



Chairman: Mr. Carlos GIAMBRUNO
(Uruguay).

AGENDA ITEM 60

**Programme for the observance of the twenty-fifth
Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human
Rights (A/8820 and Corr.1) (continued)**

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Miss PRODJOLALITO (Indonesia) stressed the significance of the programme for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and said that the suggestions made in the Secretary-General's report (A/8820 and Corr.1) were very useful.

2. Whilst, as the representative of Egypt had stated at the preceding meeting, the anniversary should be observed throughout the world, it should be left to States to decide on the means to be used and the activities to be undertaken. In that respect, her delegation agreed in particular with paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report, which stated that the most effective approach to the observance of the anniversary would be to leave to the various governmental and non-governmental organizations the choice and decision on the most appropriate manner of commemoration. However, as the representative of Ghana had rightly pointed out, also at the previous meeting, the twenty-fifth anniversary should not be mere ceremony but should also make an effective contribution to the cause of human rights. To that end, a concrete way for States to support the Universal Declaration would be for them to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. States in general, and the developing countries in particular, should do their utmost to facilitate the swift ratification of those Covenants.

3. Like other delegations, her delegation considered that the United Nations should organize seminars on human rights which should be world-wide and include youth representatives. The results of the seminars should be disseminated widely, particularly in schools and universities, in order to ensure that information on human rights was as comprehensive as possible at a time when the world was still suffering from all the evils of colonialism.

4. Lastly, with regard to paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report, her delegation would like the Association of South-East Asian Nations to be included among the organizations invited to proceed with the planning of individual programmes of celebrations to observe the twenty-fifth anniversary.

5. Mr. UTHEIM (Norway) said that his delegation had always considered the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a fundamental document which laid down the principles that should guide Governments to a better future for everyone. The Declaration did not have the force of law, but it did have moral and political authority and it would be hard to deny its impact on world public opinion. His delegation, which had been a sponsor of the text adopted as resolution 2860 (XXVI) whereby the General Assembly had decided to consider at its current session the question of the preparation of an appropriate programme to observe the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration, hoped that it would be marked in a manner which would fit the occasion.

6. The general objective of the celebration was to make the Declaration more widely known and to promote universal respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Declaration, the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

7. Furthermore, in many countries the commemoration should help to stimulate appropriate action with a view to early ratification of the International Covenants on Human Rights. Norway had ratified the two International Covenants as well as the Optional Protocol.

8. His delegation had noted with satisfaction the Secretary-General's proposals and suggestions concerning measures and activities that could be undertaken in connexion with the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration. It agreed with the Secretary-General's view that it would not be possible to work out a universal pattern for the commemoration, and that such a pattern would not necessarily be the most effective. The various Governments and non-governmental organizations should decide for themselves what measures and ceremonies would be the most appropriate at the national level. His delegation particularly favoured the establishment of *ad hoc* committees to co-ordinate the national commemoration of the adoption of the Universal Declaration; such committees had proved particularly beneficial and effective

in the past. Non-governmental organizations, and in particular national United Nations associations, had an extremely important role to play in ensuring the success of the commemoration. The specialized agencies and regional intergovernmental organizations should also be invited to participate fully in the celebration by organizing special activities of their own.

9. Mr. LAVETT (Australia) shared the views expressed in paragraph 5 of the Secretary General's report (A/8820 and Corr.1) and considered that too little time had elapsed since the celebration of the International Year for Human Rights for it to be possible again to mobilize all the efforts of Member States and of the relevant organizations, as had been done in 1968. However, the anniversary was an important one, and at the twenty-sixth session the Third Committee had made it plain that it intended to observe it in an appropriate way. The Secretary-General had made a number of most valuable suggestions and the Australian Government would pay close attention to them.

10. With regard to the suggestions made in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report to invite the specialized agencies and a number of regional intergovernmental organizations to plan individual programmes, his delegation agreed with the Indonesian delegation's proposal that an invitation should also be sent to the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

11. Mr. RAM (Bhutan) observed that at a time when the Committee was discussing the programme for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, gross violations of such rights were still taking place in several parts of the world: in South Africa, the racist régime of Pretoria continued to practice its policy of *apartheid*; in Namibia, the struggle for self-rule had been thwarted by the South African Government and the voice of the entire population had been silenced; in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) and other colonial Territories, people were being denied the right to live in dignity and freedom; in Southern Rhodesia, the illegal régime of Ian Smith continued to suppress the fundamental rights of the people of the country in defiance of the United Nations and world public opinion. Since, by virtue of the Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 2627 (XXV)), Member States had pledged themselves "to a continued and determined struggle against all violations of the rights and fundamental freedoms of human beings, by eliminating the basic causes of such violations, by promoting universal respect for the dignity of all people without regard to race, colour, sex, language or religion, and in particular through greater use of the facilities provided by the United Nations in accordance with the Charter", the Organization should attempt to eliminate the basic causes of such violations of human rights.

12. Human rights could be divided into two categories: the rights of individuals and the rights of peoples under foreign domination. While the rights of individuals had to be ensured and promoted by the Governments concerned, the rights of the peoples under foreign domina-

tion should be the concern of the international community as a whole. Thus in observing the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Governments should not only ensure respect for human rights in their own countries but should extend their support to the peoples to whom those rights were being denied.

13. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was meant to be "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations". Like peace and justice, human rights were indivisible and so long as any people anywhere were denied them, the objective of the Declaration would not be achieved. His delegation believed, therefore, that the most fitting manner of observing the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be to draw the attention of the world community to the plight of those who were being denied human rights. It wished to compliment the Secretary-General on the excellent report he had submitted and it fully agreed with the suggestions contained in the report. While rituals in themselves were not too important, they served as an important reminder to all Governments and all peoples of the need "to express the concern of the international community for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all mankind and extend within the limits of its powers and resources its helping hand to those who are victims of their violations".

14. Mr. ILOY (Congo) said that a special place was assigned to human rights in the Constitution of his country. The United Nations, with the assistance of the specialized agencies, had prevailed on mankind to recognize its rights and to defend them, but much remained to be done since human rights continued to be violated by men, perhaps by the United Nations itself, and in particular by the leading Western nations, which were signatories of the Charter; imperialism and colonialism continued to cause unspeakable devastation in Guinea (Bissau), the Cape Verde Islands, Angola and Mozambique. The Portuguese, with the complicity of the countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), continued to exploit the African people. With mass arrests and torture, they were decimating those peoples in a war undertaken in the name of Christian civilization, which was merely a synonym for flagrant violation of human rights. The South African Government, by implementing its *apartheid* policy, was inflicting systematic genocide on the black people of that country, with the blessing of the NATO countries, which continued to sell arms to South Africa. The situation was no better in Southern Rhodesia, where the illegal régime of Ian Smith sowed despair with the complicity of the United Kingdom, while in Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia, United States aircraft and ships spread terror on the pretext of defending the freedom of peoples. It was such acts that constituted true terrorism, and the Africans, the Palestinians and the peoples of Asia were defending a just cause by struggling for the restoration of their rights. In that connexion, he expressed regret that consideration of the item on Korea had been deferred until the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly and stressed the importance of the reunification of that country.

15. By pillaging the resources of the developing countries, the imperialist and capitalist countries of the West were preventing the inhabitants from enjoying their rights. Consequently, each country should celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration in the light of its own situation. The United Nations should uphold its cause by making the day an occasion for emphasizing the worth of the human person and his rights.

16. Mr. AN (China) commended the excellent preliminary statement made by the Director of the Division of Human Rights at the preceding meeting.

17. When speaking of the programme for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it should be remembered that colonial oppression still reigned in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (Bissau), that racial discrimination and *apartheid* were imposed in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, and that the rights of the Palestinians and other Arab peoples were crushed by the Israeli Zionists; all of those phenomena negated the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and constituted a challenge to progressive peoples throughout the world. Justice-loving people everywhere should combat such acts and it would not do for the members of the Committee to limit their discussion to the formalities of celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary. That was why his delegation considered that, to mark the anniversary, the United Nations should decide on action to enhance the effectiveness of the Declaration, to combat racism and colonialism, to condemn the cruel policies of the colonial régimes and the racial discrimination imposed by Portugal, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, to condemn the cruel and inhuman acts of the Israeli Zionists and the action of the imperialist countries supporting South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal, and to require all Members of the United Nations to implement its resolutions and to withhold assistance from those three countries. The specialized agencies and the United Nations should be encouraged to combat those countries which were not implementing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Information on all those issues should be disseminated by the Office of Public Information and the unit responsible for publications; the just struggle being waged by the people of Guinea (Bissau), Palestine, Namibia and Angola, in particular, deserved greater publicity.

18. With regard to the observance of the anniversary at the national level, it was for Member States to decide on the action to be taken, because conditions were not the same everywhere. Certain representatives had made constructive proposals which deserved consideration.

19. Mr. BERK (Turkey) thanked the Director of the Division of Human Rights for his excellent statement.

20. His delegation welcomed the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in his report concerning the observance, at the national and international levels, of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Decla-

ration of Human Rights, an occasion which should be marked by a number of specific activities. The Declaration constituted a landmark in the history of the world community: its influence was manifest and its provisions had inspired a number of international instruments, in particular the two International Covenants on Human Rights. The Charter, the Declaration and the Covenants had served as the basic frame of reference for many important international instruments prepared by the United Nations itself and by the specialized agencies.

21. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 1904 (XVIII) of 20 November 1963, affirmed that discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic origin was an offence to human dignity and should be condemned as a denial of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The elimination of racial discrimination should be considered as a high priority area of action to protect human rights and the major efforts of the United Nations for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration should be directed against racial discrimination and *apartheid* and the elimination of anachronistic institutions. The principles of the Declaration should be disseminated widely and included in the curricula of schools everywhere. An international conference should be arranged in 1973 to review the progress made since the adoption of the Declaration and to consider further measures to be taken for its wider implementation. The Turkish Government, for its part, would celebrate 10 December 1973 as Human Rights Day; it would issue a commemorative stamp, encourage the press to devote special attention to the occasion, and ensure that the anniversary of the Declaration was widely and effectively observed by the general public.

22. Mr. BUHL (Denmark) recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 2860 (XXVI), had expressed its desire to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "in a manner which would fit the occasion and serve the cause of human rights". His delegation believed that the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report could provide a basis when Member States decided on the action to be taken to mark that important day. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, no universal pattern for the purpose of the commemoration would be possible or necessarily the most effective. In the circumstances, it would be preferable to leave the choice of the best way of commemorating the anniversary to the national, regional and local authorities.

23. Since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, important international instruments had been adopted to bring about the implementation of the principles set forth in the Declaration and in the Charter of the United Nations. For example, the two International Covenants on Human Rights had been concluded in 1966. His delegation believed that an effort should be made to bring the

two Covenants into force by the time the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was celebrated. To that end, the draft resolution submitted by the Committee to the General Assembly should solemnly urge Member States to accede to those two instruments.

24. The observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration should serve as an opportunity to draw the attention of all Governments and all peoples to one of the most important tasks confronting the United Nations. Denmark, for its part, considered it necessary to strengthen the means available to the United Nations for ensuring respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all human beings and offering assistance to the victims where those rights were violated.

25. Mr. PAPADEMAS (Cyprus) said that his delegation had read with great interest the Secretary-General's report on the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it had also listened with interest to the statement made on the subject by the Director of the Division of Human Rights. It was an appropriate occasion for taking stock of the progress that had been made and of the efforts that still needed to be made. Definite advances had been made during the preceding 25 years, and the adoption of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the two International Covenants on Human Rights were particularly noteworthy events. He recalled that his Government had been one of the first to accede to the Convention and to the two Covenants. The progress recorded thus far could not, however, be considered sufficient, and there was no need to enumerate the many violations of human rights that were currently being perpetrated all over the world. It had become the duty of each country to persevere in its efforts to ensure the implementation of all the provisions of the Declaration. The Secretary-General's report contained some specific proposals for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration at the international level, and more general suggestions concerning measures that might be taken at the national level. His Government supported the proposals made by the Secretary-General and also the Turkish proposal concerning the dissemination of the text of the Declaration in schools. UNESCO might perhaps undertake the task of preparing a model textbook for pupils at all levels. The Committee might, for its part, wish to adopt a short draft resolution for submission to the General Assembly, endorsing the report prepared by the Secretary-General, which might subsequently be transmitted to the Governments of all Member States. His delegation, which had had the pleasure, at the previous session of the General Assembly, of submitting the draft of the text subsequently adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 2860 (XXVI), would be happy, at the current session, to assist in preparing a similar draft resolution concerning the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. He reserved the right to speak again later on the matter.

26. Mrs. BARABANOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had great contemporary relevance and significance, especially for those peoples and States which had still a long way to go towards guaranteeing respect for human rights. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, for its part, had always come to the defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the socialist States had spared no effort to promote the drafting of international instruments which constituted, as it were, an extension of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Byelorussian SSR was proud to note that it was one of the States that had made the greatest efforts to ensure the inclusion in the Declaration of a number of provisions relating to economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to work, the right to social security, the right to rest, the right to a minimum standard of living and the right to education, all of which in the Byelorussian SSR, were guaranteed by the Constitution and the relevant laws. The right to work, for example, was guaranteed by the socialist organization of the economy, by the development of productivity and by the elimination of economic crises and unemployment, for the well-being of the people was the paramount principle of the socialist system. For instance, the average monthly wage had risen by 31.6 per cent in 1970 and the new five-year plan for the period 1971-1975 made provision for further improvements in the material and cultural standard of living of the population as a result of a 58 per cent increase in industrial production, a 47 per cent increase in the national income and a 33 per cent increase in real *per capita* income.

27. In 1971 expenditure by the Byelorussian Government in the social field—for such purposes as old-age and disability pensions, scholarships, holidays with pay, free education and medical care—had totalled 2,300 million roubles, representing a 9.6 per cent increase over the total for the previous year. Also, in 1971, 1 million persons had received salary or pension increases.

28. The Byelorussian SSR also attached great importance to public health. On 4 June 1970, the Supreme Soviet had adopted a law on the subject, providing for practical measures to improve the standard of health of the population. Measures were taken to combat disease, to lower the mortality rate, to reduce the risks of disablement and to eliminate all factors that might have a detrimental effect on the health of the population. As a result of those efforts, the average life expectancy was 72 years, and the infant mortality rate, which had been 121 per thousand in 1940, had dropped to 16 per thousand in 1971.

29. The Government took a particularly keen interest in the education of workers. More than 3 million persons—one third of the population—were currently participating in education programmes.

30. In the Byelorussian SSR, the entire life of the community was based on the principle of socialist democracy, which aimed at ensuring the participation

of the greatest possible number of workers in the conduct of the internal affairs of State. Such participation was ensured through the Soviets, which were the embodiment of popular unity. The local Soviets comprised some 81,000 deputies, which meant that one out of every 50 members of the adult population was a deputy. The electoral system made it possible for half the membership to be replaced periodically by fresh deputies, to enable as many workers as possible to gain a knowledge of the conduct of public affairs.

31. All those results, of which the Byelorussian SSR was legitimately proud, had been made possible solely through the support and fraternal co-operation of the other Republics in the Union. She recalled, incidentally, that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary in 1972.

32. In view of developments in the world situation, the United Nations still had much to do in order to put a halt to the violations of human rights that were constantly recurring and to create conditions in which justice and respect for human dignity could triumph. Attention must be drawn to the violations that were being committed in various parts of the world and, in particular, to the crimes being committed against the peoples of Indo-China, such as the United States bombings, the destruction of villages and dikes and the use of chemical warfare to destroy human lives, fauna and vegetation. Serious violations were also being committed in the Arab territories occupied by Israel, which, for reasons of an expansionist nature, had no scruples about wiping out whole population centres with the help of napalm and dynamite; the inhabitants were tortured, arbitrarily arrested, taken hostage or imprisoned. It should be noted that articles 4 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulated that no one should be held in slavery or servitude and that no one should be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. It was an undeniable fact that colonialism and *apartheid* had a direct connexion with slavery. The Byelorussian SSR had always fought for the adoption of adequate measures to protect the rights and interests of all individuals, regardless of their race or beliefs. For that reason it believed that no effort should be spared to ensure the implementation of all instruments so far adopted in that field and, in particular, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

33. With regard to the programme for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, measures imposing specific obligations on Member States might be envisaged, having regard to General Assembly resolution 2627 (XXV) and, in particular, paragraph 8 of the Declaration adopted under that resolution.

34. The recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/8820 and Corr.1) should certainly be adopted, but they should also include measures aimed at the elimination of racial discrimina-

tion and at the ratification by all States of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965. Specific measures should be taken under that programme to condemn colonialism and *apartheid* in all forms. Furthermore, a number of proposals in the report should be made more specific or set out in greater detail. For example, the proposals made no mention of the systematic violations of human rights which were taking place in South Africa and in the Arab territories occupied by Israel as well as in other areas of the world. The programme for the observance of the anniversary should make it possible to unmask those crimes against humanity and to condemn them; it should be anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist in nature. That was the basis on which the United Nations should prepare the documentation which it planned to publish on the occasion of the anniversary, as well as the radio and television broadcasts which were similarly planned. The seminars proposed under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights should be organized with the same considerations in mind. At the same time, considerable attention should be given to the relevant United Nations resolutions and documents, particularly the resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its twenty-eighth session concerning violations of human rights in the Arab territories occupied by Israel.

35. The Byelorussian delegation reserved the right to comment at a later stage on the draft resolution eventually submitted on the subject.

36. Miss ILIĆ (Yugoslavia) congratulated the Director of the Division of Human Rights on his very full introductory statement on the question under consideration.

37. By adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations had, for the first time in history, proclaimed fundamental human rights in an international instrument. That event had led to the adoption of many other international instruments concerning human rights. The observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration should afford an opportunity for making better known the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, for increasing respect for those rights and freedoms, for evaluating the results achieved and for appraising the effectiveness of the methods followed and measures taken, with a view to establishing better conditions for action programmes in the future.

38. In the view of the Yugoslav delegation, the programme outlined in the Secretary-General's report was not entirely adequate. Although a common standard had been set in the Universal Declaration and although Member States had pledged themselves, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, to a continued and determined struggle against all violations of the rights and fundamental freedoms of human beings, it must be noted, unfortunately, that in many parts of the world, particularly in Viet-Nam, the Middle East, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia,

Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau), thousands of persons were being deprived of their human rights and were even being denied the most fundamental right of all—the right to life. The international community should therefore create favourable conditions for putting an end to wars, colonial oppression and policies of racism and *apartheid*. The launching in 1973 of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination should be most useful in that regard. Her delegation therefore supported the Egyptian representative's proposal made at the preceding meeting that the Decade should be inaugurated on the date of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that, five years later, an international conference should be devoted to the struggle against racism and racial discrimination. The Yugoslav delegation also considered that the international community should support the efforts undertaken by countries to resolve specific problems of economic and social development and to create conditions which would enable them better to respect the rights of their citizens in those fields. In addition, an appeal should be addressed to those Member States which had not yet ratified the International Covenants to do so in the course of 1973, as their contribution to the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary.

39. For its part, Yugoslavia would, as on previous occasions, ensure that governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions such as the press, radio, television and schools observe the anniversary effectively.

40. Mr. BEASSOUM (Chad) noted that the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration was an important event for all peoples. He wished to take the opportunity to recall that, at its nineteenth ordinary session, in June 1972, the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity had adopted a resolution in which it requested that assistance should be furnished to liberation movements. As practical measures should be planned in celebrating the twenty-

fifth anniversary, he considered that a fund might be established to help oppressed people in Africa.

41. Mr. QUENUM (Dahomey), recalling his country's firm dedication to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, said that the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration could leave no country indifferent and that where there was no appropriate national body to deal with human rights problems, countries should entrust the organization of Human Rights Day to the national commissions of UNESCO. With the help of the press, radio, television and public celebrations, international public opinion should be made aware of the anniversary and attention should be drawn to the African and Asian peoples who were still being denied their human rights. It would be useful, as had already been proposed, to adopt a resolution in that regard.

42. His delegation hoped that UNESCO would make effective arrangements for the celebration of the occasion, for example by requesting Member States to submit reports on specific measures taken to celebrate the anniversary which the Government of Dahomey, for one, would observe in an appropriate manner.

43. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) said that in their statements, the representatives of Indonesia and Australia had referred to an inter-governmental organization, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, whose name was not mentioned in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report. He wished to state that the intergovernmental organizations mentioned were those with which the United Nations had some contact in connexion with the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolutions; however, the list of such organizations was by no means exhaustive.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.