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President: Mr. Eelco N. VAN KLEFFENS
(Netherlands).

AGENDA ITEM 8

Adoption of the agenda (*concluded*)

SEVENTH REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE
(A/2875)

1. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The first item on our agenda this afternoon is the report of the General Committee [A/2875] concerning the request by the Secretary-General [A/2864] for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of this session.

2. I shall now ask the Assembly to decide first on the General Committee's recommendation that this item be included in the agenda.

3. In accordance with rule 23 of the rules of procedure, three speakers may make statements in favour and three against the inclusion of this item. Does any delegation wish to make a statement?

4. As no one wishes to speak, I conclude that the General Assembly has decided, in plenary session, to include this new item in its agenda.

It was so decided.

5. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): In its second recommendation, the General Committee proposes that the item which the Assembly has just placed on its agenda should be referred to the Fifth Committee for examination and report.

6. The General Committee has asked me to inform the Assembly that, in its opinion, the general principle expressed in the second sentence of rule 121 of the rules of procedure should not be strictly adhered to. That provision reads as follows:

"As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Committee unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

In my opinion the General Committee was quite justified in recommending that the General Assembly should not adhere strictly to this provision.

7. Does anyone wish to speak on the recommendation of the General Committee that the item should be referred to the Fifth Committee for examination and report?

8. As no one wishes to speak, I conclude that the General Assembly has decided, in plenary session, to refer to the Fifth Committee the new item that it has placed on its agenda.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council
(*concluded*)

9. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The members of the Assembly will recall that at the time of adopting the agenda of the ninth session, it was decided [478th meeting] to consider in plenary session chapters I, VI, VII and VIII of the report of the Economic and Social Council [A/2686].

10. In addition, the General Assembly has before it a draft resolution submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [A/L.186].

11. The debate on this item is now open.

12. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): In accordance with the General Committee's decision of 22 September 1954 [92nd meeting], which was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly on 25 September [478th meeting], chapters I, VI, VII and VIII of the report of the Economic and Social Council—item 12 of the agenda—were to be considered directly in plenary meeting.

13. The Soviet Union accordingly considers it necessary to make a few comments on chapter VIII of the Council's report which deals with the consultative arrangements between the Economic and Social Council and non-governmental organizations.

14. In the Soviet delegation's opinion, these consultations will be effective only if precedence is given to the participation of international democratic organizations representing a very wide cross-section of the population in all countries.

15. Unfortunately, however, in recent years the Council has shown a dangerous tendency to discriminate against a number of non-governmental organizations whose activities are disliked by some of its members. By following a harmful policy of favouritism and discrimination these members of the Council have been attempting to deprive such democratic non-governmental organizations as the Women's International Democratic Federation, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the International Organization of Journalists and various others of any link whatever with the United Nations.

16. The resolution adopted at the seventeenth session of the Economic and Social Council [529 B (XVII)] with regard to the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) is an example of this policy of favouritism and discrimination with regard to non-governmental organizations. It appears in chapter VIII, paragraph 943, of the Council's report which reads as follows: "The Council decided that consultative status in category B should be withdrawn from the Women's International Democratic Federation."

17. A study of the whole course of the discussion of this question reveals a picture of haste and partiality. First, at the proposal of the United States representative, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations formally decided in a few minutes at a closed meeting, without even inviting the representative of the WIDF to attend or giving her a hearing, to recommend the Council to withdraw consultative status in category B from this widely representative international organization.

18. The Soviet Union delegation made a strong protest and opposed this recommendation. In this connexion, I would draw the General Assembly's attention to the fact that when the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations notified the WIDF of this decision, it did not even inform the Federation of the reasons for the adoption of such a recommendation. Only after the representative of WIDF, supported by the USSR representative, had lodged an energetic protest, were the purported grounds for this step divulged.

19. Not until several months after the adoption of this decision was the representative of the WIDF given an opportunity to tell the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations about the Federation's activities, which are in complete conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

20. Nevertheless, after considering and continuing the consultative status of more than eighty-four non-governmental organizations, including such organizations as the International Vegetarian Union, the International Youth Hostel Federation and the International Federation of Senior Police Officers, the Committee again decided, upon the insistence of the United States representative, to recommend that consultative status in category B should be withdrawn from one, and only one, of the eighty-four organizations, namely, the WIDF.

21. At meetings of the Economic and Social Council, the United States representative put forward, as the main reason for the withdrawal of consultative status in category B from the WIDF, unsupported accusations that the Federation's activities were not in keeping with the United Nations Charter. The United States representative even considered it dangerous, however incredible this may seem, that the WIDF was fighting discrimination against women in political, economic and civil rights. He painted a tendentious and one-sided picture of the Federation's activities, attributing to it only exclusively political activities and he cast doubt on the documents which the Federation had submitted to the United Nations in which attention had been drawn to women's lack of rights in the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories.

22. In their statements, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakian representatives proved that there was absolutely no foundation for or truth in the fabrications about the "harmful" nature of the Federation's ac-

tivities on which the United States representative had laid such stress. They also pressed for the rejection of the recommendation of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

23. Only 9 of the 18 members of the Economic and Social Council voted for the Committee's recommendation; 5 voted against it and 4 abstained. The mere fact that more than half the lawful members of the Council did not support this unjust decision speaks for itself.

24. The Soviet Union delegation considers that this unwarranted decision with regard to the WIDF runs counter to the spirit of the United Nations Charter. The Federation's representative, Mrs. Eugenie Cotton, was quite justified in stating in her letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations that the Economic and Social Council's decision was unfounded and unjust.

25. Millions of women throughout the world will never acquiesce in the unjust withdrawal of consultative status in category B from the WIDF. They know that the Federation to which they belong supports the United Nations Charter and is working for the implementation of the Organization's principles, to which it is true. This is clearly demonstrated by even a brief reference in general terms to a few typical aspects and facts of the Federation's work.

26. The WIDF was founded shortly after the end of the Second World War as a result of the striving of women throughout the world to unite their efforts in a crusade to save their homes and children from the horrors of a new war, to ensure all women their rights, to promote the protection and welfare of the child and to build a world in which nations can live together in peace.

27. Since then, the WIDF has developed into a widely-representative organization which now unites approximately 140 million women, from sixty-six countries, of different nationalities and races, political and religious views and walks of life.

28. The Federation has always acted and is acting in the spirit of the United Nations Charter, the preamble of which proclaims the determination of the United Nations "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The Federation's concern with the attainment of peace and its activities to that end were acknowledged in 1952 at the sixth session of the General Assembly by the President of the Assembly, Mr. Padilla Nervo, who officially thanked the Federation for its work.

29. The United States representative's other assertion with regard to the WIDF, namely that its activities are unrelated to the economic and social objectives of the United Nations, is also unfounded. The delegates to the Federation's first congress took a solemn pledge to defend women's economic, political, civil and social rights so that the essential conditions for the harmonious and happy development of children and of future generations may be created, to fight unceasingly to ensure a lasting peace in the world and to strengthen friendship and unity among the women of the whole world. Such are the official purposes of this international federation. The United States representative's accusation is thus completely unfounded.

30. The WIDF representing 140 million women cannot stand aside from questions which deeply disturb

hundreds of millions of women and affect their position in society as mothers, workers and citizens. WIDF enjoys enormous prestige among women, because its national organizations in sixty-six countries are waging a tireless struggle to protect women's rights, displaying initiative, daring and courage. WIDF was not content merely to proclaim its intention of doing everything within its power to achieve the full equality of the sexes in all spheres of life; it has worked actively to that end. At its congresses and meetings and through its national branches, the Federation has systematically studied and is studying questions related to the status of women and is urging its organizations to fight actively for equal political, economic and civil rights for men and women in all countries.

31. The declaration adopted at the World Congress of Women in Copenhagen in 1953 confirmed that this was the Federation's aim. In this declaration, women from seventy countries raised their voices to declare once again that the economic, political and legal position of women in most of those countries required radical change or improvement. This declaration, which is fully in accord with the principles of the United Nations Charter, states that the following rights must be recognized for all women, irrespective of their race, nationality and position in society and then sets out the platform of WIDF's national organizations:

"The right to work; the right to free choice of a profession or trade; the right to enter all administrative and public posts; equal possibilities for promotion in all spheres of work; equal pay for equal work; the equal right to social insurance; the equal right to state protection of mother and child; paid pre- and post-natal maternity leaves, the establishment of sufficient maternity homes, welfare clinics for mother and child, crèches and kindergartens, in the countryside as well as in the towns and industrial centres; the granting of the same rights to agricultural as to industrial women workers as regards wages, measures of security at work and protection of mother and child; the rights of peasant women to own land and to the fruits of the land; the right to a full education and professional training; the right to vote and to be elected to all state bodies, without restriction and discrimination; equal rights with men in relation to property, marriage and children; the right to association and unhampered activity for women's democratic organizations, and the right to participate in other organizations."

32. The women belonging to WIDF's national branches are fighting stubbornly in widely different countries to achieve these demands which reflect the most fundamental aspirations of women and are in full accord with the defence of human rights.

33. WIDF has undertaken numerous activities for the promotion of child welfare. Immediately after its establishment it undertook a campaign to succour war orphans. Since then it has taken a number of other national and international measures to promote child welfare. At the meetings of its executive bodies, WIDF has called on its national organizations to intensify their activities in this field. WIDF initiated the idea of a world children's day which was supported by a number of prominent persons throughout the world. The support given to this idea is also evident from resolution 836 (IX) submitted by the Third Committee on the initiative of the Indian and Uruguayan dele-

gations and adopted unanimously by the General Assembly on 14 November 1954 [512th meeting].

34. Another of the purported accusations invoked as a reason for excluding the Federation from the United Nations must also be categorically refuted: it is the accusation that WIDF has not co-operated in the work of the Council and its organs. This would-be accusation is also unproved and unconvincing.

35. As a non-governmental organization WIDF makes its contribution to the work of United Nations bodies. It has participated in the work of most sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and has introduced a number of recommendations on important problems affecting women's vital interests which evoked the interest of members of the Commission. In all, representatives of the Federation have attended almost twenty sessions of various United Nations bodies, including the Economic and Social Council.

36. Since 1946, the WIDF has sent the United Nations more than a hundred documents on the status of women and children in over seventy countries together with specific proposals the adoption of which would undoubtedly have contributed to the implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Charter and resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on equal rights for women. The Federation has also submitted proposals to the Council's commissions and has made a number of statements to United Nations bodies on various questions relating to women's rights.

37. Unfortunately, as a result of the difficulties experienced by the WIDF in recent years when sessions of the United Nations and its bodies have been held in New York (I am referring to the refusal to grant WIDF representatives entry visas to the United States), the Federation has not been able to play as effective a part at such sessions as in the past. The United States delegation has specifically accused the Federation of doing too little. The United States itself refuses to admit WIDF representatives to the country and then charges it with inactivity. Such is the way the United States delegation reasons in this matter.

38. The adoption at the seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women of a resolution on the question of the admission of WIDF to United Nations Headquarters to attend the meetings of that session clearly shows the close links that have been established between WIDF and the Commission.

39. There is thus no justification whatsoever for the action which the Economic and Social Council, acting on the initiative of the United States, has taken against the WIDF, an organization that unites 140 million women living in countries with various economic and social systems and has gained prestige by its activity and its loyalty to its declared aims which are fully in accord with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

40. Can we speak of the democratic representation of non-governmental organizations in the United Nations, if the very largest and most influential women's organization in the world, which is directing the efforts of worthy and courageous women to obtain their own rights and the rights of their children, is excluded from the United Nations, while dozens of organizations like the International Vegetarian Union and the International Federation of Senior Police Officers are still associated with it?

41. I would point out, moreover, that in many countries the WIDF is the only women's organization. It is therefore important that the women in these countries should be allowed to make their voices heard in the United Nations through the representatives of this Federation.

42. The facts that I have just mentioned show that the Economic and Social Council's decision to withdraw consultative status in category B from the WIDF is wrong, utterly unjust and unfounded, and contrary to all democratic principles and human rights.

43. The USSR delegation therefore submits the following draft resolution for the General Assembly's consideration [A/L.186]:

"The General Assembly,

Considering that the Economic and Social Council, in deciding at its seventeenth session to withdraw consultative status in category B from the Women's International Democratic Federation, acted contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations as laid down in the Charter and, more particularly, in Chapter X thereof,

Proposes to the Economic and Social Council that it should revise the said decision with a view to the retention of consultative status in category B by the Women's International Democratic Federation."

44. The Soviet Union delegation hopes that this draft resolution which is designed to protect the legitimate rights of one of the most widely representative non-governmental organizations, will be supported by the representatives of the Member States of the United Nations and that consultative status in category B will be restored to the WIDF.

45. Mr. WADSWORTH (United States of America): I hope that the General Assembly will give the draft resolution, just now proposed again by the USSR delegation, the quick burial that it deserves.

46. The Soviet Union has raised the serious charge against the Economic and Social Council that it has acted contrary to the Charter of the United Nations in removing from consultative status the WIDF. The elimination of the WIDF from consultative status was based upon the failure of that organization to fulfil the obligations required of a non-governmental organization in consultative status, to conform to the spirit, Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations, to support its work and to promote knowledge of its activities. These criteria are specified in Economic and Social Council resolution 288 (X), paragraphs 3 and 4.

47. The Council's decision was not based on the fact that the Federation is hardly a *bona fide* non-governmental organization, but on the fact that it is actually a part of a propaganda apparatus dominated by the Government of the Soviet Union; nor was it based on any fear of the expression of divergent views, as my Government has made explicitly clear many times. It was based on the scurrilous attacks of the WIDF against the forces of the United Nations in Korea; accusations that United Nations troops had engaged in tortures and mass murders surpassing the crimes committed by the Nazis, accusations that United Nations troops were engaged in bacterial warfare in Korea, and similar Communist propaganda nonsense. It was based on deliberate falsifications by the WIDF, for propaganda purposes, of economic and social situ-

ations respecting women in many under-developed countries; and it was based on attacks by the WIDF against even the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

48. At no time whatever should this particular situation which we are now debating be confused for a moment with the question of the equality or the status of women. This has nothing to do with the situation; what we are talking about now is the record of a particular organization, and let me give some examples.

49. The WIDF set up a so-called Women's International Commission for the investigation of atrocities committed by the United States and Syngman Rhee troops in Korea. One of the conclusions of its report states the following: "These mass tortures and mass murders surpass the crimes committed by Hitler's Nazis in temporarily occupied Europe."

50. The executive committee of the WIDF, in protesting to the United Nations, firmly declared that these crimes, leading to the annihilation of the Korean nation, had been committed under the United Nations flag, mainly by the Americans, with the participation of British, Canadian, Turkish and other troops. Is that aiding the United Nations? Is that supporting its principles and its work?

51. This organization subsequently became a principal sounding-board for the notorious germ warfare propaganda campaign. For example, on 4 March 1952, the secretariat of the WIDF sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations which stated in part:

"After a long period of preparation in collaboration with Japanese war criminals the United States is using sixteen kinds of bacteriological weapons, which it manufactured with the idea of continuing its barbarous and inhumane programme of annihilating the whole Korean population and reducing the country to a barren waste. The use of bacteriological warfare is depraved and inhuman, and even more atrocious than the Hitler gas chambers which were denounced at the Nürnberg trials."

Is that aiding the United Nations? Is that supporting its principles and its work?

52. If any doubt remains in anyone's mind about how the WIDF deliberately distorts the truth, that organization itself has dispelled it in its communication of 3 September to all United Nations delegations. In this document the WIDF claimed that the United States representative in the Economic and Social Council, in quoting from the Federation's documents, had omitted and added words, extracted sentences from their contexts and distorted their meaning; the Federation sought to prove this by citing what it termed the correct quotations.

53. I have the original WIDF document here and I can show that in every single instance the United States quoted the WIDF correctly, and that in every single instance in its communication of 3 September, the WIDF falsified its own document in a vicious attempt to confuse members of the General Assembly. I shall give just one example.

54. One so-called correct quotation, according to the WIDF, should have been as follows: "In Mussulman marriages the wife is often deprived of property rights and often stripped of her possessions on divorce". The WIDF said that, in repeating this sentence, the United States representative had omitted the word "often",

which occurred twice, and added the word "all" three times.

55. The true facts are that the WIDF deleted the word "all" three times from its own statement and substituted the word "often" twice in a blatant effort to substitute the big lie for the truth. I should like to read to the Assembly from this document, which is a WIDF document entitled "Documents and current events", issued late in the summer, as far as we can tell, of 1952, after a meeting of the executive committee of the WIDF in Bucharest from 18 to 20 July 1952. I shall read one sentence from page 4 of the Federation's own document: "In all Mohammedan marriages the woman is deprived of all property rights and stripped of all her possessions upon divorce".

56. This is a patent falsehood which requires no further exposure. The WIDF has not made a translation error. The original document of the Federation was in English, the United States speech was in English, and the Federation's letter of 3 September was in English. Thus, they have deliberately falsified the record.

57. The Federation's original statements were false; its analysis of the United States speech was false; its quotations from its own document were false. It is clear to my delegation that this organization has not fulfilled the obligation of a non-governmental organization with consultative status. My delegation will vote against the draft resolution put forward by the Soviet Union, and hopes that other delegations will do likewise.

58. Mr. ALTMAN (Poland) (*translated from French*): The Polish delegation supports and will vote in favour of the Soviet Union draft resolution.

59. The Economic and Social Council's decision to deprive the WIDF of consultative status in category B for non-governmental organizations is entirely unjustified and unwarranted. The WIDF is an organization composed of 140 million women of many countries in all parts of the world. It is, without doubt, the world organization most representative of the interests of large groups of women. Its activity in the struggle for the political, economic and social rights of women is universally known. The causes for which it fights are the objectives set out in the United Nations Charter.

60. In taking this unjustified decision, the Economic and Social Council was not guided by concern for the good of the United Nations, which is and must be interested in co-operation with non-governmental organizations that are truly representative and active in the economic and social fields. Experience shows that genuine co-operation with non-governmental organizations such as the WIDF is of great benefit to the United Nations and contributes effectively to the achievement of its objectives. It would be unjust to allow the political sympathies of any delegation to be a determining factor in the matter of granting consultative status to non-governmental organizations: In the case of the WIDF, it was certainly the political leanings of the majority in the Council which led to the decision to exclude this thoroughly democratic organization, a fact which has, moreover, been confirmed by the United States representative, who spoke before me.

61. We consider that the Economic and Social Council's decision is unjustified and that it is an act of discrimination against the WIDF. In the interests of the United Nations, the Council must re-examine the

question of granting consultative status to the WIDF and restore to that organization consultative status in category B. That is the aim of the Soviet Union draft resolution, which the Polish delegation will support.

62. Mrs. ROSSEL (Sweden): According to the Soviet Union draft resolution the General Assembly should propose to the Economic and Social Council that the Council should revise its decision in a matter which is within its competence.

63. The Swedish delegation has noted a growing tendency to have the Assembly detract from the authority once vested in certain of the United Nations organs. We consider such a procedure to be inappropriate, especially in this case where there has been no previous discussion of the matter in a Committee. We shall, therefore, vote against the Soviet draft resolution, but only because a decision of the General Assembly in this matter would constitute an improper admonition to the Council.

64. I wish to stress that the Swedish delegation's negative vote on the Soviet draft resolution is thus not based on any consideration of the substance of the Economic and Social Council's decision. In this connexion I can only say that the mere fact that an organization holds opinions which are critical of the United Nations would not, in our view, constitute a basis for the withdrawal of consultative status. We thus hope that this decision of the Economic and Social Council will in no way set a precedent for future reviews of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations.

65. Mr. SLIPCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): The Ukrainian delegation believes that the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council on 6 April 1954, at its seventeenth session whereby the WIDF was deprived of consultative status in category B, was quite unwarranted and profoundly unjust.

66. The WIDF is a broadly representative organization which includes among its members tens of millions of women of different races, creeds and walks of life, from countries with varying economic and social systems. Throughout its existence, the WIDF has fought unceasingly for the political, economic, civil and social rights of women, for the protection of children, for friendship and unity among women throughout the world and for close co-operation between nations to strengthen peace. The activities of the WIDF are thus fully in accord with the purposes and tasks of the United Nations.

67. The preamble to the United Nations Charter says that the peoples of the United Nations are determined "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small". But a struggle for human rights and for equality of rights between men and women is at the very root of the work of the WIDF. The Federation fully respects and supports these most important principles of the United Nations, and it is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in consultative relationship with the Economic and Social Council.

68. According to Article 71 of the Charter, the Economic and Social Council is empowered to "make

suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence". It is only natural that the WIDF, which expresses the opinions of broad social groups, should on a number of occasions have pointed out cases where the democratic rights and freedoms of mankind had been violated, as, for instance, when it sent a commission to investigate the situation in Korea; the United States representative has just said that this was sheer propaganda, but not a shadow of doubt can be cast on any of the facts mentioned in the commission's report or in any other of the documents. As the saying goes: "Nothing hurts like the truth".

69. The WIDF has compiled reliable information about the economic and social position of women in colonial and dependent countries. If such activities are not to the taste of the representatives of some countries here, that certainly does not mean that they run counter to the United Nations Charter. On the contrary, they were undertaken specifically for the purpose of putting the principles of the Charter into practice and upholding human rights. The Federation's criticisms of the work of certain United Nations bodies, moreover, were constructive in character and could certainly not serve as a reason for depriving the Federation of its consultative status.

70. During the discussion of the item at the Economic and Social Council's seventeenth session, and today at this plenary meeting, a number of delegations have made unfounded statements about the WIDF, namely that it has not co-operated with the Economic and Social Council and has shown no interest in its work, but has, in fact, thwarted that work. These allegations are flatly contradicted by the facts. It is no secret, for instance, that the Federation has frequently made concrete proposals in United Nations bodies, which, if adopted, would undoubtedly have contributed to the realization of the principles of the United Nations Charter and of General Assembly decisions concerning equal rights for women.

71. The memorandum submitted by the WIDF to States Members of the United Nations gives detailed information about its participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council. It has sent most useful information on the position of women and children in over seventy countries to various organs of the Economic and Social Council. We should mention here its demand, supported by documents, for the defence of women's rights, for the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work, for the protection of mothers, and for equality of rights between married women and their husbands. These demands were sent to the Economic and Social Council by the Federation on 4 January 1949.

72. There were also such important documents as those concerning slavery and servitude of women and children, the Declaration on Women's Rights which was adopted by the World Congress of Women in Copenhagen under the item on the social status of women and children, the memorandum on questions to be discussed at the eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and a host of other documents which were sent by the Federation to the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and to other United Nations bodies. The WIDF has taken an active part in meetings and conferences of various United Nations bodies. Its representatives

have regularly made oral statements on important matters of principle.

73. Our delegation wholeheartedly supports those representatives who have declared that a wrong procedure was followed when the status of the Federation was under discussion in the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and at the recent session of the Economic and Social Council.

74. In view of all the foregoing considerations, the Ukrainian delegation regards the Economic and Social Council's decision to deprive the WIDF—the largest women's organization in the world—of its category B status as unwarranted and quite unjust.

75. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR supports the Soviet delegation's draft resolution that the General Assembly should recommend that the Economic and Social Council should revise its incorrect decision to deprive the WIDF of its consultative status in category B and should allow it to retain that status.

76. Mr. MEADE (United Kingdom): Like the representative of the United States, I hope that this problem will not detain the Assembly for very long, and I shall therefore keep my remarks as brief as possible.

77. My delegation will, of course, vote against the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the Soviet Union. We cannot accept the statement in the preamble that "the Economic and Social Council, in deciding . . . to withdraw consultative status . . . from the Women's International Democratic Federation, acted contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations".

78. I will leave aside the question of the propriety of suggesting that the General Assembly should make such a statement about one of the principal organs of the United Nations. The situation seems to my delegation to be quite clear: under Article 71 of the Charter, the Council is authorized to "make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence". The Economic and Social Council has always taken its duties under this Article very seriously and has drawn up elaborate rules to govern the grant of consultative status to the organizations in question. These rules are contained in resolution 288 (X) adopted by the Council at its tenth session. Part I of this resolution deals with the principles to be applied in the establishment of consultative relations. Paragraph 3 states:

"The aims and purposes of the organization shall be in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations."

Paragraph 4 states:

"The organization shall undertake to support the work of the United Nations and to promote knowledge of its principles and activities . . ."

79. It is therefore clear that the Council has not only the right, but the duty, to withdraw consultative status from any organization which it considers has acted contrary to the aims and purposes of the Charter or has otherwise hindered the work of the United Nations. It was on that basis, and on that basis only, that the Council took its decision with regard to the WIDF.

80. The representative of the United States has already described in some detail the vicious propaganda indulged in by this organization at the expense of troops of different nations fighting under the United

Nations flag in defence of a cause supported by the vast majority of this Assembly. I will not therefore go into these details myself, except to say that the language employed by that organization in documents which it submitted for consideration by the United Nations was such that it would be impossible for me to repeat from this rostrum some of the phrases used.

81. In view of this propaganda, which was aimed directly against United Nations troops acting under the authority of this Assembly, the United Kingdom delegation had no hesitation in voting in favour of withdrawing consultative status from the WIDF. We shall therefore vote against the Soviet Union draft resolution, which proposes to the Economic and Social Council that it revise its decision, and I hope that other delegations will do likewise.

82. Mr. ASTAPENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): In a decision of the Economic and Social Council it is proposed that the largest women's organization in the world—largest both in numbers and in influence—should be deprived of its consultative status in category B. This decision is wrong and unfair and there is no justification for it.

83. From its inception in 1945 the WIDF has devoted all its efforts to observing and putting into practice the principles of the United Nations Charter, and has worked tirelessly in defence of the political, economic, civil and social rights of women, the protection of children and the strengthening of friendship and unity among women throughout the whole world.

84. In its stubborn defence of women's rights the WIDF has won the love and respect and the wholehearted confidence and support of millions of women from various continents, of different races, creeds and walks of life and living in countries with different economic and social systems.

85. Upon the Federation's initiative and with its active participation, a number of world congresses of women have been held, at which the most varied current problems have been discussed and decisions have been taken which were of benefit to millions of women.

86. In June 1953 the World Congress of Women, at which there were representatives of seventy different countries, unanimously approved the Federation's activity and adopted a declaration on women's rights which was widely welcomed by women of all countries.

87. One of the great merits of the WIDF is that it has succeeded in uniting within its ranks women of different faiths and of the most varied walks of life and that it has brought them together in a fight for women's rights and for the good of the world.

88. Between 1951 and 1953 the WIDF arranged more than thirty trips so that women from various countries could exchange experiences about their work for the women's movement and so that closer ties could be established.

89. At the request of the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies and also on its own initiative the WIDF has submitted a large number of documents touching upon a number of important questions of direct interest to women as well as upon questions which are before the United Nations.

90. From 1946 onwards the WIDF has been represented at meetings of the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies, excepting only on

those occasions when its representatives were denied entry visas into the United States of America. During the past eight years the WIDF has participated in the work of various United Nations organs and its representatives have spoken on all kinds of questions connected with the status of women. It has submitted to the Organization more than one hundred documents and proposals, as well as information on the political and economic status of women, on women's rights in the social field and also on the improvement of conditions for children.

91. Even this brief survey of its activity is enough to show that it is absurd to suggest that the WIDF has failed to co-operate in the work of the Council and its organs, is not genuinely interested in such work, distorts the facts and so on, and that it uses unsuitable language, as some here have maintained and as the representative of the United States, in particular, attempted to prove, in an endeavour to deprive it of its category B consultative status.

92. The WIDF is devoting a great deal of attention to welfare work for children. The whole world knows that it was upon its initiative that 1 June was established as a Universal Children's Day and is so observed every year in a great number of countries. The protection of children's rights has presented the WIDF with many problems connected with the social and economic position of children in various countries.

93. Naturally since the Federation studies conditions affecting children, it has, in its reports to the United Nations, pointed out the deficiencies in various countries which make life difficult for children. The WIDF felt obliged to inform the United Nations of these facts because there are many children throughout the world who have not enough to eat, and who lack proper dwellings, medical care and schooling.

94. The Federation's noble endeavours in the defence of children's rights were, to a certain extent, reflected in resolution 836 (IX), establishing a Universal Children's Day, adopted at this session of the General Assembly. This resolution also invites "the cultural, professional, trade union, workers' and social welfare organizations, for men and women, to support and co-operate actively in the observance of Universal Children's Day".

95. The WIDF could be very helpful in putting such decisions into effect. Its participation would enable the Organization to fulfil its obligations towards succeeding generations. The assistance of so large and influential a women's organization as the WIDF which promotes respect for women's and children's rights, could not but be beneficial to the work of the Organization.

96. It is quite clear from this brief survey of the Federation's activity that it has taken an active part in the work of United Nations bodies as a non-governmental organization and that it has made a definite contribution to the good of mankind and, first and foremost, of the world's women and children. All the Federation's activities fully accord with the principles and purposes of the United Nations and reaffirm faith in the fundamental human rights.

97. Justice and respect for women's rights make it imperative that the General Assembly should reconsider the Economic and Social Council's profoundly unjust decision to deprive the WIDF, without reason, of its consultative status in category B, and should permit it to retain that status. Such a decision by the

General Assembly would make it possible for United Nations bodies to obtain more information about the status of women and children. By the same token, the Economic and Social Council would widen its activity, since it would be more fully acquainted with the lives of women living in various countries in the world. A revision of the Economic and Social Council's unjust decision would enhance the prestige of the Organization and would broaden its contacts with non-governmental organizations. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is in favour of retaining the WIDF in consultative status in category B.

98. Consequently, it will vote for the Soviet draft resolution for a revision of the Economic and Social Council's resolution with a view to the retention of consultative status in category B by the WIDF.

99. Mr PAVLICEK (Czechoslovakia) (*translated from French*): In considering the chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which are included in our agenda, the Czechoslovak delegation wishes to refer particularly to section II of chapter VIII, which deals with the review of non-governmental organizations, and in that connexion, to state its views on the draft resolution proposed by the delegation of the USSR.

100. At its seventeenth session, the Economic and Social Council decided, on the proposal of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, to withdraw consultative status in category B from the WIDF.

101. During that session of the Council, the Czechoslovak delegation pointed out that the recommendation of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations that consultative status should be withdrawn from the WIDF, was ill-considered, hasty and unwarranted. My delegation asked the Council not to take a decision before thoroughly studying the statement of the Federation and consulting the Commission on the Status of Women. Despite the warnings of the delegations of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, the Council took, by only nine votes, an unjustified decision depriving the WIDF of consultative status in category B. This decision which runs counter to the Council's own interests is designed to prevent the WIDF, a non-governmental organization with more than 140 million members from seventy different countries, from taking part in the work of the Council.

102. The WIDF was founded at the first International Congress of Women held in Paris in 1945. It owes its origin to the unanimous desire of women throughout the world to unite their efforts to preserve their children and their homes from the horrors of a new world war.

103. The aims of this Federation are the defence of women's economic, political, civic and social rights, the creation of conditions that will ensure a happy and peaceful life for children and future generations, the complete and lasting extermination of fascism in all its forms, the establishment of true democracy and an untiring campaign for the maintenance of universal peace.

104. The WIDF includes women's organizations, women's sections of trade union organizations, co-operatives, cultural organizations and so forth which fight for women's rights. These organizations are made up of women of widely differing political opinions, philosophical ideas and religious convictions. Their

members come from different social *milieux*, in every part of the world and under the most varied political systems.

105. The WIDF has always supported, and will continue to support, the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Its co-operation with the Economic and Social Council and with the Commission on the Status of Women represents an important contribution to the work of the Council and to the accomplishment of the tasks conferred upon it by the Charter.

106. The Czechoslovak delegation feels that the Council's decision would deprive not only the Council itself but also, and more especially, the Commission on the Status of Women, of the valuable assistance given to it by an important international organization, the WIDF.

107. The active participation of its representatives has proved fruitful and, in this connexion, I will mention particularly the substantial and effective support given recently to the Commission on the Status of Women during its eighth session in which the Federation took part only after strenuous efforts by the Commission and especially by its Chairman. It is therefore only fair that the General Assembly, in considering the Council's report, should take these facts into account and adopt the USSR draft resolution recommending that the Economic and Social Council should reconsider its decision.

108. The Czechoslovak delegation is convinced that, if the Council re-examined the question of the consultative status in category B of the WIDF, taking into account the activities of that body and hearing at the same time the views of the Commission on the Status of Women, it would change its decision and thus allow one of the most important non-governmental organizations to play an active role in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its organs.

109. For these reasons the Czechoslovak delegation warmly supports the Soviet Union draft resolution and will vote for it.

110. Mr. KOS (Yugoslavia): The Yugoslav delegation voted against the withdrawal of consultative status in category B from the WIDF at the seventeenth session of the Economic and Social Council. At that time, the Yugoslav delegation explained that it in no way supported the activities of the WIDF, basing this on our own experience of the organization. Nevertheless, we acted as we did in the belief that the United Nations was a universal organization which grouped together countries of different political régimes and ideologies, and not an association of States holding the same views. We applied that belief also to the non-governmental organizations. My delegation is also of the opinion that, on closer scrutiny, some other non-governmental organizations might be found to be unworthy of consultative status.

111. This point of view has not changed, but my delegation cannot support the statement in the preamble of the Soviet Union draft resolution that the Economic and Social Council "acted contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations as laid down in the Charter and, more particularly, in Chapter X thereof". Such an interpretation of the decision of the Economic and Social Council would, in our opinion, amount to a condemnation of the Economic and Social Council, and this my delegation is not ready to support. We

cannot connect this decision with the principles and purposes of the United Nations, which, in our opinion, are broader and higher than just a question of an organization.

112. My delegation will have to abstain in the voting on the preamble of the draft resolution. We shall vote in favour of the operative paragraph of the draft resolution, which simply proposes to the Economic and Social Council that it revise its decision; the matter would then be discussed by the Council.

113. Mrs. HARMAN (Israel): My delegation believes that every shade of opinion should be represented among the non-governmental organizations without bias or prejudice whatsoever, as long as they are representative of duly-constituted responsible groups with world-wide affiliations. These organizations can act as an important bridge between the United Nations and world public opinion in a two-way traffic. They are the exponents of widely divergent views on a variety of issues; many of them are devoted to humane and purposeful causes. In many respects they are the ears and the eyes, and often the conscience, of the world. From their own respective points of departure they can contribute much to the promotion of international understanding.

114. The Soviet draft resolution does not permit us to enter into the substance of the matter as to whether or not the WIDF is entitled to consultative status in category B in relation to the Economic and Social Council. Instead, we are asked to pass judgment on the Economic and Social Council for taking a decision contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter. My delegation regards this not only as a challenge to the integrity of the Economic and Social Council, but also to that of its Chairman, Ambassador Cooke of Argentina, in whom my delegation has the fullest confidence.

115. We shall therefore have to abstain on the draft resolution without expressing any opinion whatsoever on the merits or demerits of the WIDF as a non-governmental organization worthy or unworthy of consultative status B with the Economic and Social Council because, I have already said, the draft resolution precludes discussion of the substance of the matter.

116. Mr. DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (Belgium) (*translated from French*): The Belgian delegation wishes to explain its vote on the draft resolution proposed by the Soviet Union delegation.

117. The Belgian delegation cannot accept the preamble and especially its criticism of the Economic and Social Council for having "acted contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations as laid down in the Charter and, more particularly, in Chapter X thereof".

118. For this reason the Belgian delegation will vote against the draft resolution.

119. Reverend NUÑEZ (Costa Rica) (*translated from Spanish*): The Costa Rican delegation will vote against the USSR delegation's draft resolution. Its decision is not based on any consideration of the ideology of the WIDF, or of the political connexions it has or may have, for the Costa Rican delegation shares the view of all other delegations that the United Nations must be a universal body reflecting the most varied manifestations of human thought.

120. My delegation will vote against the Soviet draft resolution, because the reports before us show that the WIDF has on various matters followed a line of conduct that is clearly at variance with the basic principles of the United Nations and of its activities in support of those tenets.

121. When the WIDF gives clear evidence that it has repudiated this earlier line of conduct and is consistently supporting the principles of the United Nations, the Government of Costa Rica will be prepared to reconsider its present decision.

122. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): If no other Member of the Assembly wishes to speak we shall proceed with the vote on the draft resolution submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [A/L.186].

123. In accordance with the request of the Netherlands delegation we shall vote separately on the preamble and the operative part of the draft resolution.

124. I shall now put to the vote the preamble of the draft resolution.

The preamble was rejected by 29 votes to 5, with 15 abstentions.

125. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I shall now put to the vote the operative part of the draft resolution.

The operative part was rejected by 24 votes to 8, with 17 abstentions.

126. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): In view of the result of the previous vote, there is no need to put the draft resolution as a whole to the vote.

127. I now call upon the representative of Belgium who has asked to speak on chapter VIII of the report of the Economic and Social Council.

128. Mr. DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (Belgium) (*translated from French*): Chapter VIII of the report of the Economic and Social Council gives some interesting information about the contribution to the work of the United Nations made by the non-governmental organizations. Over sixty-three written statements from thirty organizations were submitted to the Council and its Committees. Of the non-governmental organizations in category A, 4 made statements on agenda items in the course of the seventeenth session and 4 in the course of the eighteenth session. In addition, 10 organizations in category B were heard by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations during the seventeenth session and 13 others during the eighteenth session. One non-governmental organization secured the inclusion of a new item in the agenda of the seventeenth session of the Council.

129. The Belgian Government is gratified by the excellent results obtained during the year. It feels that non-governmental organizations have an increasingly important part to play in international co-operation. They are already one of the most powerful instruments of progress in the modern world. Their contribution is too important for inter-governmental organizations to be able to ignore them. On the other hand, it is essential that the non-governmental organizations, which often express the aspirations of millions of men, should, on their side, be constantly aware of the need to maintain contact with governmental and inter-governmental organizations. In the absence of relations of mutual confidence with the responsible public

authorities, the voluntary associations might degenerate and become a breeding place of anarchy.

130. The development of international co-operation at both the public and the private level is perhaps the most striking feature of twentieth century history and undoubtedly fulfils a vital need of modern society. The nineteenth century sought to become the century of freedom and, to achieve that freedom, proclaimed its faith in the independence of the individual and the absolute sovereignty of States. The twentieth century has learned, in the light of terrible experiences, that while the individual rights of men and the independence of States must be respected, co-operation between individuals and collaboration between States must also be organized.

131. Man is never freer than when he joins with his fellow in carrying out a great common task. States never fulfil their mission better than when they come to a common understanding and enter into binding agreements with a view to the solution of international problems which they would be unable to tackle alone.

132. The whole policy of the United Nations is more or less consciously based on the great twentieth century idea that freedom is not achieved merely by the establishment of a legal order but is the fruit of a social and political tradition which favours the association of private interests and inter-governmental co-operation.

133. This ideal of ours can take shape only if non-governmental organizations and inter-governmental organizations establish a system of relationships between them which favours agreements while jealously safeguarding the freedom of both within their respective spheres.

134. Even before the war the International Labour Organisation gave a practical and fruitful form to this essential co-operation. The United Nations, from its inception, has followed the same course. It had to feel its way at first and there may have been some abuses. Fortunately, at its tenth session, the Economic and Social Council reconsidered the question of the status of non-governmental organizations and under the wise leadership of Mr. Kotschnig, United States representative, achieved remarkable results. The outcome of its discussion was resolution 288 (X) of the Council, which was drafted with the help of the non-governmental organizations themselves. This legal framework which was instituted to define the relationships of non-governmental organizations with the Economic and Social Council and with the United Nations in general, is largely satisfactory to both parties. It was an outstanding achievement.

135. However, a good legal framework is not sufficient. It must be filled. Resolution 288 (X) must not set a stage for which there are no actors. This is a matter of particular concern to the Belgian Government. On its behalf I wish to appeal to non-governmental organizations to use their status as fully as possible, in particular by ensuring that they are represented at all sessions and at all meetings of United Nations organs by well-qualified representatives who can state their organizations' views clearly and defend them cogently.

136. The United Nations, for its part, must also take care to keep constantly in touch with the non-governmental organizations. Belgium has already asked that the Secretariat services dealing with non-governmental

organizations should be strengthened. They should perhaps also be more centralized. The Belgian Government is convinced that good relationships with non-governmental organizations can greatly facilitate the work of the Secretariat and relieve them of much unnecessary labour and expense. It is undesirable that inter-governmental organizations should duplicate technical studies and documentation which have already been prepared, sometimes with better facilities, by learned institutions or private organizations of unquestionable competence. But, if it is to derive the maximum benefit from the services and the assistance of the non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Secretariat must obviously be well equipped itself and well-informed of the work of the voluntary organizations.

137. This leads me to my final point. Today there is only one body which has specialized in the scientific study of this typically nineteenth century phenomenon, the development of non-governmental organizations.

138. In Brussels in 1910 two Belgians, Senator La Fontaine and Mr. Otlet, founded the Union of International Associations (UIA), the only scientific centre of its kind now existing in the world, the only body possessing general documentation on the work of non-governmental organizations, the only institute for the study of non-governmental international relations, the only committee which tries to facilitate mutual relations between international organizations, increase their efficiency and ensure that the results of their work are better known.

139. Although the UIA has been in existence for half a century, its work has greatly increased since the last war. According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the non-governmental organizations, the UIA now renders services that could not be rendered by any other association.

140. The UIA publishes a fifty-page monthly bulletin, in French and English, which deals with all technical and legal questions of interest to non-governmental organizations and which contains the only complete calendar of all international meetings. It also publishes a general index of periodicals published by non-governmental organizations. At the moment it is engaged in producing a number of publications which will be of great practical value for the work of the non-governmental organizations and the organization of their congresses.

141. In particular, it publishes a yearbook of international organizations which has become an essential tool for all who take part in international activities at the present time. The yearbook is prepared with the help of the United Nations Secretariat. The 1951-1952 edition in English, with titles and index in French, describes more than 1,000 organizations. The 1954 edition, which has just come out, gives information about a further 200 organizations. Next year, thanks to the assistance of France, which has always shown special interest in its work, the UIA will publish an edition in French in response to the urgent demands of several countries.

142. The importance of these activities has been recognized by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and by the Economic and Social Council. At its eleventh session the Council adopted resolution 334 B (XI) entrusting the UIA with the task of

publishing the Yearbook of International Organizations and invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to give the UIA every possible assistance in that task. This decision was wise, because it approved an excellent project and used what existed instead of creating something new and thus causing duplication.

143. A relationship of mutual trust was immediately established between the UIA and the Secretariat. The yearbook is always submitted in advance to the Secretariat in manuscript form before printing and any suggestions or comments made are taken into consideration. This co-operation has resulted in a large saving in the United Nations budget, which has been estimated at \$10,000 by a member of the Fifth Committee, Mr Fenaux.

144. All the documentation on non-governmental organizations supplied by the UIA also makes it unnecessary for the administrative departments of Member States to engage in difficult research, which they cannot always undertake but which the UIA is especially well-equipped to carry out. Furthermore, in order to be kept informed of the development of international voluntary organizations, ministerial departments would be compelled to set up new services if the UIA Yearbook or its calendar of international meetings was to cease publication.

145. The increasing use of the documentation of the UIA by various Governments constitutes unofficial recognition of the value and scope of its services.

146. Finally, I appeal to delegations to attach due importance to this matter of co-operation between non-governmental organizations and the various organs of the United Nations. Non-governmental organizations obviously have an increasingly important part to play in the search for peace and social progress. However, it is even more important to realize that the United Nations itself cannot give effect to certain essential

aspects of its policy without the help of the non-governmental organizations.

147. In all matters concerning public health, child welfare and assistance to refugees and in many other fields, the resolutions we adopt here will be effective only if the non-governmental organizations work systematically together with the Secretariat of the United Nations to transform our abstract aspirations into everyday reality. International associations are even better equipped than national non-governmental organizations to perform these functions. They do not view problems from an unduly narrow national point of view and naturally consider problems, as we do, in terms of the interests of nations and peoples.

148. It is the function of the UIA to remind governmental and non-governmental organizations at all times that their roles are complementary and equally important and that they must necessarily help each other. For that reason, I believe that among all existing non-governmental organizations, it is entitled to special recognition by the United Nations.

149. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The Assembly has no proposal before it. In conformity with the precedent established last year, I shall therefore consider, if there are no objections, that the Assembly has taken note of chapters I, VI, VII and VIII of the report of the Economic and Social Council [A/2686].

It was so decided.

150. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The Assembly has already had before it [511th and 512th meetings] the reports of the Main Committees to which the various other chapters of the Council's report were referred. In each case it has taken a decision and it has now taken note of the Council's report as a whole.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.