



DEC 4 1984

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MADAR (Somalia)

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

AGENDA ITEM 86: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
(continued)

Draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.17

1. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia), presenting draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.17 on behalf of the group of African States, said that after careful consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the draft plan of activities for the period 1985-1989 prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/14 (A/39/167 and Add.1 and 2), the group had decided to entrust the Secretary-General with the task of continuing the implementation of the plan of activities by requesting him to accord the highest priority to activities to combat apartheid. In that regard, it took note of the appointment of Mr. Jonah to the post of personal representative of the Secretary-General with the task of co-ordinating activities under the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Since draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.17 was based on the Programme of Action which the General Assembly had adopted the previous year by consensus, he hoped that the text presented by the African group would also 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/39/566)
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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)

2. Mr. KILLU (Kenya) said that his country had actively participated in international and regional conferences and meetings devoted to the development and

(Mr. Killu, Kenya)

welfare of women, and particularly in the African Regional Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women held recently at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. Furthermore, the Government of Kenya had continued to pursue its policies aimed at integrating women in the national development process. In 1976 it had established the Women's Bureau as a division of the Ministry of Culture and Social Services to institute and co-ordinate programmes aimed at implementing the programmes concerning women which had been adopted at the international level, and to assist in harmonizing the different Kenyan women's organizations. There had been a tremendous increase in the number of non-governmental organizations in Kenya working towards the integration of women into the development process, particularly at the village level, and those efforts had contributed in large measure to rural development in the country.

3. His delegation took particular interest in the situation of women in rural areas and looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on that subject, which was currently of particular interest to Kenya because women constituted the greater part of the labour force in agriculture. The Government of Kenya had therefore stepped up measures to ease and promote their role in food production.

4. The Kenyan Government realized that in order to ensure the effective participation of women in economic and social activities on an equal footing with men, priority would have to be given to achieving the total eradication of illiteracy. One third of the country's annual budget was devoted to education. Primary education was free and school-age attendance at that level was currently over 90 per cent. However, the male/female ratio in primary schools was three to two, an imbalance which had its roots in the traditional attitude towards women's education. The Government had sought to remedy the situation by encouraging schooling for girls and by focusing attention on practical education adapted to local needs. Considerable progress had been achieved at all levels, including specialized areas such as medicine, law and business, previously regarded as the domain of men. In that regard, his delegation hoped that the World Conference of 1985 would pay particular attention to the eradication of illiteracy and would adopt realistic strategies.

5. In addition to its educational policies, the Government of Kenya had made and was continuing to make determined efforts to increase employment opportunities for women and to secure conditions of employment suited to their particular requirements. Moreover, since women faced more health hazards than men, the Government placed great emphasis on preventive health education and had initiated many programmes in primary health care, family planning and nutrition.

6. With respect to sub-item (c) of item 93, his delegation was pleased with the activities undertaken by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and expressed the hope that the results of the forward-looking assessment of the projects and programmes supported by the Fund would enable the latter to move in the right direction. With regard to the future operations of the Fund, Kenya supported the recommendation of the regional meeting at Arusha, that the Fund should continue its close relationship with UNDP while at the same time maintaining links with other United Nations bodies that had specific responsibilities for women's programmes and policies.

(Mr. Killu, Kenya)

7. With reference to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, his delegation was pleased to note that the Institute had now established itself in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and had been able, within a short period, to make a useful contribution to the compilation of clear and factual indicators and statistics on the situation and needs of women. The Institute's work could assist many countries in formulating realistic development policies with deeper understanding of women's special needs. His country hoped that the endorsement of the Institute's Statute would enable it to become fully operational and looked forward to increased co-operation with it.

8. His delegation was pleased to announce that Kenya had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and was committed to implementing it faithfully. It invited Member States that had not yet ratified the convention to do so before the Nairobi Conference.

9. With regard to the preparations for the Conference, the Kenyan Government had set up committees to deal with the various aspects of the organization of the gathering as well as a local secretariat to co-ordinate all the physical and logistical arrangements for the participation of delegates. The Conference would be held at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre and information on accommodation would be sent shortly to all participants. Along with the preparatory activities undertaken by the Government, non-governmental Kenyan organizations had also taken an active part in the organization of the Conference. To ensure its success, his delegation associated itself with the appeals made by other delegations for co-operation in promoting the fruitful consideration of the substantive questions most likely to benefit the cause of women. It thanked the Secretariat of the United Nations for its assistance and its advice on the organization of the Conference and expressed the hope that Member States, bearing in mind the economic constraints which Kenya faced, would likewise show a spirit of co-operation.

10. Mrs. ENGO (Cameroon) said that the United Nations Decade for Women had been launched when the independent African States had been 15 years old on the average and more concerned with setting up overall structures than with solving the problems of a specific group. Lacking skilled human resources, they had mobilized all their citizens, taking care not to preclude women, who played a key role in a vital economic sector - the production and marketing of food. In Cameroon, efforts to improve the status of women had centred on training, inter alia, in the tertiary sector, and had had beneficial political, civil and social effects. In particular, the celebration of the Decade in Cameroon had helped to increase women's awareness of the important contribution they made to the country, but they continued to face major problems in the job market. That was why priority should be given to the following objectives: action to promote female employment, integrating women at the decision-making level, ensuring their normal career development and diversifying their vocational training.

11. As the Decade was drawing to a close, the fundamental problem in Africa was how to combat hunger. Rural women, who bore the main responsibility for food production, were not yet receiving international assistance commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. That assistance should cover essentially the introduction of simple food-conservation techniques, road improvement, development

(Mrs. Enqo, Cameroon)

of dispensaries and other infrastructural facilities, drinking water supply, establishment of producers' and consumers' co-operatives, participation of women in organizing rural community activities, and above all training in the mother tongue of the women concerned with the use of locally-produced materials.

12. Her delegation praised the action taken for that purpose by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and various other agencies and institutions, and appealed urgently to Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to increase their contributions to the Institute.

13. With regard to the preparations for the Nairobi Conference, her delegation commended the Kenyan Government on its efforts to ensure its success. The Conference should advocate proclaiming a second decade for women, with the principal objective of completing the work that had not been carried out during the first Decade. The first Decade had helped to establish a number of specific structures which would enable the world to solve women's problems, and in so doing, to improve the prospects for peace: those achievements should now be further developed. In Africa, the second decade would focus essentially on peace through food.

14. In conclusion, she invited Member States to intensify, during the forthcoming decade, their efforts to improve the status of women in the interest of tomorrow's security.

15. Miss SEDDOH (Togo), speaking on agenda item 93, said that real progress had been made in accomplishing the Decade's objectives, but that much remained to be done to ensure equality of men and women because prejudice and discriminatory practices against women still persisted; she was thinking in particular of women who lived under the apartheid régime of South Africa and in Namibia. States must take appropriate legislative, legal and administrative action.

16. In Togo, women had always played a preponderant role in trade, agriculture and the basic education of children, but only a very minor one in the politics and administration. That was why the National Union of Togolese Women (UNFT), which linked all women throughout the territory, had been founded in 1972, on the initiative of the President of the Republic. The Union comprised a national office, headed by a national chairperson who was a member of the Central Committee of the Party, and a regional office in the main town of each of the 23 administrative districts, which was headed by a regional chairperson. The same structure was to be found at the village level. In 1977, and on the same lines, the Government had established a State Office for Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women, which had subsequently been upgraded to a ministry.

17. At present Togolese women took an active part in public, political and economic life, and the number of women wage earners had reached 30 per cent. UNFT had set up a national programme for the advancement of Togolese women which would offer them technical training to qualify them for jobs, improve working conditions and establish appropriate structures for supervisory personnel. A research project on working conditions, contributions to food production, employment and the

(Miss Seddoh, Togo)

training of young women and girls in the non-structured sectors had been launched with the aim of establishing a centre for documentation on women, and an advisory services project for alleviating domestic chores had been initiated. Sixty-two women's co-operative groups had been set up concerned with agriculture, animal husbandry, fish-farming, farm produce processing and handicrafts for the purpose, inter alia, of better integrating women into economic development. The Union had also engaged in socio-educational and training activities and had organized group discussions on health, nutrition and family life, functional literacy campaigns and seminars on the management of co-operatives. Togo's five-year economic and social development plans also comprised activities for the advancement of women.

18. Togo believed that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women should continue its activities beyond 1985, and urgently appealed for the Fund's resources to be increased through, inter alia, the Pledging Conference for Development Activities, to be held at New York on 7 November 1984, in order to enable it to operate in the developing countries, and particularly in the least developed countries.

19. Her delegation welcomed the preparations being made for the 1985 World Conference and endorsed the proposal of the Commission on the Status of Women that each State should submit a document detailing the obstacles it had encountered in implementing the Decade's objectives. The Conference must not only review and appraise the results of the Decade, but also adopt a strategy to promote attainment of the Decade's objectives after 1985.

20. Turning to agenda item 92, she said that the adoption of the statute of International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, as recommended by the Institute's Board of Trustees, would provide an appropriate legal framework for the Institute to carry out its work. Its programme must emphasize technical co-operation for the advancement of women and for their total integration into the economic and social development of their countries. Togo was fully prepared to co-operate with the Institute for that purpose and urged donor countries to increase their contributions to its Trust Fund.

21. With regard to agenda item 94, her delegation had noted with satisfaction that more States had become Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Togo had signed the Convention in 1983 and urged States which had not yet done so to follow suit so as to make it applicable world-wide.

22. Mr. JATIVA (Ecuador) welcomed the headway made in preparing for the 1985 World Conference, particularly by the preparatory body, but regretted that the number of seats on the Conference's General Committee set aside for Latin America was so obviously inadequate. As proof of its interest in the Conference, Ecuador, like many other countries, had replied carefully to the questionnaire of the Secretary-General; those replies, in the aggregate, would be an essential tool for the Conference's analysis of the results achieved during the Decade and for setting new courses.

(Mr. Jativa, Ecuador)

23. The Decade had undoubtedly been productive: the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had removed the legal restrictions which had prevented women from participating in political, economic and social affairs, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, whose recommendations ought to be supported by all, was performing a useful monitoring function in which Ecuador would be willing to become involved soon by submitting its initial report and entering into a constructive dialogue with that Committee. Another of the Decade's striking successes had been the establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, responsible for ensuring the involvement of women in development as both agents and beneficiaries, and for improving the status of women, without which development would be meaningless. Ecuador hoped that the General Assembly would approve the statute of the Institute and its programme of work for the biennium 1984-1985, which provided for a statistical analysis of the status of women, their integration into development and the implementation of policies of individual and collective self-reliance in the developing countries. Ecuador recognized the Institute's importance and intended to co-operate closely with it.

24. Lastly, the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women was a precious instrument of technical assistance for under-privileged women and its crucial role justified maintaining its activities after the Decade. In view of the large proportion of its projects which had been administered by UNDP, it was desirable that, without renouncing its autonomy and co-operation with other organizations of the United Nations system such as the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the Fund should become more closely associated with UNDP in order to benefit fully from its infrastructure.

25. Ecuador's Constitution and legislation forbade discrimination against women and granted them the same civil, political, economic and social rights as men. It should, however, be recognized that the persistence of certain prejudices led to discriminatory practices. The National Office for the Advancement of Women had been established in May 1980 to put an end to those practices. Although there were no legislative instruments expressly stipulating that women should participate in the establishment of government policies, women contributed to them as ministers, senior civil servants, militants, electors, and heads of non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, for example, those which had submitted to the national Congress a study which had led to a bill - soon to be adopted - on legal equality between the sexes. The Government's action was aimed in particular at improving the lot of women in rural areas by promoting agricultural production, infrastructure and social services, literacy and primary education, and rural community organizations, in other words everything that constituted community development.

26. Miss CHENG Phobo (Democratic Kampuchea) said that her delegation was well satisfied with the preparatory work for the 1985 World Conference and reiterated its full co-operation towards ensuring the success of the Conference. Women's development could not be achieved easily and quickly. So long as discrimination on the basis of sex, colour or race persisted, there would be injustice and inequality. The inequality of women in some developing countries derived partly from mass poverty, backwardness and superstition, in turn caused by

(Miss Cheng Phobo, Democratic Kampuchea)

underdevelopment, which was a product of colonialism and foreign invasion and occupation. Equality of men and women could be achieved only if women were equal partners with men in all activities of society. It was true that a clearer understanding of the problems of women was emerging in most parts of the world. Kampuchean women did not yet enjoy the same status as their sisters in the developed countries, but they were more conscious of their own status and that only through their own efforts could they improve their lot. The Association of Democratic Kampuchean Women, established in 1971, guaranteed the rights of all women, as well as men, inter alia in respect of employment, production, health, social welfare and education.

27. The situation of Kampuchean women could not, however, be dissociated from that of the country itself, which had been completely disrupted by the war. Six years had elapsed since over 250,000 Vietnamese soldiers had invaded Kampuchea in the hope of establishing an "Indo-China Federation", causing havoc, untold suffering and many deaths. Under those conditions, the rights and protection enjoyed by women could easily be imagined: they were forced into prostitution, raped to death every day by Vietnamese soldiers or forced into concubinage in order to survive. Others had been dispossessed of their property and displaced from their ancestral villages to make room for the Vietnamese settlers who currently numbered more than 600,000. The Kampuchean people had been reduced to the status of refugees in their own country and were living in constant fear of the "Vietnamization" of their country. The Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea had made great efforts to improve the situation of women in the many regions under its control but the task was rendered very difficult by the war of aggression being waged in the country. That situation had led to a mass exodus, mostly of women and children who, even in their flight towards the protection of international refugee camps, were not always safe from attack, as had recently been seen in the events at the Thai-Kampuchean border.

28. Kampuchean women were certainly the equals of men in their fight to ensure the survival of their nation, which encompassed all their daily lives. At the front, women served in guerrilla units to defend their bases and villages, transported military and medical supplies and worked as nurses and doctors. At the rear, they grew crops and food, administered villages and taught children. As most men were fighting, women had to shoulder full responsibility for day-to-day activities. The only way of ensuring the future of their children was to persevere in the struggle against the aggressors until they were forced to implement the United Nations resolutions on Kampuchea and withdraw all their aggressive forces from its soil. The support of the international community encouraged Kampuchean women to pursue the fight until final victory, which would enable peace, independence and sovereignty to be restored to Kampuchea; to strengthen national unity under the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea headed by Samdech Norodom Sihanouk; to work as equals with men in building a democratic and parliamentary régime with a market economy and in full respect for all human rights.

29. Mrs. ZOGRAFOU (Greece) said that women had become more aware of their rightful place in society owing to the consciousness-raising activities in many countries in preparation for the World Conference in 1985. The United Nations Decade for Women had been instrumental in making Governments and the public recognize women's role in society. The World Conference should not be content with outlining the efforts

(Mrs. Zografou, Greece)

made by Governments to ensure the equality of the sexes but should also focus on the problems that remained and how to solve them by the year 2000. Greece attached great importance to finding a common basis on which to develop national, regional and international programmes up to the year 2000. Her delegation was satisfied with the preparations for the Conference and congratulated the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, as well as the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the Preparatory Body, on their thorough report.

30. Greece attached particular importance to the draft reports which the Secretary-General had been asked to prepare on forward-looking strategies for the advancement of women in rural areas and the situation of displaced, refugee and migrant women. It also noted with pleasure the recommendation adopted by the recent seminar on the situation of migrant women recently held for the ECE region. It could not fail to commend the serious work done at the regional level. Three regional meetings had already been held and two others were to be held before the end of 1984. Since Greece had recently been elected a member of the Commission on the Status of Women, it looked forward with the greatest interest to participating in the work of the third session of the Preparatory Body. The symposium held at Delphos (Greece) in April 1984 on the employment, health and education of migrant women deserved special mention; it had worked out policy recommendations which would be presented to the 1985 World Conference. In view of the role played by the non-governmental organizations in the advancement of women, Greece would facilitate the participation of some of them in Forum 85 (July 1985). Greece was pleased to note that the Trust Fund for the preparatory activities for the Conference, to which it contributed, was helping least developed countries to attend preparatory meetings for the Conference. It hoped that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, to which it had been contributing for several years, would be able to continue its activities without basic changes in its organization. The Fund should be formally associated with UNDP, while retaining sufficient autonomy.

31. Her delegation noted with satisfaction that an increasing number of States had ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Greece had become a party to that instrument in 1983.

32. Greece was confident that in the new autonomous form provided for by its Statute, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women would continue to contribute to the integration and mobilization of women and reminded the Committee that the Greek Government was working closely with the Institute through the Greek expert who was a member of its Board of Trustees.

33. Mrs. LOMONACO (Italy) said that the inferior status of women in relation to men and the exclusion of women from the male political and social scene was an undeniable historical phenomenon which had lasted until the past century. Some had considered it a matter of destiny, others a historical fact whose causes could be analysed and which could be changed. The considerable progress made over the past hundred years, which could be explained by the awakening of women's own awareness should not hide the fact that much remained to be done to change the legacy of inferiority inherited from the past. The recent improvement in the status of women was attributable partly to the initiatives of the United Nations, particularly those of the Commission on the Status of Women and the International Research and

(Mrs. Lomonaco, Italy)

Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Decade which would soon be over had contributed decisively to that long process of evolution, and the Nairobi Conference should usher in the next stage.

34. After the Mexico City World Conference of the International Women's Year in particular, Italy had strengthened the political, juridical, social and economic structures which alone could lead to a real and lasting improvement in the status of women. Her Government had recently established two bodies: one which was consultative and was responsible to the Ministry of Labour, was charged with supervising implementation of the laws on equal pay and access to jobs, training and careers. The other, called the Commission for the Equality of Men and Women and responsible to the presidency of the Council, functioned in all areas. The two bodies were called upon to play an important role, since they had to consider what measures and regulations should be adopted to translate the principles embodied in legislation into everyday reality. They had to see to it, by taking account of socio-economic problems and their relationship to the status of women, that choices made at all levels were in accordance with the Government's policy on the integration and advancement of women. Those initiatives, which were the outcome both of the growing pressures exercised by women and of the Italian Government's commitment, were proof that her country was taking the problem of the status of women seriously and was determined to make headway.

35. Her country had taken part in the Decade's economic and financial programmes and had contributed to FAO, ILO and UNICEF projects connected with food strategies and those which aimed to improve the status of women in rural areas. In the context of technical and vocational assistance for women, Italy wished to encourage women to participate in development not only as beneficiaries but also as agents. It also favoured continuing the activities of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women after 1985 and strengthening collaboration between the Fund and UNDP.

36. The analysis of replies to the questionnaire would be a working tool for the 1985 World Conference and a source of reference and inspiration for Governments in their legislative initiatives. Italy for its part had undertaken to disseminate the document widely throughout the country and to make known to interested circles the data it contained and the terms of the Italian reply. Her delegation believed that the conclusions of the regional preparatory conferences, which would shortly be before the Committee, would be a contribution of great interest. She hoped that the politicization which had been in evidence during the seminar on the economic role of women in the European Economic Community area would not hinder the work of the world Conference and that the latter, starting from the results already achieved, would make it possible to improve the status of women still further.

37. Mrs. TIRONA (Philippines) said that, for her country, the United Nations Decade for Women had been the occasion for applying the principles of participation, economic independence and social justice.

38. Participation should be understood to mean the actual involvement of women in decision-making, as for example in the formulation of policies and the implementation of programmes and strategies. Legislative initiatives had been taken to ensure equality of rights as a prerequisite for their participation, and to repeal laws which discriminated against women.

(Mrs. Tirona, Philippines)

39. As in most developing countries, women constituted half the total labour force in the Philippines and lived mainly in rural areas. It was for that reason that international co-operation aimed at enhancing the productive capacity of rural women under fair working conditions was regarded as very important. Her Government was implementing national strategies to help women in rural areas. There were at least three programmes in which they could participate as equal partners with men: Samahang Nayon (co-operatives); Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran (livelihood programme), which encouraged production for home consumption and exports; and Sariling Sikap (self-reliance), which promoted indigenous productive capacity and strengthened self-sufficiency. Those programmes were themselves supported by a quasi-public enterprise managed exclusively by women and known as Balikatan sa Kaunlaran (partners in progress).

40. Because they had to rear children and earn a living at the same time, women worked for much longer hours and were vulnerable to exploitation. Because the standard of education in rural areas was inferior, rural women had an additional handicap. Despite adoption of the principle of universal education, traditional attitudes had perpetuated priority for boys over girls. The basic education of girls was still directed towards the performance of traditional domestic functions.

41. Another problem faced by women in developing countries was the emigration of men to work overseas. Women then had to support their families without necessarily enjoying greater rights in terms of authority, security or social status. The task of preserving the family as a basic social institution fell to the women of the Philippines.

42. Her country concurred with the views expressed in FAO studies on women's role in agriculture and believed that there was a direct linkage between that role and policy issues such as food security, nutrition and migration. It was in the interests of self-sufficiency and social justice that national, regional and international efforts should be geared towards strengthening the role of women in agriculture.

43. She had read with interest the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in particular paragraphs 69 to 124 of the report (A/39/45, vol. II). She questioned the validity of the deplorable comments which could be read in the foreign press about Filipino women. Far from being dull-witted and unintelligent, they had a charm all their own, a blend of Western culture and oriental spirituality that enabled them to take part in building the nation in all fields, even those traditionally the preserve of men. In fact, Filipino women filled prominent posts both at national and international levels. As for those who worked as housemaids or chambermaids, they earned their living worthily, helping to educate their brothers and sisters and sometimes investing their savings in such enterprises as raising poultry and pigs, which helped to improve the diet of the people. Whatever their condition, they never neglected the role of wife and mother, they strengthened family ties and they preserved the Filipino way of life.

44. She agreed with the representative of Australia that women's issues had a profound bearing on men. The latter should be equally concerned about improving the position of women so that they could help to build a peaceful and progressive world.

45. Mr. VOICU (Romania) said that his delegation wished to reaffirm the importance it attached to achieving all the aims of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. The world economic crisis was hitting women, who were the victims of serious injustices, particularly hard. It was necessary to struggle against the harmful consequences of unfair world economic relations, to integrate women in the general development of society, and to establish a new world order based on justice, law and equity.

46. Women, who wanted deeply to defend the peace and security of their homes, should participate side by side with all of society's progressive forces in promoting peace and international co-operation. The documents adopted by three of the five regional meetings devoted to preparations for the Nairobi World Conference contained a rousing collective call for immediate action to defend peace as mankind's supreme asset. The representatives of Romanian women who had taken part in the various non-governmental events devoted to those preparations had eloquently demonstrated their willingness to fight for the fundamental and inalienable right to life, peace and freedom.

47. His delegation wished to reaffirm the importance of implementing in its entirety the recommendation adopted by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in Copenhagen, on the initiative of Romania and other States, concerning equal access for girls and women to all forms of education and the need to guarantee the material conditions indispensable for the effective enjoyment of that fundamental right. The specific needs of that social group had been rightly emphasized in the document prepared for the Nairobi Conference.

48. Having been the original sponsor of the resolution adopted by the Copenhagen World Conference on strengthening the role of the Commission on the Status of Women, his delegation would be glad to know what specific measures had been taken to achieve the aims formulated in that resolution. It should not be forgotten that after the 1985 World Conference, the Commission would remain the only United Nations body charged with considering and appraising the manner in which the recommendations adopted at the Nairobi Conference were implemented. Moreover, the Commission on the Status of Women was the body expressly designated to deal with the follow-up to the recommendations adopted by the regional meetings held in 1984.

49. His delegation noted with satisfaction that, by 15 September 1984, 91 States had signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and 60 had ratified it. However, it believed that the Convention should be made truly universal and that its provisions should be implemented and observed in their entirety. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should play a decisive part in that respect.

50. His delegation wished to assure the Secretary-General of the Nairobi Conference that she would enjoy Romania's full co-operation in the preparations undertaken for that important event. The Conference should contribute usefully to encouraging international co-operation to solve the complex political, economic, social and cultural problems connected with the status of women throughout the world.

51. Miss BOCOUM (Ivory Coast) said that much progress had been made in achieving the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women but that much remained to be done to ensure equality between men and women and to attain the complete integration of women into development. Among the advances achieved in the Ivory Coast, mention could be made of the establishment in 1976 of a ministry for the status of women. In 1983 a set of laws had been adopted which modified and supplemented family law to make it conform more closely to the spirit and the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which the Ivory Coast had signed and intended to ratify in the near future.
52. Close to 67 per cent of the female population lived in a rural environment, representing 50 per cent of the total rural population; rural women represented 53 per cent of the country's economically active rural population. Projects had been launched, in collaboration with the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, to make available to them easily learned technique to ensure a return for their efforts, to save energy and to lighten their heavy burdens. The Government, however, did not intend to assist women indefinitely and was making efforts to teach them to look after themselves.
53. Information, sensitization and training seminars had been organized. For instance, a seminar on sensitization to education for family life, launched with technical and financial assistance of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) had led to the establishment of a large-scale project under the ministries for the status of women, public health and population, and towards which UNFPA would contribute \$800,000. An introductory seminar on dyeing, financed by UNESCO, could also be mentioned.
54. The Nairobi Conference should make it possible to design action strategies covering the period up to the year 2000. Her delegation had welcomed the strategies for the African region adopted at the African intergovernmental regional meeting held at Arusha in October 1984, because they took into account specifically African problems: agricultural development and food production, drought and women's role in the struggle against desertification, and the development of human resources. Care should be taken at the Nairobi Conference not to view situations and problems too much from a global standpoint, which often diverted attention from the hard facts.
55. On item 93, the Ivory Coast was of the opinion that the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women should continue its work beyond 1985. It should strengthen its association with UNDP, while maintaining the necessary autonomy to retain flexibility in its relations with other United Nations agencies. It should therefore remain in New York, where UNDP headquarters were located. Lastly, it would be desirable to shorten delays in the allocation of financing provided by the Fund.
56. Mrs. ESCOBAR (Spain) recalled that one of the objectives of the United Nations was to establish a more just society, free from discrimination. Despite recent progress, the international community's efforts to eliminate the centuries-old situation of inequality of women remained insufficient and should be intensified, notwithstanding the world economic crisis; they should also be taken up by Governments at the national level.

(Mrs. Escobar, Spain)

57. The Spanish Constitution prohibited all discrimination. The Women's Institute, recently established, had been given the task of fostering social equality between the sexes and the participation of women in the political, cultural, economic and social life of Spain, and of eliminating the discriminatory practices and acts of violence of which women were the victims, particularly in the family. It had actively participated in the prisoner-of-conscience week which Amnesty International in 1984 had dedicated to women.

58. The United Nations Decade for Women had increased awareness everywhere of the problem of discrimination and the need to eliminate discrimination against women, and had permitted an analysis which served as a guideline to action taken at the national, regional and international level. Ten years had, however, been insufficient to redress a situation of age-old injustice. The end of the Decade should not signify the end of activities aimed at guaranteeing that women had access on an equal footing with men to political, social and cultural life, that they would be involved in all the phases of development programmes and that they would partake in the fruits of such efforts. Her delegation supported the recommendations made in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women and hoped that the spirit of compromise shown by the Commission and the Economic and Social Council would also prevail in the General Assembly and the World Conference.

59. The Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women played such a crucial role in the United Nations system of co-operation for development that her delegation felt that it should continue its activities beyond the end of the Decade. Given the close co-operation which already existed between the Fund and UNDP, her delegation was of the opinion that the Fund should continue to have its headquarters in New York and to be responsible to UNDP, using the latter's human and technical resources, while retaining its autonomy.

60. United Nations efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women had led to a Convention which was an important international instrument to the extent that States decided to accede to it, as Spain had done recently, and to make the principles enshrined in it part of national reality. National and international legislation were, however, not sufficient to eliminate discrimination against and oppression of women. In addition, an effort should be made to educate and sensitize all sectors of society, beginning with the family, since only by modifying the status of women at the personal level could real change be achieved at the public, including the political, level. That implied at the same time that women should be offered the training they often lacked - because it had long been denied them - to take up, under conditions of equality, the responsibilities traditionally reserved for men. That was why the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women should give priority to training activities. Her delegation hoped that the General Assembly would approve the statute of the Institute; Spain, moreover, was co-sponsoring the draft resolution submitted for that purpose.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.