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THIRD COMMITTEE  
27th meeting  
held on  
Thursday, 1 November 1984  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MADAR (Somalia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 84: ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO THE RACIST AND COLONIALIST REGIME OF SOUTH AFRICA (continued) (A/C.3/39/L.7)

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Draft resolutions A/C.3/39/L.3 and L.7

1. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia), introducing on behalf of the African Group draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.3, submitted under item 87 and draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.7 submitted under item 87, said that both drafts were of immediate importance to the African countries. Resolutions on the same subject which had been adopted by the General Assembly at previous sessions had not been implemented to any significant extent and the African countries were thus left with their demands unmet and their hopes frustrated. The two new drafts contained most of the same demands as had those earlier resolutions and also took into account developments which had occurred in the recent past.

Draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.4

2. Mrs. MOIZ (Pakistan), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.4, submitted under item 87, of which the Comoros had become a sponsor, said that the text was essentially the same as that of General Assembly resolution 38/16, with minor changes referring to the latest resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote by the Committee and the plenary Assembly.

Draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.9

3. Mr. MATELJAK (Yugoslavia), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.9 submitted under item 88 (a), of which Mauritania and Zimbabwe had become sponsors, said that it reflected the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and dealt with several issues raised in previous resolutions as well as with new issues which had been the subject of discussion at CERD's past two sessions. Emphasis had been placed on the problems of apartheid, racism and racial discrimination in paragraphs 2 through 6, while paragraphs 7 through 11 were essentially the same as in the corresponding paragraphs of the previous year's resolution. The draft stressed the need for States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination to supply adequate information about the demographic composition of their populations and to submit their reports in good time. Paragraphs 15 and 16 dealt with the holding of one of the forthcoming sessions of CERD in Africa and with ensuring wider publicity for the Committee's work. Consultations were being held with delegations which had problems with some of the paragraphs. Depending on the result of those consultations, the sponsors might make some changes in the text.

Draft resolutions A/C.3/39/L.8 and L.10

4. Mr. TROUVEROY (Belgium), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.8, submitted under item 88 (b), of which Guinea-Bissau had become a sponsor, said it had been sponsored by many delegations from all regional groups. He noted that the total number of ratifications of and accessions to the Convention had risen to 124, thus demonstrating the international community's commitment to eliminating all forms of racism and racial discrimination wherever they occurred. The sponsors hoped that the Committee would have no difficulty in adopting the draft resolution without a vote.

5. Mrs. BORGES (Uruguay) introduced document A/C.3/39/L.10, setting forth amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.8.

Draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.5

6. Mr. POERSCHKE (German Democratic Republic), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.5, submitted under item 88 (c), of which the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Madagascar had become sponsors, said that the position which each country adopted concerning the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid was a decisive indicator of its stand in the struggle for the elimination of apartheid. As the South African régime could survive only with the continued collaboration of certain States and transnational corporations, the draft resolution condemned such collaboration, which it treated as the key issue in the fight against the illegal apartheid régime. A special appeal to accede to the Convention without further delay was addressed to those States which had jurisdiction over transnational corporations operating in South Africa and Namibia. With reference to paragraphs 7 and 8, he said the sponsors of the draft attached special importance to the periodic compilation and wide distribution of the progressive list of individuals, organizations, institutions and representatives of States deemed responsible for the crimes enumerated in article II of the Convention. The strengthening of the universality of the

(Mr. Poerschke,  
German Democratic Republic)

Convention was an important step in increasing the effectiveness of measures designed to eliminate apartheid; therefore, all States which had not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention were called upon to do so without further delay. His delegation expressed the hope that the draft resolution would meet with broad approval.

AGENDA ITEM 85: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.3/39/L.6, L.12 and L.15)

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Draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.6

7. Mr. VOICU (Romania), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.6 submitted under item 85, said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft: Austria, Benin, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Yemen, Dominica, El Salvador, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, Malta, Mozambique, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Thailand, Uganda, Uruguay and Zimbabwe. As could be seen from the large number of sponsors, there was great interest on the part of Member States, the international community as a whole and the United Nations in the specific problems of the younger generation and in ways and means of solving them. He wished in particular to draw attention to the eighth preambular paragraph concerning the adequate preparation and widespread support that would be required if the International Youth Year was to be a success, and stressed the need for active and direct participation of youth organizations in the activities relating to the Year. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.12

8. Miss BROŠŇÁKOVÁ (Czechoslovakia), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.12 submitted under item 85, said that the sponsors felt that the human rights of young people, particularly the right to education and work, should be given special attention within the framework of the International Youth Year. There had been no changes for the better with regard to the education of youth and their integration into the working process; on the contrary, there were millions of young people in the world who were illiterate or who, if they had an education, were unemployed. The sponsors had been guided by the conviction that the issue of the human rights of youth, particularly the rights to education and to work, should be highlighted during the preparation for and observance of the International Youth Year. She hoped that the draft resolution would meet with the same broad response as had corresponding resolutions at past sessions, and that it would be adopted without a vote.

9. The CHAIRMAN announced that Belgium, Costa Rica, Rwanda and Senegal had joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.11.

10. Mr. DARWISH (Egypt), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.11 submitted under item 89, said that his country had always attached great importance to channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations, and had been active in improving them. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

11. The CHAIRMAN announced that China, Senegal and the Sudan had joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.13.

12. Mr. CERMAK (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.13 submitted under item 90, drew attention to the first, seventh and the ninth preambular paragraphs and to operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution and said that since it was a follow-up of the previous year's resolution, which had been adopted by consensus, the sponsors hoped that it too would be adopted by consensus.

13. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Mauritania, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Uruguay and Zaire had joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.14.

14. Mrs. TIRONA (Philippines), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.14 submitted under item 91, said that a revision of the draft would be issued on the basis of proposed amendments. She drew attention to the second, fifth, seventh, twelfth and thirteenth preambular paragraphs and to operative paragraphs 1, 3, 10 and 11, and said that since the draft resolution was the result of consultations and concerned important humanitarian matters which transcended national boundaries, she hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 92: INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/511; A/39/568; A/C.3/39/6)

AGENDA ITEM 93: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: (continued) (A/39/185)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/58, A/39/556)

(b) PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN (continued) (A/C.3/39/7)

(c) VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/146 and Corr.1 and Add.1; A/39/569 and Add.1; A/39/571)

AGENDA ITEM 94: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: (continued) (A/39/590 and Corr.1)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN  
(continued) (A/39/45, vols. I and II);

(b) STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/486)

15. Mrs. TROFIMYAK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women had still not been achieved and never could be without the prior removal of such obstacles as colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid, aggression, interference in the internal affairs of States, all forms of foreign domination, the arms race and the survival of misanthropic theories and practices based on force and terror. In fact, the situation had deteriorated in recent years because of the adverse effects, especially on women, of the arms race, the exacerbation of international tension and the resultant diversion of enormous resources from social to military purposes, not to mention the unemployment and inflation produced by the policies of certain Western circles. The developing countries were the hardest hit, since they faced the additional difficulties of foreign colonial and economic domination, exploitation by transnational corporations and the consequences of the crisis of capitalism in general. Her delegation therefore felt it was extremely important that the forthcoming World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women should consider the harmful effects of the arms race and militarization on development as a whole and on the implementation of programmes to help women in particular.

16. A growing number of women everywhere supported the policies of the socialist countries aimed at putting an end to the arms race and to the use of force in international relations. The women of the Ukrainian SSR, like the people of the Soviet Union as a whole, were determined that there should be no nuclear war, limited or otherwise. Women, as the givers of life, could not be indifferent to the struggle to safeguard the most basic human right of all, namely the right to life itself, which was being threatened by those who were prepared to bring the world to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe in order to further their imperialist ambitions. The United Nations must give priority attention to the participation of women in the struggle for peace; that would be a major contribution to the removal of the basic obstacles which were preventing the implementation of the goals of the Decade. The World Conference in particular should focus attention not only on women's participation in the struggle for peace, but also on their struggle against the imperialist-supported survivals of Nazi and Fascist ideology and practices because they were all part of the same struggle.

17. The goals of the Decade could not be expected to be achieved in just ten years. The World Conference must therefore assess the progress already made and map out a strategy for removing obstacles to achieving the Decade's goals by the year 2000.

18. Her delegation was pleased with the useful work accomplished in 1984 by the two sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, but regretted that it had not honoured the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 38/105 to consider what measures might be necessary in order to implement the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation, and

(Mrs. Trofimyak, Ukrainian SSR)

hoped that a report on that question would be prepared for the fortieth session of the General Assembly.

19. The Government of the Ukrainian SSR was unremitting in its efforts to develop women's creative capabilities, involve them in all spheres of activity, improve their education and working and living conditions, and promote maternal and child welfare. Her country's legislation, which in many respects went beyond the requirements of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, not only guaranteed women full equality but also contained special provisions in respect of maternity and accorded women certain privilege in such areas as work and social security. Unfortunately, those advantages were still not enjoyed by women everywhere. Some Western States, in fact, consciously practised discrimination against them. The World Conference should therefore devote special attention to the problem of discrimination against women in the economic area and analyse its causes and consequences.

20. Her delegation urged all States which had not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in order to make it genuinely universal. In so doing they would be making a worthy contribution to the Decade and to the World Conference.

21. Mrs. AL-HAMMAMI (Yemen) said that following the revolution in her country, women had regained their usurped rights and the Government had been encouraging the participation of women in economic and social development. For example, training centres, including vocational training facilities, had been established for their benefit. Yemeni women enjoyed the same rights and duties as men under the Constitution, including political and civil rights. In 1982 women had been elected to a number of municipal posts and were participating in the legislature. Her country was also striving to improve education and combat illiteracy, and success in that area had been reflected in the participation of women in a number of seminars.

22. Her delegation was deeply concerned by the fact that women in the occupied Arab territories were deprived of their elementary rights, had been forced to flee from their homes and had become refugees because of the racist practice of zionism. It supported all efforts to put an end to torture and other abuses to which women were subjected in the occupied Arab territories and in southern Africa.

23. Mrs. KOGAN (Panama) said that since the establishment of the Republic of Panama early in the twentieth century Panamanian women had constantly striven to protect their rights and to participate actively in the political, economic, social and cultural life of their country. The political platform of the National Women's Party, which had been established in 1926, was based on full equality for women and men in all spheres. Successive constitutions and constitutional reforms recognized equality of rights irrespective of sex, and various governmental and non-governmental institutions had been established to ensure that women participated in national life.

24. Each year an increasing number of women entered the labour force and occupied higher-level jobs. Nevertheless, to some extent women still were relegated to a secondary role in the economic and social development process.



(Mrs. Kogan, Panama)

25. Census data showed that by 1970, women had already begun to enter more diverse professions, and a substantial number were engaged in teaching, administration, finance and technical and scientific occupations. Progress in those areas was closely related to the fact that women were increasingly enjoying access to education; indeed more of the nation's women than men attended school, particularly at the university level, where women accounted for 54 per cent of the student population. There had been a consequent substantial increase in the number of women who were economically active, and women were enjoying greater access to administrative posts and supervisory jobs. Although circumstances at times still barred them from decision-making posts, national legislation guaranteed equal opportunity with regard to work and remuneration and established regulations protecting working women. Likewise, under family law, wife and husband were equals within the family unit and spouses enjoyed equal rights in marriage.

26. Her Government had established a Department for the Development and Training of Women within the National Office for Children and the Family - a division of the Ministry of Labour - which was responsible for planning and implementing programmes to integrate women in national development. The Ministry of Health and the General Office of Community Development were implementing, respectively, women's health programmes and integrated rural development programmes. With the assistance of the Inter-American Commission of Women, a documentation centre had been established to assist the public and private sectors in developing policies to benefit women.

27. Panama was a Party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, was a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and actively participated in regional efforts on behalf of women.

28. Her delegation considered that the year 1985 should mark the beginning of a new phase in efforts to improve the situation of women and was convinced that programmes to benefit women would benefit all members of society.

29. Ms. ELMIGER (World Health Organization) said that the World Health Organization (WHO) had integrated the principles and goals of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women into its activities and programmes. In preparation for the 1985 World Conference, WHO had submitted to the Conference secretariat a number of documents supplying sufficient information on the basis of which to draw general conclusions on the progress made and obstacles encountered in support of those principles and goals, and on the directions Governments were taking in their efforts to promote women's health. The six WHO regional committee meetings had included the question of women and health in their agendas.

30. WHO was according priority to the forward-looking strategies in the field of health based on the Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000 endorsed by WHO and the General Assembly. Primary health care was the principal criterion applied. WHO had identified priority areas regarding women and health, based on the common needs and concerns of women. However, each country must select its own priorities.

(Ms. Elmiger, WHO)

31. WHO's long-term proposals took into account the fact that the attainment of health targets depended on progress on the economic front, on social policy measures aimed at greater equity, on education as a promoter of self-care, and on improvement of the physical environment and with regard to sanitation. Education concerning health problems and methods of preventing and controlling them should be available to all women. The role of women in food production, handling and preparation should be fully recognized, and women should receive the same pay as men and have access to equal training opportunities, technology and credit. There was a need for increased awareness of the special nutritional requirements of women, particularly during pregnancy and while breast-feeding. Women should enjoy equal access to conveniently located, affordable health treatment facilities. They should also be treated equally in terms of remuneration, working conditions, employment regulations and career opportunities.

32. Women's organizations were a key factor in community involvement, and they should be encouraged to participate in primary health care in their communities and in decision-making with respect to the health system at all levels.

33. WHO participated actively in the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women and the Water Decade, and attached great importance to the role of women in efforts relating to water supply and sanitation activities. It was therefore preparing a number of publications on those subjects.

34. Mrs. SKARD (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women served as a basis for her Organization's Major Programme XIV on the status of women in the medium-term plan for 1984-1989 and in the biennial programmes and budgets. In accordance with a request by the General Assembly, UNESCO had undertaken studies on the socio-cultural and economic causes of prostitution, and planned to convene an expert meeting in 1985 to examine institutional and informal mechanisms favouring prostitution and to suggest a programme of prevention through education and information. The manner in which prostitution was presented in the mass media was also being studied.

35. In preparation for the World Conference, UNESCO had participated in the evaluation of the effects on the status of women of projects in four countries, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.

36. UNESCO had helped prepare the questionnaire from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs to Member States on the review and appraisal of progress achieved and obstacles encountered in attaining the goals and objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women and had analysed the replies relating to education and communication. UNESCO had also helped prepare a similar questionnaire from the Centre addressed to the specialized agencies and had completed its own replies thereto. Furthermore, UNESCO was evaluating its own activities regarding women in the field of education which it had undertaken since 1975, and was assessing how the status of women in the field of communication had changed since 1980.

37. UNESCO had assisted the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

(Mrs. Skard, UNESCO)

with the preparation of forward-looking strategies of implementation for the advancement of women and concrete measures to overcome obstacles to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Decade. During the first half of 1985, UNESCO would convene an ad hoc advisory group to consider future strategies and activities within its fields of competence. Reports were planned on women in politics, culture, national liberation struggles and science and technology, and on UNESCO's activities to improve the status of women. A calendar was being prepared for 1986 to mark the end of the Decade.

38. With regard to item 94, she noted that UNESCO was conducting research on the impact of legislation on the current status of women in industrialized and developed countries, the findings of which would be communicated to national institutions, non-governmental organizations and women's organizations so as to assist them in developing training and information programmes on ways of applying the principles set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. At the request of CEDAW, UNESCO had submitted a report on its programmes which were relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

39. Lastly, the aims of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the programme of UNESCO had much in common and closer co-operation between them should be established. Although UNESCO had no budgetary provisions to support the Institute, joint projects could be envisaged.

40. Mrs. SIBEKO (Observer for the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania) said that women in Azania accounted for almost half the total population and were therefore an important part of the oppressed, exploited and dispossessed people of Azania. Moreover, women were compelled to undertake heavy responsibilities imposed by the fascist-colonial system practised in occupied Azania. As a result of the establishment of the reserves, euphemistically called "homelands" or "bantustans", obstacles were placed in the way of women who wished to join their husbands in the towns. However, the African women, burdened by economic problems, taxes and long absences of their men, had gradually begun to move to the cities. The women of Azania were forced by the colonial and fascist system to become wage slaves and to undertake unskilled jobs. Because of the nature of employment available to them, African women were particularly vulnerable to such designations as "idle" or "undesirable", thus giving local authorities the power to remove them from the towns.

41. The women of Azania had become fully involved in the struggle for national liberation because it had become evident that unless the usurped land was regained, the mother would not be able to play her rightful role. The extension of the pass laws to African women had led PAC to launch the Status Campaign and the Positive Action Campaign against the pass laws. The racists had reacted with customary violence and the Sharpeville massacre had occurred. Few people know that among those killed and wounded at Sharpeville were 40 women and 8 children. Women had thus become an integral part of the struggle for national liberation.

42. In addition to fighting for her own rights, the African woman had to keep the family together and educate her children in a society in which education for blacks

(Mrs. Sibeko)

was neither free nor compulsory and job opportunities few and far between. In several cases, the African woman had to endure the life of a widow or virtual widow as a result of imprisonment of her husband. The list of widows and families that had lost their loved ones in South Africa was long. However, that had not dampened the spirit of African women. On the contrary, it had given them greater courage and determination.

43. The Women's Wing of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania was engaged in several self-help projects inside the country and in several front-line and neighbouring States. While it had received some support for those projects, it was again appealing for greater assistance.

44. Mr. HWANG (Observer for the Republic of Korea) said that the question of aging and the question of women were closely interrelated in his country because both questions had common problems arising from the conflict between traditional values and the rapidly changing way of thinking brought about by the processes of industrialization and urbanization. In the Republic of Korea, society traditionally maintained a large family system in which three generations or more lived together. It was therefore important to maintain a system of values that was appropriate for a hierarchical order in family life.

45. Recently, however, industrialization and urbanization had helped to bring about vast changes in the social structure of the Republic of Korea. Nuclear families had begun to replace large, extended families and the social status of women within and outside the family had been substantially improved. In contrast to the position of women, however, the aged found themselves increasingly isolated from major social activities. The question of aging had thus emerged as a new social issue and that had led the Government to proclaim a Welfare Law for Older People in 1981 and a Charter for Older People in 1982.

46. The various United Nations activities for the advancement of the status of women had served as a catalyst for his Government to proceed with a more positive policy towards enhancing the status of women in the Republic of Korea. The Korean Women's Development Institute had thus been established in 1983 as an autonomous policy-oriented research organization. It initiated various activities to stimulate both the integration of women into the development process and the achievement of equality between men and women in the Republic of Korea.

47. In May 1983, the Republic of Korea had signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its ratification was now in process. However, many problems remained to be solved if the spirit and letter of the Convention were to be fully implemented. His Government was seeking to foster a more receptive social environment in which those desired goals and changes could be legislated with the support of the majority of the people.

48. His delegation attached great importance to the regional approach that had been made with respect to the preparations for the 1985 World Conference because it believed that the differences in cultural, social, economic and religious attitudes towards women in various regions of the world should be carefully examined and fully taken into consideration at the Conference. The Republic of Korea would

(Mr. Hwang, Observer, Republic of Korea)

continue its contribution to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and would co-operate fully with the United Nations in the post-Decade period. Finally, his delegation hoped that the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women would continue to give due attention in its research projects to the different patterns of social attitudes towards women in various countries and regions and to help in finding solutions suitable to each region and country.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.