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THIRD COMMITTEE
33rd meeting
held on
Friday, 4 November 1983
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 33rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. CHAVANAVIRAJ (Thailand)

later: Mrs. FLOREZ (Cuba)

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9 November 1983

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 91: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE
(continued) (A/38/203):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/38/146)
- (b) PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN (A/C.3/38/2 and Add.1)
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AGENDA ITEM 92: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN
(continued):

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (A/38/45, A/C.3/38/7)
- (b) STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/38/378)

AGENDA ITEM 85: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION (continued):

- (b) NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/C.3/38/L.16)

1. Mrs. SHAHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs), referred to the statement made by the representative of Austria at the 30th meeting (A/C.3/38/SR.30) and said that she had been informed by the Economic Commission for Europe that the European seminar on the economic role of women would be held from 15 to 18 October 1984. As the representative of Austria had said, his Government had offered to host the seminar.

2. Mrs. REYNOLDS (United States of America) said that the documents under discussion showed the crucial role to be played by non-governmental organizations in promoting the full participation of women in development and pointed to the contribution the 1985 World Conference on Women could make towards fostering a more equitable partnership of men and women throughout the world.

3. Among the achievements of the Decade, she mentioned the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of

(Mrs. Reynolds, United States)

Women (INSTRAW). Her delegation wished to congratulate the Government of the Dominican Republic and the staff and Board of the Institute on the auspicious opening of the headquarters in Santo Domingo in August 1983.

4. Another accomplishment of the Decade had been the establishment of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women. Her delegation congratulated the staff and the Consultative Committee of the Fund for their commitment to the practical application of women-in-development principles and thanked the Secretary-General for his prompt action to enhance the Fund's efficiency by creating an implementation unit and by a realistic alignment of staff. Her delegation had also noted with appreciation the partnership the Fund and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) were forging to ensure the appropriate involvement of women in technical co-operation activities. The fact that the Fund was increasing the percentage of projects implemented by non-governmental organizations was also a source of satisfaction. Non-governmental organizations were a crucial bridge between project planners and project beneficiaries and had the unique ability to incorporate practical knowledge of a particular situation into the design of projects.

5. The recent formation of a United States National Committee for the Voluntary Fund was one manifestation of the growing interest the Decade had helped to stimulate in the concept of women in development in the United States. Another was the founding in 1982 of the Association of Women in Development by a group of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers in the public and private sectors. One goal of the Association was to strengthen research and action in the women-in-development field by increasing interaction among those groups.

6. The sharing of experiences and ideas was the fundamental purpose of world conferences on women. The 1985 Conference would provide a unique forum for Member States and non-governmental organizations to work together co-operatively. The United States looked forward to that Conference as an opportunity to evaluate the accomplishments of the previous 10 years, to bring together views from all parts of the world and to move forward with a practical and effective agenda for the period beyond 1985.

7. Throughout history, collective action based on unity of purpose had been a most powerful agent of change. The women of the world shared a fundamental unity of purpose by virtue of their lack of equal access to the challenges and benefits of full participation in society. The 1985 Conference should be a forum to foster that unity. Member States might have legitimate political differences, and there were United Nations forums whose purpose was to debate those differences. However, the introduction of divisive political issues into forums especially created to deal with other questions, forums in which political issues could not be solved, was inappropriate and, in the case of conferences on women, would only reinforce negative stereotypes which women had long sought to shed and encourage the tendency to trivialize the issues which united women everywhere. The Commission on the Status of Women had acted wisely in that respect and in recognizing the importance of the principle of consensus in preparing for the Conference.

(Mrs. Reynolds, United States)

8. The draft agenda for the Conference drawn up by the Commission and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council was fully acceptable to her delegation, which believed that the time had passed when some issues were assumed to be of concern to women and some were not. Her delegation hoped that the General Assembly would approve the agenda as presented and looked forward to participating in future meetings of the Committee in its capacity as the preparatory body for the Conference.

9. The Commission on the Status of Women had also agreed upon a number of activities to be undertaken prior to the Conference. At the session of the Economic and Social Council, Member States had requested that the implementation proposal submitted by the Secretariat be streamlined to take account of the many recommendations made by Member States, including recommendations concerning the budget. Her delegation hoped that the Secretariat had given attention to that matter.

10. In conclusion, she thanked all who had participated in the preparation of the questionnaire on national progress during the Decade for Women; her Government had organized an inter-agency task force to address the questions. Her delegation was also pleased that the Secretariat had invited non-governmental organizations to make their own assessment of progress made during the Decade and the obstacles which remained.

11. Miss MARTIN (Canada) said that in its capacity as the preparatory body for the World Conference, the Commission on the Status of Women, of which Canada was a member, had been assigned a central role in shaping the World Conference, which it was hoped would contribute significantly to the realization of the objectives of the Decade.

12. Her delegation was pleased to have participated in working out the provisional agenda for the Conference. The two substantive items of the draft agenda, items 7 and 8, provided a sturdy and well-balanced foundation for discussion of all major issues affecting the status of women throughout the world. The draft agenda had been adopted by consensus and it was the hope of her delegation that the General Assembly would not attempt to alter it in any substantive way.

13. Canada unreservedly supported the United Nations Decade for Women and would be contributing \$20,000 to the Voluntary Fund for the Decade in 1983 and each year until the end of the Decade. It viewed with approval the effective management of the Fund and its close co-operation with the UNDP.

14. At the national level, Canada had taken steps to establish a national programme to recognize the Decade for Women and to prepare for the World Conference by assigning a senior public servant to work on the Decade Programme until the World Conference and by establishing an extensive system of consultation and liaison to facilitate work on substantive matters to be completed by mid-1985.

(Miss Martin, Canada)

15. The first measure about which the various governmental committees and women's non-governmental organizations would be consulted was the United Nations questionnaire to Governments on the progress made in achieving the goals of the Decade, which her Government would endeavour to answer as fully as possible. Once the questionnaire had been completed, work would begin to develop a new national plan of action on the status of women. At the federal level, three provisional working groups had been constituted to work on three major areas of discrimination against women, namely, women and economic independence, women in public life and women as persons. When completed, the new plan of action would consist of two parts: the first would cover the period 1986-1990 and would comprise concrete measures to overcome the obstacles to equality to be implemented by the year 1990; the second part of the plan of action would outline strategies to advance equality for women in Canadian society as a whole. It would be implemented over the decade 1991 to 2000.

16. Apart from activities associated with the United Nations Decade, Canada was involved in a number of initiatives to improve the condition of women globally. It had been represented at the deliberations of the third regional conference of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) on the integration of women into the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean. It had also been accorded official observer status at the deliberations of the Inter-American Commission on Women. In conjunction with INSTRAW and the North-South Institute, the Canadian Government had funded a major study on the impact of development on women. As a substantial element of its aid policy, Canada was developing a new approach to ensure the integration of women in the process of development. Research and experience had shown that failure to recognize the pivotal role played by women in development had jeopardized the effectiveness of many aid projects. Consequently, Canada now saw the integration of women in development processes not merely as a matter of social justice but also as an economic imperative.

17. In June 1983, her Government had submitted Canada's initial report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The statistical digest included in the section of that report dealing with article 2 of the Convention represented Canada's efforts to develop objective indicators on the degree of equality with men achieved by women in the field of employment. It was gratifying to note that 90 States had signed the Convention and that 50 States had ratified or acceded to it.

18. It was a matter of particular satisfaction to her delegation that a Canadian had been elected Vice-President of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). However, Canada viewed with some concern the request of that Committee contained in its general guidelines (CEDAW/C/3/Rev.2) regarding the form and content of reports received from States parties under article 18 of the Convention. Paragraph 7 of the guidelines directed States parties to pay special attention in their reports to the role of women and their full participation in the solution of problems and issues referred to in the preamble but not covered by the articles of the Convention. In the view of her delegation, States parties were required only to report on their compliance with

(Miss Martin, Canada)

the operative provisions of the Convention. The Committee's decision to give consideration to no more than seven reports at its next meeting was also a matter for concern. If that rate became the norm, Canada's second report would be due before the first one had been reviewed.

19. Mrs. FLOREZ (Cuba) said that the goals of equality, development and peace set for the Decade for Women had not yet been achieved, despite the adoption of such important international instruments as the Declaration of Mexico and the World Plan of Action, the Copenhagen Programme of Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation. Her delegation hoped, therefore, that the 1985 World Conference would make a critical assessment of the results of the Decade and establish guidelines and strategies which would ensure that the goals set were achieved for all women.

20. The Mexico Declaration and World Plan of Action and the Copenhagen Programme of Action were still valid and should form the basis for the review and appraisal called for under item 7 of the provisional agenda for the World Conference; the reports submitted to the Conference should reflect the decisions taken at Mexico and Copenhagen. If a genuine assessment of the results of the Decade was to be made, Governments must reply to the questionnaires sent out by the Secretariat; failure to reply would prejudice objective assessment of achievements and outstanding obstacles and detract from the value of the Conference.

21. In assessing the Decade and establishing strategies for the future the Conference should take account of the condition of women living in situations of extreme distress such as those in El Salvador, Namibia and Palestine.

22. A national committee for the 1985 Conference would shortly be set up in Cuba to review and assess the Decade and decide on measures to be taken up to the year 2000. The committee would also be responsible for publicizing the preparations for the 1985 Conference and making Cubans, especially Cuban women, aware of the work being done on behalf of women both nationally and internationally.

23. While substantial progress had been made in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, greater efforts must be made to increase the number of States parties to that Convention before the end of the Decade.

24. Since the previous session of the General Assembly, INSTRAW had been established at its headquarters in Santo Domingo. Presumably the Institute was now in a position to achieve the objectives for which it had been established.

25. At its meeting in March 1983, the Consultative Committee of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade had approved a project by the Cuban Women's Federation to set up community centres for handicrafts development. The Fund had approved a considerable number of projects which had benefited the developing countries. It was important that the developed countries should continue, and if possible increase, their financial support to the Fund, thus enabling it to continue its assistance to the developing countries.

26. Mrs. SÄLZLER (German Democratic Republic) said that article 20 of her country's Constitution provided that men and women were equal and had the same rights in all spheres of social and personal life, and that the promotion of women, particularly with regard to vocational qualification, was a task of society and the State. The German Democratic Republic had been among the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

27. Two years before the conclusion of the Decade for Women, there were still many countries in which women had not yet achieved equality with men. In its report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, her Government had described (CEDAW/C/5/Add.1) the measures it had taken to ensure such equality and how they were being implemented.

28. In the German Democratic Republic, women no longer faced problems with regard to such basic matters as education and vocational training. A comprehensive socio-political programme enabled them to make work compatible with partnership and motherhood. Women represented 33.6 per cent of the 500 members of the People's Chamber; 35 of them represented the Women's Democratic Federation, which, like all political parties, the youth organization, the Free German Trade Unions and the League of Culture, had a seat and vote in Parliament. In county, district and municipal assemblies 42 per cent of representatives were women. Women were members of the Council of State, ministers, deputy ministers and mayors; they ran enterprises and institutes and were active in political parties, trade unions, the National Front and the Peace Council. Women had made the most of their opportunities under the law by taking an active part in their new life.

29. Aware that peace was the first prerequisite for the development, prosperity and happiness of all people, women in the German Democratic Republic had joined in the great peace movement. In the prevailing climate of aggression, in which certain States violated the right to self-determination and some were preparing a nuclear holocaust in Europe, it became increasingly clear that the right of women to participate in promoting international peace and co-operation must be enshrined in a document binding under international law. Unfortunately, some States opposed the adoption of such a document by the United Nations to keep women, who formed more than half the world's population, from exercising political and social clout to oppose plans to increase armaments and prepare for war.

30. The Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session despite the resistance of imperialist forces, demonstrated the demand of peoples for peace and constructive co-operation and reflected the awareness that social progress, women's equality and life itself depended on peace. Adoption of that Declaration supported the call for peace contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It endorsed the themes of the United Nations Decade for Women - equality, development and peace, as well as the growing participation of women in the international peace movement. Moreover, it reflected the statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, that women's participation in the struggle for peace and against colonialism, racism and apartheid should have priority in preparations for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women.

(Mrs. Sälzler, German Democratic Republic)

31. The report submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW/C/5/Add.1) was but one piece of evidence of the attainment of equal rights for women in the German Democratic Republic since its formation. Questions of equality, however, even when embodied in legislation, continued to receive close attention so that any new problems could be discussed and the requisite changes made in the regulations in force.

32. The German Democratic Republic was ready to do its utmost to implement the resolutions of the Decade and the provisions contained in the Convention and the Declaration.

33. Mrs. MOUDUD (Bangladesh) said that it was heartening to find that women in developing and developed nations alike were no longer prepared to accept the discrimination and inequities which they had suffered in the past. Many women could not exercise their constitutional rights to equality because of factors such as traditional social structures, illiteracy, ignorance, poverty and unemployment. Despite the general awareness created by the observance of the Decade and the guidelines provided by the Declaration of Mexico and the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, much more remained to be done. In the developing countries the basic problem facing men and women was economic deprivation; for those countries, therefore, the elimination of discrimination against women was closely linked to the establishment of the New International Economic Order.

34. Bangladesh was fully committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, and strongly supported implementation at the national, regional and international levels, of the Programme of Action. A national women's organization had been set up in Bangladesh to mobilize women at local and national levels. The Government had launched multi-purpose projects, concentrated for the most part on rural women, and had framed rules reserving at least 10 per cent of all available Government posts for deserving women candidates.

35. The persistence of various discriminatory practices against women showed that many of the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women had yet to be achieved; nevertheless, her delegation believed that the Decade had not entirely failed. Her Government looked forward to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the Decade for Women; the Conference's success would depend largely on careful preparation and her delegation was pleased to note that preparations were proceeding satisfactorily. A delegation from Bangladesh had attended, as an observer, the first session of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory body for the Conference; the fact that the delegation had been headed by the Minister in charge of women's affairs underlined the importance her Government attached to the Conference.

36. In her delegation's view, the best way to appraise the Decade would be to identify all achievements and any obstacles encountered and then to formulate future policies to consolidate the former and remove the latter; for that purpose, the agenda proposed by the Commission on the Status of Women provided an excellent framework for deliberations.

(Mrs. Moudud, Bangladesh)

37. Her delegation agreed with the Commission that regional intergovernmental meetings should be held in preparation for the conference to help identify the problems faced in regions with different socio-economic backgrounds. A regional meeting for the Asia-Pacific region would be held at Tokyo in 1984.

38. Her delegation was pleased that the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women had begun operations at its permanent headquarters at Santo Domingo; it had noted the Institute's work programme with satisfaction and hoped that the activities would contribute to the full integration of women in development. Her delegation felt that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women had been a success and should be continued beyond the end of the Decade.

39. Mr. BRAUN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation was pleased that preparations for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the Decade for Women had already entered a decisive phase, based on the existing consensus; the recommendations made by the Commission on the Status of Women and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council at its 1983 spring session should be adopted by the General Assembly. It was particularly significant that agreement had already been reached on the Conference's draft agenda, the main points of emphasis and the basic arrangements. However, the Conference would fail in its main purpose if it were to become a supplementary instrument, discussing political issues within the purview of other United Nations bodies instead of focusing attention firmly on achieving equality for women and securing equal opportunities for all. That was the purpose of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which many Member States had already ratified. The Convention's provisions would probably become law in the Federal Republic of Germany at the beginning of 1984.

40. His country was making preparations for the World Conference. The questionnaire sent to Member States by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and the work of a preparatory committee involving non-governmental organizations, had been most helpful to his Government. The replies to the questions would provide useful guidance in assessing progress towards equality of the sexes and a good basis for decisions on how to improve women's opportunities.

41. However, his Government appealed again to Member States to bear in mind that the Conference's success depended on concentration on the subject-matter, and to maintain the prevailing spirit of constructive co-operation.

42. Mrs. KHAMISANI (Pakistan) said that her delegation welcomed the activities of various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to carry out the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade and hoped that the reports to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirtieth regular session and its third session as the preparatory body for the forthcoming World Conference, would provide a broader picture of the relevant measures adopted by the international community in pursuance of the Decade's goals.

(Mrs. Khamisani, Pakistan)

43. Despite the substantial progress achieved in improving the status of women since the International Women's Year, the task was not only incomplete but more urgent in some respects because of world economic stagnation which had adversely affected conditions in the developing countries, social welfare programmes in many parts of the world, and women in particular. Increased co-operation was required at international and regional levels, as well as active measures at the national level, to enable women to enjoy their rights and play an effective role in society as agents and beneficiaries of development. Pakistan hoped that the forthcoming World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women would help to evaluate the progress made, identify obstacles to further progress and adopt a sound strategy for overcoming them. Pakistan, which had played an active part in the meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women as the preparatory body for the Conference, would provide all possible co-operation to make the Conference a success.

44. Her delegation was gratified to note that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women had been able to finance a large number of projects aimed at enhancing women's well-being; it hoped that Member States would continue to support the Fund's activities generously. Pakistan had been a regular contributor and would provide Rs. 100,000 for 1984.

45. Pakistan had viewed with satisfaction the gradual progress made by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the formal inauguration of its headquarters at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in August 1983. Pakistan had made a modest contribution of Rs. 50,000 towards the United Nations Trust Fund for the Institute for 1983 and intended to make a similar contribution for next year. Adequate arrangements should be made at Headquarters to provide liaison between the Institute and the United Nations Secretariat.

46. The precarious position of refugee women in various parts of the world warranted the Committee's attention. Pakistan, despite its limited resources, bore the formidable financial and economic burden of looking after nearly 3 million Afghan refugees, most of whom were women, children and old persons. The international community must take urgent steps to prevent the exodus of refugees and ensure their voluntary return to their homeland in safety and honour.

47. Pakistan had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 34/180, by which the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had been adopted, and supported the objectives which that Convention sought to achieve. A decision would be taken by her Government in the near future, on the question of signing and ratifying the Convention.

48. Islam, a pioneer in the emancipation of women 1400 years ago, provided for a dignified role for women in the family and in society. Accordingly, the Constitution of Pakistan provided, under article 34, that steps should be taken to ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of national life. Women in

(Mrs. Khamisani, Pakistan)

Pakistan enjoyed political rights on equal terms with men, in addition to the right to acquire knowledge, to employment, to hold public office, to select a spouse, the right of divorce, of inheritance and to the ownership and disposal of property. Since 1979 the ministry responsible for enforcing those constitutional rights had carried out programmes to enhance women's welfare; it was sponsoring 7,000 centres for that purpose, having allocated a sum of Rs. 60.2 million in 1982-1983 in support of activities to improve women's conditions. It had also undertaken 31 research studies and organized various national conferences on issues of interest to women.

49. The Government had also taken special measures to increase literacy among women and provide for their vocational and technical training. During the sixth five-year plan, from 1983 to 1988, 10 million adult women would achieve literacy. The Government had also set up a Commission on the Status of Women to define women's rights and responsibilities in an Islamic society and make recommendations to the Government to safeguard their rights, advise on measures to provide educational, health and employment opportunities, identify services that women could render in eradicating poverty, disease and other social ills and suggest measures to integrate women of minority communities in national life.

50. Pakistan's Government and people whole-heartedly supported the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women and the Programme of Action. Despite the progress made in enhancing women's welfare in Pakistan, much remained to be done. The chief obstacle, as in most developing countries, was the lack of resources - an obstacle which could be overcome through increased international co-operation in solving the developing countries' economic problems and making more resources available for women's welfare.

51. Mrs. Flórez (Cuba) took the Chair.

52. Ms. GUO Yuanhui (China) said that the Decade's themes of equality, development and peace, and the sub-themes of employment, health and education, reflected the problems and demands of women throughout the world, particularly in the developing countries, and formed a basis for various activities by women of all countries.

53. It was noteworthy that women in the developing countries had integrated into efforts to consolidate and defend national independence, develop the national economy and culture, build up the country and improve living standards, while continuing to defend and promote women's rights and interests. More and more women played an increasingly prominent role in State management and development. A number of countries had adopted legislation to ensure equality between men and women. More than 50 had acceded to and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The work of the past few years had not only helped to promote and safeguard women's rights and interests but had facilitated the exchange of experience, thereby strengthening unity and co-operation.

(Ms. Guo Yuanhui, China)

54. Of course, the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women and the requirements of the various themes and sub-themes could not be achieved in a brief period of time. In the current turbulent international situation, with the unjust old international economic relations, women still faced difficulties in achieving equality with men and participating fully in development. The forthcoming World Conference would provide an opportunity to review the work done, point to achievements and identify problems; more importantly, it would lead to practical measures and guidelines for achieving the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women. China was pleased that the Commission on the Status of Women had held a special session as the preparatory body for the Conference. The Chinese delegation had participated in the deliberations during that session and had stated that the themes and sub-themes of the Decade should be those of the Conference. It had also suggested that the establishment of a new international economic order and the strengthening of South-South co-operation should be listed as important development goals, and that priority should be given to considering women's problems and needs in developing countries, especially in rural areas.

55. In recent years the Chinese Government had made further efforts to promote and safeguard women's rights and interests. A new marriage law had been adopted in September 1980 to safeguard the rights and interests of women and children and ensure equality between men and women. The new Constitution, adopted in December 1982, reaffirmed women's equal rights in politics, the economy, culture, society and family life. The fifth session of the Women's Congress had discussed the problems resulting from the opening up of new opportunities for women in China's new historical period, had expressed the determination of Chinese women to work for the nation's revitalization and had reflected past efforts to promote equality between men and women and to bring about women's full liberation and social progress.

56. The Chinese Government attached great importance to the forthcoming World Conference. Regional preparatory meetings should be held as a vital step in preparations for the Conference. Her delegation was ready to exchange information and strengthen co-operation with others in joint efforts to make the Conference a success.

57. Mrs. PAPAJORGJI (Albania) said that her delegation hoped that the discussion would deal with the true reasons for the oppression and unhappy situation of women and of the working masses. Bourgeois and revisionist ideologues were always citing isolated cases of women, naturally of the upper classes, who held some high post in Parliament, meanwhile forgetting about the millions of others who were scorned, discriminated against and suffering all the consequences of oppression.

58. The World Plan of Action adopted in Mexico and the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women adopted in Copenhagen were not yet being implemented. On the contrary, the economic crisis which had affected the capitalist and revisionist countries was creating new difficulties, especially for the large masses of women. For example, even when they enjoyed the right to work, they were placed in unskilled jobs and were paid 30 to 40 per cent less than men

(Mrs. Papajorgji, Albania)

doing the same job. The statistics showed that women were the first to be fired and the last to be hired; they were also the first to be deprived of the right to study. Women in South Africa, suffered discrimination in all areas of life. The situation was no better for women in the "developed" and "civilized" countries, where equal rights for men and women were loudly proclaimed. But all that propaganda was a smokescreen to deceive the oppressed masses of women and keep them out of the political and social arena.

59. Her delegation felt that the urgent problems concerning women all over the world and their struggle for emancipation were inextricably linked with the great problems of the era, and that those problems could not be separated from the struggle for national and social liberation. Women should be spoken to frankly and without demagoguery so as not to raise false hopes. They did not need pious sympathy or charity from capitalist bosses. Through their struggle against oppression, exploitation and other social injustices, they would achieve true liberation.

60. Albanian women had reached their present favourable status after the liberation of the country and the establishment of the people's power. Albania's socialist legislation sanctioned and defended the rights of women. For example, the differences in educational level between men and women had been reduced considerably, and in the under 25 age groups they had been eliminated. Employment for women was a problem that had already been solved in Albania, and women played an important role in all fields. Albanian women as always would defend and support the just struggle of millions of progressive and oppressed women in the world to realize their aspirations for emancipation.

61. Mr. Chavanaviraj (Thailand) resumed the Chair.

62. Mrs. ANDRIYUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said the international movement for women's equality in social and political life had been developing for decades. The United Nations Decade for Women had won well deserved recognition and support, as had the related Declaration of Mexico, World Plan of Action and Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade. Her country attached great importance to the attainment of the goals of the Decade for Women and the activities of the United Nations bodies concerned. It welcomed the fact that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women had begun its work. It was very important for that Committee to be guided by the principle of consensus.

63. The goals set in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had been attained and were legally guaranteed and enforced in her country. Detailed information on those matters could be found in her Government's report on its implementation of the Convention. She hoped that the consideration of national reports in the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women would promote the international pooling of experience in improving the lot of women and in preparing for the forthcoming World Conference. Her delegation called on all States to ratify or adhere to the Convention; their positive response would be a worthy contribution to the preparations for the Conference.

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(Mrs. Andriyuk, Ukrainian SSR)

64. Millions of women throughout the world considered their campaign for better status and full equality to be closely linked with their efforts to bring about peace and disarmament and avert the threat of war. They were increasingly aware of their mission - to protect life on the planet earth and the happiness and future of their children and grandchildren. There could be no higher duty or calling. The women of her country understood and held dear the principles of the Government's peace-loving foreign policy, which sought to prevent nuclear war of any kind - small or large, limited or total. Soviet women had recently addressed an appeal to every woman on earth, expressing deep concern at the fate of the world and willingness to co-operate with all who actively strove for peace and an end to the arms race that so senselessly wasted resources needed by all countries, particularly the developing countries, to attain the goals of the Decade.

65. The chief obstacles to social progress and the attainment of the goals of the Decade were the arms race, colonialism, racism, apartheid, racial discrimination, aggression and interference in the internal affairs of States as well as other forms of foreign domination. There were those who attempted to interpret concern about those obstacles as a "politicization" of the question. Their position was unfounded. The obstacles really existed and until they were removed there could be no thought of bringing about radical socio-economic change, or of overcoming hunger, poverty, unemployment or inflation.

66. It suited the purposes of reactionary imperialist circles, that were again fuelling international tension to deny that interrelationship: in a militaristic fever, they were resorting to direct persecution of people in anti-war movements, which included a large number of women. They were stepping up their blackmail and aggression against independent sovereign States, trying to bring back the time when overseas governors ruled under a colonial system. The very real dangers of that trend had been demonstrated by the perfidious attack on a small country that did not present any threat to anybody. Her delegation shared the distress of the people of Grenada and joined in the world condemnation of the attack.

67. Her delegation had noted with satisfaction the results of the special session of the Commission on the Status of Women, believing that they would provide a sound basis for the preparations for the World Conference. It reaffirmed its support for the World Plan of Action and the Programme of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women, together with the recommendations by the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women regarding preparations for the Conference.

68. It applauded the presentation of items 7 and 8 of the provisional agenda for the World Conference, but had some queries as to the supporting documentation: what background would the Conference be given for its discussion of the third theme of the Decade, peace? It hoped that the document on the role of women in development would duly record the setbacks to development caused by the arms race and the potential opportunities for development if the arms race were halted. The Conference should have before it a document exposing the scale of the threat that nuclear disaster posed to mankind and the scope of women's involvement in the campaign for peace and international security. The document should review steps

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taken in implementation of the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation, promulgated by the General Assembly in resolution 37/63. The Conference should also pay due attention to the situation of women in South Africa and the Arab territories occupied by Israel.

69. The meeting was suspended at 5.10 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 85 (b): NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS; REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.3/38/L.16)

70. Mrs. IDER (Mongolia) said that, in a spirit of co-operation and conciliation, the sponsors had proposed some changes in the draft resolution. The first part of operative paragraph 3 should now read: "Requests the Secretary-General to make arrangements for holding in 1984 or 1985 an interregional seminar". In operative paragraph 5, the word "comprehensive" in the second line should be deleted. Finally, in the sixth preambular paragraph, the word "neo-colonialism" should be inserted after the word "colonialism".

71. Mrs. DOWNING (Secretary of the Committee) summarized the proposed changes in the draft resolution and said that they had no financial implications.

72. The CHAIRMAN said that a recorded vote had been requested and opened the floor to explanations of vote before the vote on draft resolution L.16 and further explanations of vote on the texts already adopted.

73. Mr. WAKE (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation would vote against the draft resolution because, although the United States firmly believed that exchanges of experience could be valuable, the series of reports under agenda item 85 (b) had produced little of value. The implementation of the draft resolution would involve real expenditures, and his delegation felt that members must refrain from undertaking projects with only marginal value in view of the shortage of resources. He appreciated the revisions proposed by the delegation of Mongolia but felt that they did not address the United States objections.

74. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) said that her delegation was pleased that Mongolia had accepted the addition of the term "neo-colonialism" in the sixth preambular paragraph. Costa Rica had also suggested adding "terrorism" after the word "apartheid" and "ideological" before the word "political", and adding the words "freely expressed" after the words "in accordance with the will of its people" in operative paragraph 2. Although it felt that it would have been better to include those changes, since they were a matter of actual fact, Costa Rica would vote in favour of the draft resolution as amended by the sponsors.

75. Mrs. UMAÑA (Colombia) said that her delegation supported Costa Rica's proposed changes and considered that they would have been more constructive and positive. Colombia would therefore abstain in the voting.

76. A recorded vote was taken by roll-call.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Canada, Colombia, Germany, Federal Republic of, Israel, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

77. Draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.16 was adopted by 107 votes to 1, with 9 abstentions.

78. Mr. SHIRAMBERE (Burundi) said that his delegation had been absent during the voting but would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

79. Miss MARTIN (Canada) thanked the sponsors of draft resolution L.16 for their co-operation in addressing the problems of her delegation with regard to the draft resolution. Her delegation had found it necessary, however, to abstain in the voting because it felt that the purpose of the draft resolution lacked definition and clear focus and that its intention was not substantially different from the mandate of the Commission for Social Development. Canada objected to such duplication of effort and was reluctant, in view of current financial restraints, it to give priority to the seminar and reports called for.

80. Mr. FELDMAN (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote on draft resolution L.13, said that the United States had joined in the consensus on the draft resolution because it had a strong commitment to youth and the promotion of a successful International Youth Year. It would have preferred, however, that other rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of

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assembly, as well as the right to earn a living by doing work which was freely chosen or accepted, had been unambiguously specified. The United States interpreted the reference in General Assembly resolution 37/49 to "all relevant human rights instruments" to mean that work must be freely chosen or accepted. The reference to the "right to work" in article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights did not suggest totalitarian control over a captive work force; that right must also include the right to form associations and join trade unions.

81. Mr. ROUKOUNAS (Greece), speaking on behalf of the 10 members of the European Community, in explanation of their vote on draft resolution L.16, said that they had certain reservations with regard to operative paragraphs 3 and 5. Given the pressures on the Secretariat's resources, the Committee should exercise restraint in commissioning activities and reports of the Secretary-General. The Ten reiterated their view that the subject of national experience in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes for the purpose of social progress should be considered a sub-item under the item on the world social situation.

82. Mr. BRAUN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolutions A/C.3/38/L.12/Rev.1 and L.15, but with some hesitation. It was concerned about some of the wording used in paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.12/Rev.1, and would have preferred a more precise formulation, indicating, perhaps, that the recommendations of the regional meetings would receive proper attention. As for draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.15, his delegation felt that the concept of popular participation should more appropriately be dealt with in the Commission for Social Development. It nevertheless welcomed the fact that the activities would be financed from existing and extrabudgetary resources.

83. Mr. MATHEWSON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolutions adopted the previous day. It was especially pleased with the drafts on the social items, which generally avoided placing extra burdens on the budget. It wished to place on record its understanding of draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.12/Rev.1, operative paragraph 7: decisions of the General Assembly could not be put on the same footing as recommendations of regional meetings.

84. Mr. WIRTEN (Sweden), also speaking on behalf of the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway, expressed his gratitude to the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.18 for their willingness to consult on matters of great concern to the Nordic delegations. The changes they had agreed to make to operative paragraph 2 had enabled the Nordic delegations to accept the adoption of the draft without a vote. The Nordic Governments fully supported the International Year of Disabled Persons. While the main responsibility for implementing the Programme of Action for Disabled Persons lay with Governments, care for the disabled should be integrated into United Nations activities, and resources should be channelled through existing bodies, such as UNDP, for maximum impact. New bodies should not be created when existing ones could satisfy requirements. He looked forward, the following year, to receiving a wide-ranging report on the World

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Programme of Action and the funding of the related activities. Such a report would give the Third Committee an opportunity to discuss all possible ways and means of implementing the Programme and suggest possible terms of reference for a trust fund.

85. Mr. RUSI (Finland), speaking also on behalf of the delegations of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, said that the Nordic countries had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.15, because they attached great importance to popular participation in all spheres of life. They favoured continuing study of the concept, and would like the scope of the debate widened. So far discussions had concentrated on workers' participation in management and on self-management. The International Labour Organisation was the proper body to deal with labour/management relations.

86. Mr. PENN Nhach (Democratic Kampuchea) said that his delegation welcomed the adoption by consensus of draft resolutions A/C.3/38/L.12/Rev.1, L.13 and L.16. His country attached particular importance to the problems of young people; its own young people were now engaged in a desperate fight to protect the national identity of Kampuchea in a war of aggression and genocide that its neighbour to the east had been waging for nearly five years. With characteristic hypocrisy, that neighbouring State claimed to be the apostle of youth and to defend young people's right to education and work, while it was sending its own young people by the hundreds of thousands to die in its war of aggression and expansion, and massacring young Kampuchean daily. That same State, which had put his country to the sword in violation of the Charter and in defiance of repeated condemnations by the international community, was now trying to give lessons on how to combat foreign domination, aggression and occupation and had gone so far in its hypocritical gestures as to co-sponsor the three draft resolutions.

87. Mr. BYKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution on popular participation, which furthered the goals of social progress and protected the rights of the working masses, including young people, the aging and the disabled. In order, however, to put the resolutions into practice there must be a strengthening of peace, an end to the arms race, nuclear disarmament, and the elimination of colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and interference in the internal affairs of other States. The three goals set for the International Youth Year - participation, development and peace - should provide constant guidance in the preparations for the Year.

88. His delegation endorsed draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.13, which supported such sensible provisions as the right of young people to education and work and the elimination of unemployment. It unconditionally supported draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.16, the wisdom of which was borne out by the experience of his own country, other socialist States and the newly independent nations. The right of countries to choose their own social systems in accordance with the will of their peoples was anything but an academic principle. People needed to be constantly reminded of it, because the militarists were flouting all human rights, as in South Africa, the Middle East and several regions of Latin America, and using mercenaries

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to further their aggressive activities in an attempt to impose anti-popular régimes. Exchanges of experience should be a central feature of United Nations activity in the human rights field.

89. Mr. HOGUE (Australia) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.16, as it had on General Assembly resolution 36/19, not because it objected to the consideration of the issues concerned but because it doubted whether discussing such vague ideas would produce anything of value.

90. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its discussion of agenda items 84, 85, 88, 89 and 90.

91. Mr. FELDMAN (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that for the second time the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic had slyly inserted an attack on his country into an otherwise rather boring statement. The incident might have been overlooked, except that the Ukrainian delegation had voted to cut off the debate on the question of Grenada in the plenary, yet was apparently trying to provoke a debate on the subject in the Third Committee. If the Ukrainian delegation wanted a debate, it should have the subject put on the agenda in the proper manner. But its sly allusions were as unacceptable as would be a passing reference on his part to the fact that 1983 was the fiftieth anniversary of the great Ukrainian famine, deliberately brought about to kill off a politically unacceptable class of Ukrainian farmers, the Kulaks.

92. Mrs. ANDRIYUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) pointed out that the United States had not been mentioned in her earlier statement. If the United States representative saw, in what had been said, a reference to actions by his country he was only acknowledging that her description was an accurate one. She would reply to the comments on the "Ukrainian famine" at the following meeting.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.