as being unequal to men and were seen as having different social functions and limited roles which prevented them from participating fully in activities outside of family life and deprived them of self-fulfilment and integration in the process of development and in society. Women accounted for 500 million of the current figure of 800 million illiterates in the world, and although they constituted one third or even half of the gainfully employed population of the world, the vast majority of them were employed only at the lower levels. In many parts of the world centuries-old traditions, prejudices, discriminatory practices and exploitation, as well as unemployment and underemployment of women, were obstacles to the emancipation of women and their participation in economic development on an equal footing with men. The current international economic, political and social situation, characterized, inter alia, by poverty and famine in many parts of the world, anarchy in international relations, aggression and military occupation, colonialism and neo-colonialism, the uprooting of millions of people who become refugees and the economic crisis, did not favour the improvement of the living conditions of the population as a whole. It favoured even less the improvement of the status of women.

60. The progress achieved in that field and the contribution of women to development should not, however, be minimized. It was merely a matter of emphasizing that the world was on the threshold of a new era in which efforts would be redoubled to ensure full equality between men and women and the integration of women in development, as well as their participation in the strengthening of international co-operation and peace, which presupposed equality of rights, opportunities and responsibilities for all members of society. Since the Second World War, people had become more fully aware throughout the world of the injustices to which women were subjected and the latter had suddenly awakened,

(Mrs. Kozakou-Marcoullis, Cyprus)

after a long sleep induced by discrimination, social constraints and isolation. Attitudes had progressively evolved and much hope had been placed in the education of women. With increased literacy and education, they had become acquainted with the ideas and institutions of the modern world and with an environment that was no longer limited to relatives and the family, and the resulting values and roles. The industrial revolution and urbanization had also changed traditional behaviour, and the proportion of women in the non-agricultural work-force had increased. The decline in traditional religious beliefs which had favoured a high rate of fertility, reduction in infant mortality rates and the awareness that the education of children was costly and that their labour had lost its usefulness had led to a lowering of fertility and, consequently, an increase in the social and economic mobility of women throughout the world.

61. Cyprus was no exception to the rule, and its evolution had been marked by urbanization, transformation of socio-economic structures and the reorientation of the work-force towards the secondary and tertiary sectors. Cypriot women, including in particular those in the rural areas, whose role had traditionally been limited to family life and housework or non-remunerative agricultural work, had benefited significantly from the economic boom which had begun in Cyprus at the end of the Second World War and had accelerated after independence and the proclamation of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960. In 1974, Cyprus had ranked among the countries with the highest levels of literacy. At present, more than 85 per cent of the female population were literate. The level of education of Cypriot women was rapidly approaching that of men, thus changing traditional concepts about the role of women. Those rapid developments in the social and economic situation, which had had the effect of increasing the participation of women in all sectors of social life, had been brutally disrupted by the Turkish invasion in the summer of 1974. Two hundred thousand had been uprooted from their homes and had become refugees in their own country, with destructive consequences for the family unit and particularly for women. Approximately 40 per cent of Cypriot territory was still occupied by Turkish troops and 70 per cent of its economic resources were in the occupied areas, which had serious implications for the economic life of the country. The mass unemployment from which the economically active population suffered had a particular impact on women. A large number of women had been killed, injured or mistreated during the invasion, and 152 women were among the 1,619 missing persons. The economic difficulties that had arisen from the Turkish invasion had had adverse effects on education, which was one of the main instruments of the advancement of women.

62. The suffering of Cypriot women could not be expressed in numbers or percentages. They had learned during the past eight years that equality and development were not enough to ensure their emancipation, but must be coupled with peace and justice. Women played an important role in the struggle for the liberation of the Cypriot people, the objective of which was the withdrawal of Turkish troops and the return of refugees to their united, independent, demilitarized and non-aligned country.

63. Mr. JANKU (Albania) said that since the beginning of the United Nations Decade for Women there had been a continuous development, in statements, plans and programmes, of the idea that the emancipation and advancement of women in the family and society was a prerequisite for development and progress. It must be stated, however, that neither the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year nor the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women had been translated into reality: far from improving, the situation of women had deteriorated in many countries. The bourgeoisie in the capitalist-revisionist countries attempted to place the burden of the economic crisis in those countries on the backs of the labouring masses, a policy which could not but intensify the exploitation of women, the traditional victims of super-exploitation and the most savage discrimination. That was true even in the so-called most advanced countries, in which the feminist and other movements, supported by the media, sought through the dissemination of their reactionary theories to distract women from the crucial problems of the emancipation of the masses and the movement towards real democracy, and draw their attention to secondary problems relating to themselves.

64. Albanian women had never dissociated the struggle for their emancipation from the struggle of the people for national liberation and social progress. They had fought valiantly in the ranks of the partisans and revolutionaries against the Nazi invaders and the oppressors of the country, convinced that the revolution would lead to the radical transformation of society necessary for their own liberation. The Albanian Communist Party, which had led the people's revolution in Albania, had furthermore recognized that the revolutionary movement could not succeed without the full participation of women.

65. The Albanian Constitution adopted after the liberation from foreign occupation and the establishment of the People's Power guaranteed the equality of women and men. The Albanian people had thus recognized that the participation of women in production, defence and the governing of the country was essential. Today, Albanian women played an important role in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the country. Thirty per cent of the membership of the Party and about 33 per cent of the deputies to the People's Assembly, the supreme organ of State power, were women. Women constituted 46 per cent of the work-force. Fifty per cent of the student body of the secondary schools, and 52 per cent of the students in universities were girls. Despite the enormous progress achieved, the Albanian Government was unceasingly promoting the complete and effective equality of men and women by creating the conditions necessary for women to exercise their rights recognized in legislation and by encouraging the ever-increasing participation of women in the building of socialism. The Women's Union of Albania played a very important role in that regard, as had been recognized by Comrade Enver Hoxha, leader of the Albanian people. Finally, Albanian women themselves, as in the past, supported the just struggle waged throughout the world by oppressed women and peoples for their individual and national liberation.

66. Mrs. KOUYOKILA (Congo), speaking on items 91 and 92, commended the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women for her efforts to make the Institute operational in the near future so that it could begin the substantive work entrusted to it.

(Mrs. Kouyokila, Congo)

67. In the context of the United Nations Decade for Women, whose main themes were equality, development and peace, equality between men and women was seen as enabling women to participate on an equal footing with men in all the activities of a particular society and, consequently, to have full access to education and to State bodies. Progress had clearly been made in that area since the beginning of the Decade, but obstacles to women's full development remained in some areas. The time had come when women must be allowed to develop their potential in its entirety, for if they were not fully integrated into national life they could not participate effectively in the economic and political development of their countries, which was a guarantee of peace.

68. Women's activities in her country had been directed and guided by the Union révolutionnaire des femmes du Congo, which received support from the Party and the States. The Union was setting up specific structures to enable Congolese women to take their place in the forefront of development. Recently, a department had been established within the Union to promote co-operatives, which were intended to bring together large numbers of women with a view to implementing collective projects in specific areas. In the long term, the co-operatives should result in the diversification and improvement of national production. The co-operatives had already achieved some success, especially in rural areas, since they provided women with an opportunity to express themselves freely and to renounce individualism in favour of productive collectivization. While Congolese women were actively taking part in the political, social and economic life of the country, much remained to be done to involve them in all aspects of nation-building.

69. Her Government, which attached increasing importance to everything that might improve the condition of Congolese women, had recently acted as host to a regional workshop on project development and implementation organized by ECA in collaboration with the Yaoundé MULPOC. From the workshop it had become clear that the difficulties experienced by some women's organizations responsible for the implementation of projects were due largely to their lack of experience. It was therefore necessary to hold many more such international meetings, which, by promoting the exchange of information and experiences, made it possible both to avoid certain difficulties which hampered the implementation of projects and to determine ways to implement them rapidly and simply. United Nations radio broadcasts might also be of great assistance in exchanging information in that area. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women might in turn help women finance their projects.

70. Her Government was contributing to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, and she hoped that all Member States would do likewise.

71. Ms. FAWTHORPE (New Zealand), speaking on item 91, said that, as the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women would take place in less than three years, it was necessary to begin to determine its themes and priorities. Her delegation supported Economic and Social Council Resolution 1982/26 in which the Council recommended that the Commission on the Status of Women should be the preparatory body for the Conference and that the

(Ms. Fawthorpe, New Zealand)

Advancement of Women Branch should serve as the preparatory body's secretariat. In view of the Commission's competence and the valuable contribution which it had made to the cause of women - it had been responsible for the first draft of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination against Women - one was justified in considering it fully qualified to draw up a practical agenda and provide guidance on the preparation of documentation for the Conference, in order to sustain the momentum which the Decade had given to the international movement for women's advancement. In that respect, care should be taken to ensure that the Conference attached due importance to the problems which continued to pose obstacles to equality between men and women, as well as to emerging areas of concern in that area. The Commission must also attempt to keep the agenda of the Conference free of controversial political issues, which, regrettably, had divided participants at the Copenhagen Conference. Her Government would like the Conference to emphasize regional activities that facilitated exchanges of information on national projects. It had been especially pleased to note that ESCAP had taken steps to ensure that women's problems were a basic consideration in its development activities. For example, it was increasing the number of staff involved in women's programmes and establishing an interdivisional task force for activities relating to the integration of women in development.

72. One important result of the Copenhagen Conference had been the achievement of wider recognition for the crucial role that women played in the social and economic life of all countries; at the same time, her Government would like to keep attention focused on other related matters, especially the social and cultural factors which were among the underlying causes of discrimination against women. In that connection, she cited the useful proposals of the Commission on the Status of Women, which had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1982/22, entitled "Abuses against women and children". Her delegation had also noted with satisfaction that a Special Rapporteur had been appointed to ensure the co-ordination of surveys and studies on traffic in persons and exploitation of the prostitution of others.

73. With regard to preparations for the 1985 Conference, priority must be given to post-Decade policies and activities, so that the Conference would constitute not so much review as an opening to the future.

74. New Zealand would like all activities undertaken by organizations within the United Nations system to maximize the involvement of women, who were supposedly the beneficiaries of the policies elaborated by the Organization. Numerous examples gave evidence of the imagination and energy which women could use outside of formal structures, to achieve objectives which they themselves had defined. In that respect, she was pleased to note that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women had made possible many projects which drew on that very imagination and energy, and which had a direct impact on the everyday lives of underprivileged women. Her delegation therefore hoped that the administrative problems concerning the Fund might be solved in the near future, and supported paragraph 11 of draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.24.

(Ms. Fawthorpe, New Zealand)

75. With regard to United Nations employment and promotion policies, she had been pleased to note that 25 per cent of all Professional posts in UNICEF were currently held by women and that UNICEF had thus reached the target set by the Secretary-General; it should indeed be the Organization which set the example in that regard.

76. Her delegation welcomed the fact that the sponsors of the draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and for the Solution of Other Vital National and International Problems had shown a willingness to engage in informal discussions, but reaffirmed its reservations on that subject; a declaration alone would not eliminate sex-based discrimination, which was a major obstacle to the participation of women in political life.

77. Of all the social changes currently taking place in New Zealand, those relating to the situation of women were undoubtedly the most noteworthy. However, those changes were complex, and progress was often accompanied by new, unforeseen problems. Women's liberation was also part of a more general trend towards the individual autonomy of the members of a society, and of developments affecting social and cultural questions at the international level. In recognition of those facts, New Zealand would continue to give active support to the activities which the United Nations had undertaken within the framework of the Decade and expected to benefit from the changes which they would bring about.

The meeting rose at 9 p.m.